

THE PERSPECTIVES OF NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS ON HOW
LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES IMPACTED JOB SATISFACTION

by

IRENE GOETZE

(Under the Direction of Sally J. Zepeda)

ABSTRACT

Given the increasing number of National Board Certified Teachers, the purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationship with their principals and their job satisfaction. This qualitative study sought to draw from the experiences of these teachers and their interaction with others to learn how National Board Certification had impacted their teacher leadership activity, their relationship with their principals, and their job satisfaction. An interpretive approach was used to discover how the teachers developed their perspectives and why they believed the way they did. Through the lens of symbolic interactionism, data from interviews, field notes, and other artifacts were analyzed using a constant comparative approach.

Three themes emerged revealing the perspectives of the teachers on their leadership activities. The first theme indicated that these National Board Certified Teachers assumed more leadership activities after achieving National Board Certification. The second theme indicated that there was variance in the support and understanding of National Board Certification by the principals with whom the teachers worked. The third theme indicated that job satisfaction for these teachers has been positively impacted by the collaboration, autonomy, and decision-

making that come from teacher leadership responsibilities. However, although the teachers did express satisfaction with their jobs, four of the five are planning to leave the classroom for administrative or supervisor positions.

Findings have implications for further research, particularly in the area of the knowledge and support of National Board Certification by principals. National Board Certification, a relatively new reform movement, was envisioned to identify accomplished teachers who could assume teacher leadership roles while remaining in the classroom.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher leadership, National Board Certification, Principals, Teacher Professionalism, Job satisfaction

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2006

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the National Board Certified Teachers who have earned distinction as accomplished teachers. The process of earning National Board Certification is arduous, and those who earn the distinction of National Board Certified Teacher are to be congratulated for their expertise in teaching and their accomplishments outside the classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There have been many individuals who have had an impact on my work as a doctoral student. I must thank my advisor, Sally Zepeda, for her patience and for her insistence that the job be done right and that the job be done. I wish also to thank the members of my committee, Margaret Graham and William Wraga, for their service.

The participants in the study were good sports and willing to share their innermost thoughts on National Board Certification and teacher leadership. We met in coffee shops, Mexican restaurants, libraries, and my office. I appreciate the time they shared with me.

My sister-in-law, Linda Braender, provided support from the moment I started taking classes. She was invaluable as a reader, editor, friend, and cheerleader. The I-20 ladies, while a very loosely organized group, were an invaluable support system. Thank you to Pat Bentley, Brenda Schulz, and Janie Sheldon. Thanks also to Cheryl Ogden for her inspiration and help.

My children watched their mom study and “write her paper” with understanding and amusement. I know that they will be grateful that my laptop will not always be with me.

My husband gets the credit for telling me I should start a doctoral program. I know there were times when he wished the topic had not come up. Gregg provided encouragement and did not say too much about having to eat frozen dinners or the state of the dining room table. I appreciate his patience and his love.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was established in 1987 with the goal of professionalizing teaching through the establishment of standards for what teachers should know and be able to do and an assessment system for certifying those teachers who meet the standards (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989). A result of certification would be a cadre of professional teachers who could assume teacher leadership roles envisioned in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Task Force Teaching as a Profession, 1986).

Historically, teachers have been at the lower end of the educational hierarchy, obeying superiors and not questioning authority (Elsbree, 1939). Because access to new knowledge was controlled by people who were not in the classroom, a dependent role was created for teachers (Spring, 1997; Tyack & Cuban, 1997; Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997). This was one reason that some teachers left the classroom for administrative positions or non-teaching jobs (Barth, 1988).

In the 21st Century, the functions of the school have become more complex, requiring a broader base of knowledge and skills to engineer the changes that are needed. Teachers have the requisite abilities to share in the work of improving schools; however, the potential of teacher leadership has not been realized (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

Over 47,000 teachers are National Board Certified (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a), earning the professional status that was predicted in *A Nation Prepared* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). In a study of the effectiveness of National Board Certified Teachers, Goldhaber and Anthony (2004) suggested that the impact of National Board Certification depended on whether certification altered the career paths of teachers and if certification caused them to remain as classroom teachers for a longer period of time. The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem

In the state of Georgia, there are 2123 National Board Certified Teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). Since 1994, when 4 Georgia teachers achieved certification, the number has consistently grown with 329 teachers in the state earning certification in 2003. National Board Certified Teachers currently represent approximately 2% of Georgia's nearly 100,000 teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2003).

National Board Certification of teachers was proposed in *A National Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). In 1987, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was created to

establish high and rigorous standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, be able to certify teachers who meet those standards, and to advance other education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools. (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 1)

Millions of dollars of private and government funds have been spent on the development of standards and instruments to assess accomplished teaching (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1986; Ford Motor Company, 1989; U.S. Department of Education, 1989-2002; National Science Foundation, 1989-2002). Research has been conducted on the impact of National Board Certification on students and teachers (Belden, 2002; Bond, Jaeger, Smith, & Hatie, 2000; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004; Swogert, 2002). In 2002, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards announced the funding 21 studies, including National Board Teachers as an Organized Resource, a study which “will illuminate the potential for National Board Certified Teachers to exercise broad leadership in schools, districts, and wider venues” (“New research studies begin on National Board Certification” p. 3).

In envisioning education in the next century, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986) suggested that teachers could “provide active leadership in the redesign of the schools and in helping their colleagues to uphold high standards of teaching and learning” (p. 3). Teaching would be considered a profession that would attract and retain highly qualified individuals.

Teacher leadership was also suggested in *Tomorrow’s Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group* (1986). Citing the need for improving American schools, the Holmes Group proposed improving the education of teachers and improving the teaching profession. A career ladder providing opportunities for top teachers to qualify for a career professional status was included in the recommendations. Career professional teachers would work with adults as well as children. The report indicated that by providing differentiated staffing and leadership responsibilities for effective teachers, the goal of

attracting and retaining highly competent people to teaching could be realized (Holmes Group, 1986).

A career ladder, described in *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* would give teachers an opportunity for “multiple professional roles while remaining in teaching” (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996, p. 96).

Teachers who achieved National Board Certification would receive the advanced certification that would qualify them to work in a leadership capacity without necessarily leaving the classroom.

In November 2000, the National Board Teacher Leadership Survey sponsored by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was distributed to 4800 National Board Certified Teachers who achieved certification between 1994 and 1999. The 2186 teachers who returned the surveys were demographically representative of National Board Certified Teachers. Data from the survey indicated that 99.6% of National Board Certified Teachers participated in at least 1 leadership activity, and on average, they were involved in 10 leadership activities (Kennelly, 2001). Studies of National Board Certified Teachers in Mississippi (Swogert, 2002) and California (Belden, 2002) had similar findings. While the Kennelly (2001), Swogert (2002), and Belden (2002) studies did analyze the aggregate responses to questions regarding teacher leadership, the format did not allow for in-depth analysis of the responses of individuals.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. In *A Nation Prepared:*

Teachers for the 21st Century (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986), a recommendation was made for the development of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to create a culture of professionalism in teaching and to identify accomplished teachers who could assume teacher leadership roles in the schools. Once established, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards set as one of its goals the creation of “more professional and educationally rewarding relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 3).

Background of the Study

In 1994, Board Certification was a relatively new phenomenon with 84 teachers receiving certification nationally that year. The numbers of National Board Certified Teachers have since grown to 32,131 (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). As conceived in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) and *Toward High and Rigorous Standards for the Teaching Profession* (1989), National Board Certified Teachers would serve as classroom teachers while assuming teacher leadership responsibilities.

The work of the teacher as leader has been examined in the literature (Barth, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Goodwin, 1993; Little, 2000; Sherrill, 1999; Terry, 2002). Research has indicated that in traditional school cultures decision making has been relegated to administrators, while teachers were expected to follow curricula and regulations imposed by those administrators (Tyack & Cuban, 1997; Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997). In 1991, Bolman and Deal wrote that very little was known about non-administrators who assumed leadership work in schools. Among the questions that

Bolman and Deal raised for researchers to explore were, “For example, which teachers in which contexts become leaders? What kind of leadership do they provide and what impact does it have” (p. 31)?

In the 20th Century, teachers in the United States fought for equality, ensuring that men and women, elementary and secondary teachers, and black and white teachers received the same pay and status (Spring, 1994; Tyack & Cuban, 1997). In this context, teachers who assumed leadership work, especially when there was a perception of differentiated status, may have had difficulty functioning in schools while simultaneously maintaining collegial relationships (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Wasley, 1992a).

The leadership of teachers is considered essential by some to improve schools (Barth, 2001; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Rosenholtz, 1991). Little (2000) asserted, “It is increasingly implausible that we should improve the performance of schools, attract and retain talented teachers, or make sensible demands upon administrators without promoting leadership in teaching by teachers” (p. p. 390). Each school has unique needs and a unique staff. Even with different contexts, each school and its students can benefit from the work of teacher leaders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Vasquez-Levy & Timmerman, 2000; Zepeda, Mayers, & Benson, 2003). Danielson (2005) noted, “Teacher leaders form the backbone of the school” (p. 37).

In November, 2003 Georgia had 1323 National Board Certified Teachers and ranked 5th among the states with regard to the total number of National Board Certified Teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). A coalition of government and private agencies provided funds to support the candidacy for National Board Certification of Georgia teachers (e.g., Georgia Power; Georgia Department of

Education). Georgia teachers who successfully completed the process and became National Board Certified received a legislatively mandated 10% increase on their state salary for the 10-year life of the National Board Certificate (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

The support of policy makers and business people for National Board Certification indicated interest in supporting accomplished teaching. Implicit in support is interest in efficacy. It is important to know the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers regarding their work as teacher leaders with respect to relationships with administrators and as it affects job satisfaction.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified Teachers and how their work as teacher leaders impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. There are currently 1323 National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia out of a total teaching workforce of over 100,000. These numbers suggest that these certified teachers often work as the only National Board Certified Teacher in their school. The researcher sought to answer:

1. How has National Board Certification shaped their work as teacher leaders?
2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?
3. How has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

Conceptual Framework

This study is based conceptually on research about teacher leadership. Teacher leadership came to the forefront in the professional literature during and after the reform

movements of the 1980s. The role of master teacher was mentioned in *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), while the Holmes Group (1986) suggested collaboration of teachers and teacher training institutions through professional development schools. Teachers would serve in an advisory capacity and mentor pre-service teachers.

Professionalization of teaching was proposed in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* through the creation of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Also proposed were increased opportunities and time for professional development, the creation of lead teacher positions, and the use of teacher expertise in the decision making of the school (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). When the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was established, one of its goals was “creating more professional and educationally rewarding relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989). As a result of the recommendations of these reports, a new interest in positions of leadership for teachers, expanded leadership roles for teachers, and a hope that teacher leadership might impact teaching and learning surfaced (Smylie & Denny, 1990).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards developed standards for accomplished teaching and a process for teachers to undertake to demonstrate that they could meet the standards. The National Board Certification process requires that the teacher submit a portfolio which includes written description of teaching practice, analysis of that practice, and reflection on teaching activities. Videotapes of the teacher engaged in classroom activities are submitted with the portfolio. The portfolio and the

assessment center exercise allow the teacher to demonstrate expertise, collegiality, professional development, and reflection, all elements of leadership (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

Expertise is shown by National Board Certified Teachers in the development of their portfolio and in the assessment center exercises. Teacher expertise is an important factor in student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1997a) and this expertise can serve as an element in leadership (Sagor & Barnett, 1994). Additionally, expertise can lead to self-confidence and the willingness to share that expertise (Zinn, 1997). Teacher leadership involves collaboration with others, and this collaboration is fueled by expertise (Terry, 2002). Teacher leaders must be able to work with partners in education, administrators, parents, and community leaders (Wasley, 1992b). Collaboration is demonstrated by National Board Certified Teachers in a portfolio entry where they document work with other professionals, the families of their students, and the larger school community.

Professional Development is another component of teacher leadership. Teacher leaders are committed to their own professional development and the professional development of others (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). Often teacher leaders participate in the design and management of professional development. The documented accomplishments entry in the National Board Certification portfolio requires that teachers demonstrate how their professional development activities impact student learning.

In this study, the leadership activities resulting from earning National Board Certification were explored through the examination of the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers. The statements of the National Board Certified Teachers

reflect the experiences these teachers had and how they interpreted the interactions they had with their principals.

This research, which was conducted through face-to-face interviews with five National Board Certified Teachers, sought to obtain the perspectives of those teachers regarding their work as teacher leaders and the relationships with their principals and the job satisfaction they experienced related to the leadership they engaged in after becoming Nationally Board Certified.

Significance of the Study

After a search of the literature regarding National Board Certified Teachers, it was deduced that there was inadequate research on the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on their work as teacher leaders and how that work impacts the relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. While survey information is available on teacher leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers (Belden, 2002; Kennelly, 2001) Swogert, 2002), the analysis of perspectives of those teachers regarding their work as teacher leaders is not found in the literature. This study can provide knowledge that school administrators can use as they work with National Board Certified Teachers to determine appropriate leadership opportunities. One of the original goals of National Board Certification was to increase job satisfaction as a means to retain quality teachers. By understanding the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on teacher leadership and the impact of those perspectives on job satisfaction, administrators may realize the goal of retaining quality teachers in the teaching profession.

Assumptions of the Study

Throughout the period of research, the following assumptions were held to be true:

1. The perspectives expressed by the National Board Certified Teachers were their own honest opinions.
2. The perspectives given by the National Board Certified Teachers were freely given.
3. The National Board Certified teachers participated in teacher leadership activities.
4. The National Board Certified Teachers were the best source of data for this study.
5. Teacher leadership is an important aspect in job satisfaction of National Board Certified Teachers.

Definition of Terms

1. National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)—a teacher who has been certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, a private organization that certifies accomplished teachers.
2. Teacher leadership—activities defined by the NBPTS study on teacher leadership that “most heavily focus on mentoring or coaching and on development of programs, strategies, or professional development activities” (Kennelly, 2001, p. 1) by National Board Certified Teachers.
3. School Administrator—a principal or an assistant principal

Limitations of the Study

There were limitations of this study. First, the sample consisted of five National Board Certified Teachers certified between 1999 and 2000. This small number of participants impedes generalizability. Second, the researcher is a National Board Certified Teacher. To counter bias and to help ensure objectivity, the researcher enumerated her beliefs about the importance of National Board Certified Teachers, teacher leadership, and other issues related to the professionalization of teachers. These subjectivity statements (see Appendix B) were revisited throughout the study to counter bias and subjectivity.

Overview of Research Procedures

To provide a descriptive account of the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their professional relationships with their principals, and their job satisfaction derived from the work as teacher leaders, a qualitative case study approach was chosen.

1. With the assistance of the Educator Workforce Division of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, five National Board Certified Teachers were selected to participate in this study.
2. The teachers received their National Board Certification in 1999-2000 in the areas of Early Childhood Generalist or Middle Childhood Generalist, and they were full-time teachers in an elementary school at the time of the study.
3. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant over a three-month period.

4. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Field notes and a researcher's journal were maintained.
5. Constant comparative analysis was the method used to code and recode the data until themes could be generated as propositions.
6. Conclusions and implications were reported.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 includes a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the background of the study, the research questions, and the theoretical significance and framework for examining the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers who engage in teacher leadership. In addition, definition of terms, limitations of the study, and the significance of the study are provided. The related literature is reviewed in Chapter 2, including an overview of the literature on teacher leadership and National Board Certification. Data collection methods are discussed in Chapter 3, including issues pertaining to subjectivity, validity, and reliability related to the collection and analysis of data. Data are reported in Chapters 4 through 8, while cross-case analysis is reported in Chapter 9. A discussion of the findings with conclusions and implications is provided in Chapter 10.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

National Board Certification is an outgrowth of reform movements in the 1980s that attempted to enhance teaching by creating a culture of professionalism. An expected outcome was that National Board Certified Teachers would assume teacher leadership roles and would stay in teaching because of increased job satisfaction (Grossman, 2003; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989).

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia on how the leadership work they assumed after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. The guiding questions of this study included:

1. How has National Board Certification shaped their work as teacher leaders?
2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?
3. Has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

As more Georgia teachers attempt and earn certification, it is important to understand the perspectives of Georgia's National Board Certified Teachers regarding their work as teacher leaders with respect to professional relationships with administrators and their job satisfaction.

Symbolic interactionism was selected as the interpretive framework to situate this study and to describe the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers to see if their work as teacher leaders affected their relationships with their principals and the impact of leadership on job satisfaction. This chapter presented the history of National Board Certification and research on teacher leadership and job satisfaction, as well as the research conducted on National Board Certified Teachers.

The History of National Board Certification

In the 1980s, three reports, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform*, *Tomorrow Teachers*, and *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, outlined a crisis in American education and offered suggestions for improvement.

A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform

A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) criticized the condition of public education in the United States. The statement, “If an unfriendly foreign nation had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might have viewed it as an act of war” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 1), set the tone for the document. With regard to teachers, the Commission reported that teaching did not attract the intellectually able, teacher preparation programs needed upgrading, and that the professional conditions of teaching were not acceptable. The term teacher leadership is not mentioned in *A Nation at Risk*; however, the report did suggest the establishment of a career ladder that would culminate in a position of master teacher who would mentor beginning teachers and work with colleges and universities to develop teacher preparation programs. While some of the information given in this document was

later held to be untrue, its content created unease about the state of public education (Berliner & Biddle, 1995).

Tomorrow's Teachers: The Report of the Holmes Group

In response to *A Nation at Risk*, the Holmes Group issued *Tomorrow's Teachers: The Report of the Holmes Group* (1986). Citing the need for improving American schools, the Holmes Group proposed improving the education of teachers and improving the teaching profession. Echoing some of the suggestions of *A Nation at Risk*, the Holmes Group envisioned a career ladder where top teachers could qualify for career professional status. Career professional teachers would work with adults as well as children. The report indicated that by providing differentiated staffing and leadership responsibilities for effective teachers, the goal of attracting and retaining highly competent people to teaching could be realized (Holmes Group, 1986).

Among the recommendations of the Holmes group was the creation of Professional Development Schools to promote collaborative efforts of teacher training institutions and public schools to provide meaningful training experiences for pre-service teachers. Practicing classroom teachers would participate in the planning of teacher education programs and work with pre-service teachers during field experiences. Darling-Hammond (1997a, 1994) reported that both pre-service and mentor teachers benefited from the experience of participating in Professional Development Schools.

In an examination of data from seven professional development schools, Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster, and Cobb (1995) found that when working in professional development schools a teacher

transforms a knowledge base, reflects on practice, and generates new knowledge. The teacher must be a learner in order to teach, and in so doing, the teacher comes

to own and produce knowledge, rather than being controlled by it. With this liberating process, the teacher becomes a leader as well—developing the knowledge and making decisions that shape practice. (p. 90)

The teacher leadership that arises in professional development schools becomes a natural part of professional practice and expands the role of the teacher.

A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century

Citing the impact the Carnegie Foundation had at the beginning of the 20th Century on the restructuring of the medical profession in the United States, ideas for restructuring teaching were proposed in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986). Reiterating the call for the professionalization of teaching endorsed in *Tomorrow's Teachers*, the formation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was proposed. This board, which would have teachers as a majority of its members, would set standards for “what teachers should know and be able to do and to certify those teachers” (Carnegie Forum on Teaching and the Economy, 1986, p. 3). Teachers who met the standards would receive board certification. This certification was intended to parallel the specialty board certification of doctors, an earlier project of the Carnegie Forum (Shulman, 1998).

Established in 1987, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989) published *Toward High and Rigorous Standards for the Teaching Profession: Initial Policies and Perspectives*. In this document, the goals of the organization and its plans for creating National Board Certification were outlined. Voicing the hope of serving as a catalyst in the improvement of schools, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards set the following goals:

- Reshaping the public’s perception of teaching, leading to a better appreciation of the demands on, and requirements for, accomplished practitioners;
- Encouraging a change in the dynamics of union-school board conversations to focus on how schools can best be restructured for improved performance;
- Increasing flexibility in the allocation of instructional resources to match the diverse and varying needs of students with the diverse talents of the teacher pool;
- Enhancing teachers’ self-esteem, working environment and compensation;
- Rationalizing teacher hiring, assignment and evaluation policies;
- Creating more professional and educationally rewarding relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators;
- Expanding the flow of first-rate people into teaching and stemming the outbound tide of accomplished professionals;
- Stimulating the design of more rigorous programs of teacher education and continuing professional development;
- Accelerating the growth and utilization of the knowledge base of teaching;
- Restoring public confidence in the schools. (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, pp. 2-3)

National Board Certification was envisioned by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as a complement to the mandatory state licensure of teachers. The state license was established to require that teachers meet minimal standards, while board certification would indicate accomplished teaching, signaling “ an assurance of high quality teaching” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 2). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards did not suggest specific roles for National Board Certified teachers but left the decision on how best to use National Board Certified Teachers to the states, school districts, and schools. Prior to development of standards for National Board Certification, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989) examined what teachers should know and be able to do, stating:

The fundamental requirements for proficient teaching are relatively clear: a broad grounding in the liberal arts and sciences; knowledge of the subjects to be taught; of the skills to be developed, and of the curriculum arrangements and materials that organize and embody that content; knowledge of general and subject-specific methods for teaching and for evaluating student learning; knowledge of students

and human development; skills in effectively teaching students from racially, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse backgrounds, and the skills, capacities and dispositions to employ such knowledge wisely in the interests of students.

This enumeration suggests the broad base for expertise in teaching, but conceals the complexities, uncertainties, and dilemmas of the work. The formal knowledge teachers rely on accumulates steadily, yet provides insufficient guidance in many situations. Teaching ultimately requires judgment, improvisations, and conversation about means and ends. Human qualities, expert knowledge and skill, and professional commitment together compose excellence in this craft. (p. 13)

Five core propositions were developed to aid in the identification and recognition of teachers who “effectively enhance student learning and demonstrate the high level of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments” (p. 12). The core propositions include:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from reflection.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities. (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, pp. 10-11)

The first task of the Board was the development of standards and assessment of accomplished teaching. Teams of educators, including practicing teachers, were brought together to develop the standards. Their work was disseminated for comments, revised, and presented to the 63 member Board of NBPTS for acceptance. Assessment instruments were developed and field-tested in 1993. In 1994, 177 teachers received certification based on their scores on the field tests. In 1995, another 199 teachers were certified with the total number growing to 595 in 1996. By the end of 2003, 32,131 teachers in the United States had achieved National Board Certification (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). Table 1 highlights the number of National Board Certified Teachers in the United States and Georgia by year.

Table 1

Number of Teachers who Received National Board Certification by Year

Year	Georgia Teachers	United States Teachers
1994	4	177
1995	0	199
1996	5	219
1997	10	318
1998	10	924
1999	31	2970
2000	57	4728
2001	309	6509
2002	381	7893
2003	513	8196
2004	471	8068
2005	329	7300
Total	2123	47513

(Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2006)

The National Board Certification Process

When the assessment for National Board Certification was offered to teachers in 1993, 2 certificate areas were available, Middle Childhood Generalist and Early Adolescence English/Language Arts. By early 2003, 24 certificate areas were available with 3 certificates under development and 2 certificates in the planning stages. It was anticipated that these 29 certificates would provide certification opportunities to all

elementary and secondary teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). To become a National Board Certified Teacher, a teacher must have at least three years of experience, a valid state teaching certificate, and be actively engaged in classroom instruction. The National Board Certification process is designed to be completed during one school year. During that year, the certification candidate completes a portfolio according to NBPTS guidelines and sits for assessment center exercises.

Portfolio requirements include written description of teaching practice, analysis of that practice, and reflection on teaching activities. Student work samples and videotapes of the teacher engaged in classroom activities are submitted with the portfolio. The assessment center exercises focus on subject matter knowledge. At the assessment center, certification candidates respond to discussion questions. NBPTS estimated that a teacher spends between 200 and 400 hours in developing the portfolio and preparing for the assessment center exercises (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

The portfolio and assessment center exercises allow the teacher to demonstrate adherence to the five core propositions, which are applicable to all certification areas, and the standards, which are specific to the subject taught and the developmental needs of students. Trained assessors with the use of scoring rubrics score all portfolio and assessment center exercises. Teachers whose aggregate score on the portfolio entries and the assessment center exercises meet the standard for accomplished teaching are granted National Board Certification. Teachers whose score does not meet the standard have opportunities during the subsequent two years to submit selected portfolio entries or take

assessment center exercises again (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

Harman (2001) reported that the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards went through a three-stage genesis in establishing its assessment of accomplished teaching. From 1991-1996, individual Assessment Development Laboratories were given contracts to develop the assessment instrument for National Board Certification. Common factors in the assessment instruments were a school-site portfolio and assessment center activities but the requirements varied among the certification areas. Assessment instrument development was transferred to Educational Testing Service, which standardized the process across all certificates.

Teachers who attempted certification between 1997 and 2000 turned in a six-part portfolio with two entries focusing on documented accomplishments and four entries that were classroom based. The entries involved written commentary on classroom practice. Teachers were expected to describe, analyze, and reflect on their professional activities. Supporting documentation in the form of videotapes of lessons and student work samples were part of the portfolio. At the assessment center, the teachers wrote answers to four prompts that were subject specific. For each prompt, teachers were given 90 minutes to write their response (Harman, 2001).

In 2001, another change was made in the certification process. Four portfolio entries were required. Two involved videotapes, one assessed student work, and one documented the teacher's work with other professionals, parents, and the community. The requirement to describe, analyze, and reflect on teaching practice remained. At the

assessment center, teachers answered six prompts for thirty minutes each (Harman 2001; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

As the first National Board Certified Teachers reached the end of their 10-year certification period, NBPTS developed an instrument for a 10-year renewal of certification. Between their 7th and 10th year of certification, National Board Certified Teachers may submit a Profile of Professional Growth, which documents the teacher's professional growth since receiving National Board Certification and provides commentary that demonstrates how that professional growth has impacted students and other professionals. A reflective component is also part of the Profile of Professional Growth. Like all other National Board assessments, scoring is done by trained assessors according to a rubric developed through field testing (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a).

Section Summary

During the 1980s, a series of reports on education in the United States paved the way for an educational reform movement. *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) was critical of public education. In its assessment of teachers, the report concluded that teaching did not attract the most intellectually able, that teacher preparation programs were inadequate, and that the conditions of teaching were not acceptable. Creation of a career ladder culminating in the role of master teacher who would mentor beginning teachers was suggested in the document.

The Holmes Group (1986) issued *Tomorrow's Teachers*. Collaboration between top teachers and teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities through the

creation of Professional Development Schools was suggested as a means for improving the teaching profession. Differentiated staffing and leadership responsibilities for effective teachers were recommended as a means of attracting and retaining highly competent people in teaching.

A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century, a report by the Carnegie Forum on Teaching and the Economy (1986), endorsed the formation of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards which would set standards for what teachers should know and be able to do and develop instruments to assess how individual teachers met those standards. The certification offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards would parallel the board certification of the medical profession.

Established in 1987, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards developed a framework for certifying teachers. The certification was intended to complement, not replace state licensure of teachers. While state licensure was intended to ensure that teachers met minimal standards, board certification would indicate that the teacher had met the higher standards of accomplished teaching.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989) articulated five core propositions for teaching and a framework for setting standards and certifying teachers. The first group of teachers participated in field tests of the certification process in the areas of Middle Childhood Generalist and Early Adolescence English/ Language Arts in 1993 with 177 achieving National Board Certification. Ten years later, 24 certificates were available and 32,131 teachers in the United States had achieved certification. By the end of 2003, Georgia had 1,323 National Board Certified Teachers (see Table 1). This study seeks to examine the teacher leadership of the Georgia's

National Board Certified Teachers and how that teacher leadership impacts their relationship with their principals contributes to their job satisfaction.

Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership came to the forefront in the professional literature during and after the reform movements of the 1980s. The role of master teacher was mentioned in *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), while the Holmes Group (1986) suggested the need for teachers to collaborate and to be involved with teacher training institutions through professional development schools. Teachers would serve in an advisory capacity and mentor pre-service teachers. Professionalization of teaching was proposed in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* through the creation of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Also proposed were increased opportunities and time for professional development, the creation of lead teacher positions, and the use of teacher expertise in the decision making of the school (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). When NBPTS was established, one of its goals was “creating more professional and educationally rewarding relationships among teachers and between teachers and administrators” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 2). As a result of the recommendations of these reports, a new interest in positions of leadership for teachers, expanded leadership roles for teachers, and a hope that teacher leadership might impact teaching and learning surfaced (Smylie & Denny, 1990). Similarly, Urbanski and Nickolaou (1997) indicated that with the publication of *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* and the creation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the climate for teacher leadership changed and

leadership by teachers became synonymous with the movement toward professionalism of teaching.

The need for teacher leadership has been articulated (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Leiberman, 1992; Zepeda, Mayers, & Benson, 2003). Because teachers understand what is essential in teaching and learning, the leadership of teachers can bring direction to schools. Teachers are less likely to feel detached and more likely to find teaching meaningful when they have opportunities to exercise leadership (Duke, 1994). When teachers assume teacher leadership responsibilities, they are likely to have increased commitment to their role as a teacher (Miller & O'Shea, 1992). The demands on administrators are such that school improvement goals cannot be met without promoting the leadership abilities of teachers (Little, 2000; Vasquez-Levy & Timmerman, 2000). Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) provided a different perspective, suggesting that appending leadership to teaching may lessen the value of teaching and hurt the profession by implying that teaching "is really not enough to warrant a respected role in bettering the human condition" (p. 430).

Roles for teacher leaders have been broadly defined. Forms of teacher leadership include mentoring pre-service teachers, mentoring beginning teachers, research, engaging in staff development activities, developing curricula, and leading professional organizations (Burke, 1994). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) defined three categories of leadership: leadership of students or other teachers; leadership of operation tasks; and leadership through decision-making or partnerships. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) further indicated that leadership roles are fluid and may be formal or informal, general or specific, individual or group oriented, and focused on any level from classroom to

national. Krisko (2001) suggested that a teacher is a teacher leader if given leadership responsibilities by an administrator or if that teacher perceives a problem in the school and assumes leadership in finding a solution.

Darling-Hammond (1997c) wrote of the necessity to provide rewarding career paths that would allow teachers to remain in the classroom and still have a leadership role based on knowledge and skill. Professional development and collaborative relationships would be elements in the career paths. If knowledgeable, experienced teachers would continue to grow professionally, schools would continue to improve. Since lack of control over professional decision-making is a reason many teachers give for leaving education, teacher leadership responsibilities may keep competent teachers in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 1997a). The National School Boards Association (1995) endorsed National Board Certification as a means of identifying accomplished teachers to give “state and local school boards the opportunity to capitalize on their investment in professional development and design new structures that will capture the expertise of the nation’s exemplary teachers” (p. 3).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has shown an interest in teacher leadership (“Survey finds accomplished teachers taking on new leadership roles”, 2002). One of the discussion forums available on its website, <http://www.NBPTS.org>, is Teacher Leadership. Another website page provides a list of teacher leadership publications. The 2002 NBPTS National Conference, *Expanding Professional Influence in Communities*, had a teacher leadership focus.

Elements of Teacher Leadership

Inherent in the discussion of NBCTs assuming leadership roles is discussion of the elements of leadership as those elements apply to National Board Certification. Kelly (2004), the first president and chief executive officer of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards wrote, “The National Board Certification process itself is designed to encourage professional collegiality and qualities of leadership” (p. 309). Central to all certification areas are the Five Core Propositions. Teachers who become certified demonstrate knowledge of students, subject matter, and pedagogy. These teachers also demonstrate the reflective behaviors of thinking systematically about their practice and learning from experience. As members of learning communities, they collaborate with other educators and engage in professional growth as learners and leaders (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). The skills demonstrated by National Board Certified teachers reflect a description of teachers expressed in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Forum on Teaching and the Economy, 1986) as follows:

Teachers must think for themselves if they are to help others think for themselves, be able to act independently and collaborate with others, and render critical judgment. They must be people whose knowledge is wide-ranging and whose understanding runs deep. (p. 25)

Expertise, collaboration, professional development, and reflection frame the following review of the teacher leadership literature.

Expertise

In developing a portfolio, candidates for National Board Certification complete several entries, which provide direct evidence of the knowledge of subject and pedagogy including videotapes, samples of student work, and other artifacts. The teachers must

demonstrate through written description, analysis, and reflection that their practices meet the standards of accomplished teaching, and that they have expertise in teaching. The assessment center exercises further evaluate expertise by testing the teachers on content knowledge specific to the subject they teach and the developmental level of their students (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). Expertise is reflected in Core Proposition 2, teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 13).

Teacher expertise is of significance to schools. Darling-Hammond (1997a) reported that “studies discover again and again that teacher expertise is one of the most important factors in determining student achievement” (p. 8). Sagor and Barnett (1994) pointed to expertise as a characteristic other teachers recognize in teacher leaders. They defined teacher leaders as “teachers who are recognized by their peers as outstanding teachers and based on this earned respect have the opportunity to assist in the growth and development of other teachers” (p. 68). Administrators also recognize the expertise of teachers. Sergiovanni (2000) wrote, “Though school leaders may be in charge, the best of them are aware that often the teachers they supervise know more about what needs to be done and how to do it than they do” (p. 166).

Duke (1994) reported that the most desirable leadership was grounded in expertise and experience. Expertise in the subject taught and how to teach it gives teachers credibility and allows them to operate as teacher leaders (Leiberman, 1992; Snell & Swanson, 2000; Yarger & Lee, 1994). Knowledge of subject area is a factor in teacher empowerment (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, & Knudson, 1992).

In a 2-year study of 10 middle school teacher leaders, Snell and Swanson (2000) found that expertise was an essential element in teacher leadership. The expertise of the teachers studied stemmed from subject area knowledge as well as instructional strategies. Snell and Swanson also found that the teacher leaders were knowledgeable about current education reform. These teacher leaders served as department chairs within their schools. Their expertise was also recognized “formally through prominent local, state, and national awards and appointments” (p. 12).

In a qualitative study of teacher leadership in which 57 teachers were interviewed about their perceptions of teacher leaders, Leithwood, Jantzi, Steinback, and Ryan (1997) found among capacities or knowledge, skills, and abilities that the teachers attributed to teacher leaders, procedural knowledge and declarative knowledge were the most mentioned. Procedural knowledge refers to knowledge about carrying out leadership tasks. Declarative knowledge is concerned with subject area knowledge, as well as knowledge about education and students. These areas of teacher expertise made up almost 40% of the responses coded in the capacity category.

In her qualitative study of nine teacher leaders, Zinn (1997) found that teacher leaders knew that they had expertise and were willing to share it. The major finding of Zinn (1997) was that teacher expertise led to self-confidence. The strengths of teacher leaders have their foundation in classroom teaching (Miller & O'Shea, 1992). Similarly, demonstration of expertise through the National Board Certification process, was reported to give NBCTs more confidence in their abilities (Kennelly, 2001). By demonstrating their skills in teaching through the certification process, National Board Certified Teachers served as role models for other teachers (Waller & Klotz, 2001).

Fullan (2000) also asserted that expertise in knowledge and learning was the foundation for teacher leadership. Among the areas in which teachers should show expertise are understanding of the diversity of students and how to meet their needs, subject area and pedagogy, and knowledge and skill in use of technology (Fullan, 2000).

Collaboration

The ability to work effectively with adults is valued in the National Board Certification process (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989). Collaboration is demonstrated by candidates for National Board Certification through development of an entry in which they describe their work with other professionals, the families of their students, and the larger school community, and then analyze how that work improves student learning. Collaboration is an element of the fifth core proposition, “teachers are members of learning communities” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 15).

Expertise and collaboration are related. Collaboration and the sharing of expertise are elements of effective teaching (Terry, 2002) and regular collaboration with colleagues is a habit of professional teachers (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Teachers who collaborate in a professional community are helped to recognize their own expertise and to see what is possible in the profession as a whole and in their practice (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, & Knudson, 1992). When a teacher’s expertise in working with students is acknowledged, collaboration with colleagues is more likely for that teacher (Leiberman, 1992).

In her qualitative case study of three teacher leaders, Wasley (1992b) studied the relationship between collaboration and leadership. Among Wasley’s findings were that “teachers are interested in learning opportunities that allow them to collaborate with

peers,” and “different collaborative relationships (e.g., mentoring, division of labor, and partnering) offer different incentives and leadership opportunities” (p. 21). Wasley pointed to recognition of expertise as essential to mentoring relationships.

Collaboration may involve a variety of groups. Willingness to work with their colleagues is necessary for effective teacher leadership to emerge. Wasley (1992a) found that teacher leaders need the support of and must be able to work with the partners in education, administrators, parents, and community leaders. Commitment to the collaboration with individuals and groups in and outside the schools was reported as essential for teachers to lead (Fullan, 2000).

Collaboration is an important element of effective leadership (Mendez-Morse, 1992; Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). Conversely, teacher leadership is a natural outgrowth of professional sharing, learning, and addressing problems together (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). The leadership of classroom teachers is fostered by collaboration, participation in decision-making, and reflection on pedagogy (Snell & Swanson, 2000).

Professional Development

The documented accomplishments entry, common to all National Board Certification portfolios, requires that candidates demonstrate how their professional development activities contribute to student learning. Professional development occurs both when teachers are learners and leaders (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). Professional development is an essential element of Core Proposition 5, “teachers are members of learning communities” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 15).

Teacher leaders have a commitment to professional growth for themselves and others (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). “Teacher leaders are consummate learners taking charge of their own learning, developing expertise, and modeling continuous enthusiasm for learning” (Krisko, 2001, p. 12). Over 70% of Mississippi teachers who participated in the Gulf Coast Mentoring Project indicated professional achievement and professional growth were motivators for completing the National Board Certification process (Waller & Klotz, 2001).

The teacher leader has an essential role in the design and management of professional development. By having teachers take a leadership role in professional development, the likelihood of instructional improvement is increased (Burke, 1994). In a study of 25 teachers leaders, Ovando (1994) found that teacher leaders who led in-service activities felt they benefited and learned from professional interactions with the participants in the classes they led. Even when complaining about the time spent in preparing for leadership activities, teachers commented that the leadership activities made them better teachers.

Reflection

The National Board Certification process emphasizes reflective practice. In each of the portfolio entries, teachers describe, analyze, explain, and reflect on their practice. For accomplished teachers, the reflection leads to adjustments in goals and strategies to better meet the needs of their students (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003a). Reflective practice is an integral part of Core Proposition 4, teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989).

A relationship exists between collaboration and reflection. Reflection and collaboration play a part in teacher empowerment (Prawat, 1991). When teachers exercise leadership involving working with other teachers and with curriculum, teachers have an opportunity to reflect on their own teaching practices. Reflection can lead to important learning and significant improvement in teaching. Teachers who completed the National Board certification process reported that their teaching practice improved as a result of reflection (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

Reflection was described by Dewey (1997) as a means of formulating the methodology of teaching. He suggested that once a conclusion had been reached, examination should determine “what is helpful, what is useful, what is merely useless, [to] assist in dealing more promptly and efficaciously with analogous problems in the future” (p. 113). Schon (1986) indicated that when practitioners hold “a reflective conversation with the materials of their situations, they remake part of their practice world” (p. 36). Self-education is a by-product of reflective thought processes and part of professionalism (Schon, 1983). Shulman described the profession of teaching as one “rooted in the ability to use cues of various kinds to make inferences to guide learning” (Shulman, 1978, p. 14).

The model of teacher leadership developed by Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) centered on Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence. Goleman (1998) identified the following elements as integral to leadership: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. In his discussion, Goleman pointed to reflective behaviors as part of the characteristics of leadership. Reflective practice helps to empower teachers (Terry, 2002). Completion of the certification process allows National

Board Certified Teachers to show facility in reflecting on their practices (Waller & Klotz, 2001).

In a qualitative study of 12 principals who were known to be good leaders, Day (2000) interviewed over 200 teachers, parents, board members, students, and principals to examine the reflective behaviors of the school leaders. Analysis of the data revealed that effective leaders engage in a variety of reflective behaviors and that those reflections inform their actions.

Section Summary

With the reform movements of the 1980s came the call for teacher professionalism. Both *Tomorrow's Teachers* and *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* envisioned responsibilities for accomplished teachers that went beyond the classroom and included mentoring, working with teacher preparation programs, and other activities that might impact teaching and learning. Teacher leadership was thought to be a means of keeping talented teachers in the classroom, while also providing a means for them to have a leadership role based on knowledge and skill. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has promoted the leadership skills of National Board Certified Teachers.

National Board Certified Teachers demonstrate knowledge of students, subject matter, and pedagogy. They also demonstrate the reflective behaviors of thinking systematically about their practice and learning from experience. They collaborate with other educators and engage in professional growth as learners and leaders. Discussion of expertise, collaboration, professional development, and reflection framed the review of teacher leadership literature.

Expertise is shown by National Board Certified Teachers in the development of their portfolio and in the assessment center exercises. Teacher expertise is an important factor in student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1997a) and this expertise can serve as an element in leadership (Sagor & Barnett, 1994). Additionally expertise can lead to self-confidence and the willingness to share that expertise (Zinn, 1997).

Teacher leadership involves collaboration with others, and this collaboration is fueled by expertise (Terry, 2002). Teacher leaders must be able to work with partners in education, administrators, parents, and community leaders (Wasley, 1992b). Collaboration is demonstrated by National Board Certified Teachers in a portfolio entry where they document work with other professionals, the families of their students, and the larger school community.

Professional development is another component of teacher leadership. Teacher leaders are committed to their own professional development and the professional development of others (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). Often teacher leaders participate in the design and management of professional development. The documented accomplishments entry in the National Board Certification portfolio requires that teachers demonstrate how their professional development activities impact student learning.

The fourth component, reflection, is a process by which the professional examines actions and determines how to better those actions when confronted with a similar situation (Schon, 1983). Reflection is considered a characteristic of leadership (Goleman, 1998). Each entry in the portfolio required of candidates for National Board Certification requires a reflective essay that could demonstrate how the candidate would adjust goals and strategies to meet the needs of students.

The Impact of Principals on Teacher Leadership

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals sponsored a brochure: *A Distinction that Matters: What Principals Should Know About National Board Certification* (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2002). This brochure provided principals with information about the National Board Certification process and ways for principals to support candidacy. Potential leadership roles for NBCTs were presented. National Board Certified Teachers “present content-based workshops, provide support for candidates going through the process, and mentor new teachers” (p. 4). The expertise of National Board Certified Teachers was underscored, as was their ability to help in building collaborative learning communities.

The role of the principal in providing for teacher leadership appears in the literature. If teachers are to function as school leaders, the principal has a critical role in their empowerment (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Support and nurturing are needed for teachers who assume leadership roles (Zepeda, Mayers, & Benson, 2003). Mentoring for potential teacher leaders by administrators is critical (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000; Zepeda, Mayers, & Benson, 2003). Strodl (1992) indicated that to promote teacher leadership three elements were needed: improved communication, cooperative work, and development of formal structures. In studies of Georgia schools involved in the League of Professional Schools, Blase and Blase (2001) identified three instructional leadership behaviors that were empowering according to teachers. Those behaviors were talking with teachers, promoting teachers’ professional growth, and fostering teacher reflection.

Cooper (1993) suggested that teachers have always assumed leadership roles in schools as leadership involves too many tasks to be invested only in the principal.

Teachers and principals have differences in how they view the amount and impact of teacher leadership. In a longitudinal and comparative study of survey data of principals and teachers, Shen (2001) found that principals perceived that the leadership roles of teachers had increased between 1987-1988 and 1993-1994, while the teachers believed that their leadership roles had remained stagnant.

Administrators often demonstrate resistance to teacher leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Few instances of successful teacher leadership will be reported “until spaces are made for teacher leadership and the culture is created to support teacher leadership” (Silva et al., 2000, p. 802). Conversely, principals who expressed confidence in teacher leaders were able to share power (Ryan, 1999). Danielson (2005) wrote:

Administrators are in a position to send important signals to teachers that their ideas are important and that the teachers that their ideas are important and that the teachers play a critical role in improving the school’s program. These signals are sent in many ways. Among the most effective are the informal ones, in which principals publicly recognize a teacher’s idea and invite others to explore it (p. 36).

Danielson also noted that teacher leaders make a school stronger.

Barth (2001) wrote, “The principal has a disproportionate influence upon teacher leadership—for better or for worse” (p. 447). Some principals create barriers to teacher leadership, unwilling to share power or uncertain how to share power. Principals may not have skills in delegating responsibilities to those who are most able but may instead provide teacher leadership responsibilities to a select few. In contrast, other principals build a professional community with a culture that allows for and encourages shared leadership (Barth, 2001).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards advocates teacher leadership roles for NBCTs and suggests in its brochure for principals that assumption of teacher leadership roles by NBCTs will help the school (NBPTS, 2002). The literature on teacher leadership indicates that the principal has a role in encouraging and cultivating teacher leadership. What are not documented are the perspectives of National Board Certified teachers on the relationships with their principals regarding leadership roles.

Section Summary

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards collaborated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP) to promote National Board Certification for teachers. In a brochure sponsored by NBPTS, NAESP, and NSAAP, leadership roles for National Board Certified Teachers were suggested.

Researchers reported that the school principal is a factor in teacher leadership. Empowerment of teachers often emanates from the principal (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Barth (2001) reported some principals may create barriers to teacher leadership while others may be facilitative. Principal behaviors that were identified as helpful for teacher leadership included support and mentoring (Silva et al., 2000; Zepeda et al., 2003).

Cooper (1993) suggested that teacher leadership had always existed in schools because there were too many tasks for leadership to be invested solely in the principal. Teachers and principals differed on how they viewed teacher leadership with principals seeing a greater rise in incidences of teacher leadership than was seen by teachers (Shen, 2001). The culture of the school is a factor in teacher leadership. When principals had

confidence in teacher leadership, the principals were willing to share power (Ryan, 1999).

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards advocates teacher leadership and has published a brochure for principals that suggests leadership roles for National Board Certified Teachers to facilitate school improvement. The perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on the relationships with their principals regarding leadership roles are not documented in the literature.

Job Satisfaction

One of the goals voiced in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) was the retention of good teachers. A proposal in *A Nation Prepared* was the creation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards that would certify accomplished teachers to help create an atmosphere of professionalism in teaching. Among the goals of NBPTS were enhancement of teacher working conditions and reducing the high rates of attrition of good teachers (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989). Stated in the rationale for the formation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is the following:

Many excellent teachers already work in the schools. But their work regularly goes unrecognized and unrewarded. As a consequence, many fine teachers leave the schools and others who could be exceptional teachers never consider teaching. Worse still, the knowledge and skills of fine teachers who remain often are underused, their positive influence allowed only the most modest scope. (p. 1)

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989) expressed the hope that National Board Certification of teachers would result in recognition of teaching as a profession and of the accomplishments of individual teachers who would earn the

certification. A result would be greater satisfaction in teaching as a career and motivation for accomplished teachers to remain in teaching.

Herzberg, Mauser, and Snyderman (1959) studied accountants and engineers to determine what motivates individuals to work. They found that when individuals were satisfied with their jobs, “they most frequently described factors related to their tasks, to events that indicated that they were successful in the performance of their work, and to the possibility of professional growth” (p. 113). “Conditions that surround the doing of the job” (p.113) were reported when there were feelings of unhappiness about the job.

Conditions surrounding the job are referred to as factors of hygiene. They include supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, company policies, administrative practices, benefits, and job security. These hygiene factors are related to the situation in which an individual works and “serve to prevent job dissatisfaction” (Herzberg, 1966). Factors that increase job satisfaction are referred to as motivators. Herzberg identified five “strong determiners of job satisfaction—achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement—the last three being of greater importance for lasting change of attitudes” (pp. 72-73). Herzberg referred to the hygiene-motivator factors as being separate. The lack of job dissatisfaction does not imply job satisfaction, and the lack of job satisfaction does not imply job dissatisfaction.

Herzberg (1966) explained that individuals operate on a continuum of psychological growth with needs for “opportunities to increase knowledge, opportunities to increase understanding, opportunities for creativity, opportunities to experience

ambiguity in decision making and opportunity to individuate and seek real growth” (p. 177). To ensure a degree of job satisfaction, Herzberg stated, “some components of psychologically rewarding jobs must be present” (p. 178). Herzberg’s studies involved individuals in middle management, but did not include teachers.

Rosenholtz (1991) studied schools and the effect of workplace conditions on teachers. In the first year of her study, questionnaires requiring Likert responses were distributed to teachers in 78 elementary schools in Tennessee. During the second year of the study, 78 teachers from 26 schools were interviewed. Demographic data about the schools was also assembled, including school size, achievement test scores, and school socio-economic status.

Rosenholtz (1991) found that motivators for teachers were similar to motivators found by Herzberg, stating:

For teachers, there is substantial evidence that professional autonomy and discretion increases motivation, responsibility, and commitment and that a lack of workplace discretion is often cited as a reason for their disaffection, absenteeism, and defection. (p. 141)

Rosenholtz (1991) also indicated that when teachers “feel professionally empowered and self-fulfilled,” they would “keep reaching for new teaching challenges, fresh opportunities, and ever-expanding technical knowledge” (p. 165).

The findings of Rosenholtz (1989) on job satisfaction of teachers focused on the conditions at the school. In contrast, Lortie (1975) focused on the total life of the teacher in determining job satisfaction. He considered teachers in three groups: married women, single women, and men. In studies using 1966 survey data generated by the National Education Association and interviews of teachers in five Boston area towns, Lortie determined that married women were the most satisfied, perhaps because they had met a

life goal of marriage. Almost 62% of the survey respondents who were married women indicated that would again choose teaching as a career. Single women put more time than married women into their work at school but showed a lower level of satisfaction with 51% indicating that they would again become teachers. Lortie postulated that single women were not as satisfied because they had not met their life goal of marriage. Male teachers were found to have the goal of advancing beyond the classroom. Their satisfaction in teaching as a career was low with only 38% of them indicating that they would again chose teaching as a career. Those male teachers that did not advance beyond the classroom found interests outside the classroom, often in coaching or an avocation (Lortie, 1975).

Lortie (1975) described teaching as “career-less” (p. 84) because there was not an opportunity within the career for upward movement; there was little difference in status or responsibility given to a beginning teacher or an experienced teacher. In contrast, a law student may be rewarded for good grades with a job in a major firm, and then can look to the future reward of gaining a partnership based on hard work. There are no such career stages in teaching. Lortie (1975) wrote, “Staged careers produce cycles of effort, attainment, and renewed ambition. In tying the individual to the occupation they give him a stake in its future” (p. 85).

Herzberg (1966) wrote that the work itself may provide job satisfaction. Lortie found that among teachers surveyed in Dade County, Florida, the greatest reward came from “knowing that I have reached students and they have learned” (p. 105). Both Herzberg (1966) and Rosenholtz (1989) point to autonomy and decision-making opportunities as being factors in job satisfaction. Lortie (1975) found that the lack of

career stages and the flexibility to move in and out of the profession gave teachers a degree of autonomy in another area—involvement in their careers. However, decision-making within the classroom was considered important by many of the Dade County teachers who participated in Lortie’s study.

The call to improve the professional life of teachers found in *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (1983) and for professionalism of teaching found in *A Nation Prepare: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) and *Toward High and Rigorous Standards for the Teaching Profession* (1989) gave credence to Lortie’s findings about the job of teaching. The master teacher and other leadership roles envisioned in reform movement documents suggested the absence of such meaningful roles for teachers. Lortie’s discussion of teacher leadership is centered on classroom activities of teaching and discipline rather than activities, which could impact outside of the teachers’ immediate classroom.

In a study of the National Center for Educational Statistics 1993-1994 School and Staffing Survey, Perie and Baker (1997) analyzed factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction. This analysis indicated that among the factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction were “principal interaction, staff recognition, teacher participation over school decision-making, and influences over school policy” (p. 25).

Ingersoll’s (2001) analysis of the 1991 School and Staffing Survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics indicated that the undersupply of qualified teachers was caused by teachers leaving the profession due to job dissatisfaction. Ingersoll found that the factors that caused teachers to leave the profession are “low salaries, lack of support from administration, student discipline problems, and lack of

teacher influence over decision-making” (p. 522). Ingersoll postulated that increasing salaries, providing more support from administrators, reducing discipline problems, and allowing for more teacher input into school decision-making would increase job satisfaction and reduce teacher attrition.

Davis and Wilson (2000) surveyed teachers and principals in 44 schools to determine how the behaviors of principals with respect to teacher empowerment related to teacher motivation and to teacher job satisfaction. Analysis of data showed a direct relationship between the empowering behaviors of principals and teacher motivation. Also shown was a positive relationship between teacher motivation and job satisfaction, although job satisfaction could not be shown to be directly related to the empowering behaviors of principals.

Studies of teacher leaders (Smylie & Denny 1990; Wasley, 1992a) found that teacher leaders found satisfaction in the autonomy and decision-making opportunities that they had. However, the satisfaction that comes from the job of teaching was compromised, and tensions were created by absence from the classroom caused by leadership duties (Wasley, 1992a). Smylie and Denny (1990) found that the teacher leaders that they studied felt that the greatest benefits from their roles as teacher leaders were to the school and other teachers rather than themselves.

In a qualitative study of five teacher leaders, LeBlanc and Shelton (1997) found that job satisfaction was related to teacher leadership activities. The participants in this study reported having enthusiasm for teaching and enjoying working with students. The teacher leaders also reported enjoying the opportunity to work with their peers. LeBlanc and Shelton reported that the teacher leaders they studied liked their work.

Teacher retention has been studied by the Georgia Division for Educator Workforce Research and Development (2001). Surveys and focus group interviews were used to gather data. Results of the Georgia study mirror the Ingorsoll (2001) analysis of data from the 1991 School and Staffing Survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics. Input from the focus groups indicated the need for teachers to be supported for decisions made in classrooms and for teachers to have input in school decision-making, Salary was named as a factor in job dissatisfaction.

Section Summary

The goal of retaining good teachers was voiced in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986) and echoed in the objectives of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989). Recognition and reward of accomplished teaching could allow for the expertise of fine teachers to be used and provide for job satisfaction.

Herzberg et al. (1959) found that job satisfaction was related to “achievements, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement” (pp. 72-73). This finding has been supported in studies of teacher job satisfaction (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1991). Rosenholtz (1991) found that professional autonomy and discretion were important factors in job satisfaction.

Lortie (1975) studied teachers and found that teaching lacked career stages and that impeded the motivation of teachers. Job satisfaction for teachers rested on working with students and observing that they had learned. Teachers liked the autonomy of being able to move in and out of the profession. They also wanted autonomy in making classroom decisions (Lortie (1975)).

Professional autonomy was also found to be an important factor in job satisfaction by Perie and Baker (1997), Ingersoll (2001), and Davis and Wilson (2000). Teacher leaders studied by Smylie and Denny (1990) and Wasley (1992a) were also satisfied by the decision-making opportunities afforded by their leadership roles. Teacher leaders, however, reported some conflict because of reduced time in the classroom (Wasley, 1992a). Teacher leaders who participated in a study by LeBlanc and Shelton (1997) indicated that working with students and peers was a factor in job satisfaction. A study of retention of Georgia teachers showed that Georgia teachers also reported that professional autonomy was an important element in job satisfaction. This study seeks to look at the teacher leadership of National Board Certified teachers and how it impacts job satisfaction

Research on National Board Certification

National Board Certification, although a relatively new entity, has had considerable impact on teaching and teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 1997a, 1997b; Wise, 2000). Forty-nine states provide funds to teachers to pursue certification and/or provide additional pay for those who achieve the certification (NBPTS, 2003). Accreditation standards of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for Master's Degree programs in education reflect core propositions of the National Board on what teachers should know and be able to do, as well as standards developed for NBPTS certification areas (Darling-Hammond, 1997c; Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2003b; Wise, 2000). National Board Certified teachers are sought after to serve on panels and boards. For example, the Professional Standards Commission of Georgia in seeking

teachers to serve on the Board of Examiners, a group which reviews the plans and procedures of education units and programs for teacher certification, has looked to nominations of board certified teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2003a).

As the impact of the certification has increased, so have questions about the certification. Researchers (Bond, 1998a; Goldhaber, Perry, & Anthony, 2004; Ladson-Billings & Darling-Hammond, 2000) have found that a greater percentage of White teachers going through the certification process than minority teachers going through the certification process have achieved certification and that more teachers in suburban areas have achieved certification than teachers in rural or urban areas. Does the process discriminate against minorities, against teachers in urban or rural settings (Bond, 1998a; Ladson-Billings & Darling-Hammond, 2000)? What is the effectiveness of the process in identifying accomplished teachers (Poliakoff, 2001; Wilcox, 1999)? Do National Board Certified teachers raise the level of student achievement as measured by test scores (Wilcox, 1999)? Does achievement of National Board Certification impact on the number or type of leadership activities of the certified teachers (Archer, 2002; Podgurski, 2001)? A number of studies have tried to answer these and other questions about National Board Certification. Information on some studies follows.

Disparate Impact

A disparate impact study was conducted to determine the source of the differences in the certification rate of African-American candidates for National Board Certification and the certification rate of non-Hispanic white candidates (Bond, 1998b). The

certification rate of white, non-Hispanic candidates was 42.6%, while the passing rate of African-American candidates was 11.1%.

The study found that the level of support provided to majority and minority teachers was comparable and could not be considered a factor in disparate impact. In evaluating the differences among exercises that demanded writing, the researchers found that the demands of writing did not cause disparate impact to minority teachers. Also examined was the impact of the race of the assessor. The race of the assessor was not found to be a causal factor in the disparate impact.

Bond (1998b) also examined the difference in the passing rate of teachers who worked in a suburban setting compared to teachers who worked in an urban setting. The 40% certification rate of candidates teaching in a suburban context compared to the 30% certification rate of candidates teaching in a rural or urban context was found to be an area requiring further monitoring. However it did not appear that the context of teaching was a factor in disparate impact.

Although Bond (1998b) did not find specific elements of the National Board Certification process were a causative factor in disparate impact, some changes in the procedures of National Board Certification were recommended as a result of the disparate impact study. Directions for candidates were revised to make them clearer and easier to interpret. Information on the characteristics of descriptive, analytic, and reflective writing was provided, as was a section on making good choices in selecting students and student work to present. Training of the individuals who assess the portfolios and assessment center exercises was also changed as a recommendation of the Bond study. All assessors receive bias training prior to the commencement of scoring. More examples, showing a

greater variety of accomplished practice, have been added to the assessor training (Bond, 1998b).

Data in the Bond (1998b) study were supported in a study of teachers in North Carolina who participated in the National Board Certification process between 1997 and 2000. Goldhaber, Perry and Anthony (2004) found that relative to their numbers within the profession a greater proportion of female teachers apply for certification than male teachers and a greater proportion of African-American teachers apply for certification than white teachers. The study also found that female applicants certified at a 30% higher rate than male applicants. White applicants certified at a 65 to 70% higher rate than African-American applicants. The likelihood of certification was positively related to the standardized test scores (i.e., Praxis, SAT) of the applicants and the affluence of the schools in which the applicants for certification were employed.

Validation Studies

In 2000, NBPTS commissioned a study to validate the assessment process by comparing the achievement of the students taught by National Board Certified Teachers and students taught by teachers who had completed the National Board Certification process but who did not achieve National Board Certification. Teachers in two certificate areas, Early Adolescence English/Language Arts (13 of the 34 achieved National Board Certification) and Middle Childhood Generalist (18 of the 31 had certified), were subjects of the study (Bond, Jaeger, Smith, & Hatie, 2000). This study sought the answers to two questions:

1. To what extent is the National Board's vision of accomplished practice as laid down in its Standards documents and as instantiated in its assessments, consonant with the characteristics of teaching expertise that have emerged from the research and scholarly literature?

2. Can National Board Certified teachers and their non-certified counterparts be distinguished on the basis of the quality of work produced by their students? (p. 3)

On the 13 dimensions of teaching excellence used in this study, every comparison of the work of the students of NBCTs and the work of the students of non-NBCTs resulted in higher scores by the NBCTs. Statistically significant differences were found in 11 of the 13 dimensions evaluated (Bond, Jaeger, Smith, & Hatie, 2000). No significant difference was found in the number of and variety of professional activities of the certifying and non-certifying teachers. National Board Certified teachers reported that there was no change in the use of their expertise by their school or school districts (Bond, Jaeger, Smith, & Hatie, 2000).

In a study analyzing three years of data of North Carolina teachers and students, Goldhaber and Anthony (2004) found that the National Board Certification process successfully identified teachers whose instructional practices raised student achievement. In comparisons with teachers who did not apply for National Board Certification and teachers who applied but were not successful in their attempt at achieving National Board Certification, National Board Certified Teachers were more successful in raising student achievement both prior to and after achieving certification. The impact of the certified teachers as compared to non-certified teachers was highest on younger students with a 12% impact in reading scores of third graders and a 15% impact in the reading scores of low-income students. The students of National Board Certified Teachers improved an average of 7% more than students of teachers who had attempted but not gained the certification.

Mississippi Study

Swogert (2002) studied Mississippi candidates for National Board Certification through a combination of survey and interviews in which she asked:

- To what extent are the candidates in the six geographical zones and district accreditation levels achieving certification?
- To what extent do schools and districts support the candidacy of their veteran teachers and recognize their accomplishments of achieving national certification?
- To what extent do NBCTs report changes to their instructional practice as a result of NBC?
- To what extent did NBCTs participate in mentoring programs during their candidacy and perceive this assistance to be helpful?
- To what extent are schools, school districts, and educational institutions utilizing the expertise of NBCTs in leadership roles?
- To what extent do NBCTs, principals, and superintendents report that National Board Certification is beneficial to the students, school, school district and/or other educational institutions? (p. 3)

Swogert concluded that a disproportionately greater number of teachers from schools with high levels of achievement were attempting and achieving National Board Certification. While candidates came from all areas of the state, the Delta area of Mississippi had a disproportionately smaller number of candidates and a disproportionately smaller percentage of successful candidates.

National Board Certified Teachers in Mississippi often received recognition at faculty meetings, at school board meetings, and in newspaper articles. Fifty-eight percent of the NBCTs indicated that administrators treated them as professionals. However, 42% of the NBCTs indicated a lack of understanding of their achievement by administrators. Many felt that their skills were underused.

Ninety-three percent of the NBCTs felt that their practice had improved as a result of having gone through the National Board Certification process. The NBCTs reported that the learning of their students had increased. These teachers also indicated that they

continued to do many of the activities and procedures valued in the certification process (e.g., reflection on practice, integration of curriculum, contacting parents).

Generally, teachers reported that the impact of National Board Certification was positive. The NBCTs reported that mentoring programs had helped them through the certification process and in their development as teachers. Benefits to students, the school, school district, and other educational institutions were also enumerated by the NBCTs, as well as by principals and superintendents.

While 88% of the Mississippi NBCTs report holding 1 to 8 leadership positions, mentoring of other teachers, either National Board Certification candidates or first-year teachers, was reported most frequently. Swogert (2002) indicated that most opportunities to participate in school or district level decision-making are not presented to NBCTs and that NBCTs do not have new professional opportunities.

NBCT Leadership Studies

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards commissioned a survey of National Board Certified Teachers to determine the leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers who achieved certification prior to 2000. Surveys were mailed to approximately 4800 teachers in November, 2000. The profile of the 2186 teachers who responded was representative of the profile of the National Board Certified Teachers prior to 2000 (Kennelly, 2001). The following research questions were identified for this study:

1. Are NBCTs in fact moving into positions of leadership? What positions of leadership? Which positions are most significant?
2. To what extent did achieving National Board Certification affect the attainment of these leadership positions?
3. Are the leadership roles paid positions?
4. Do leadership roles affect classroom effectiveness

5. How do leadership roles contribute to career satisfaction? (pp. 1-2)

Survey results indicated that National Board Certified Teachers participated in many behaviors identified as teacher leadership activities. Mentoring or coaching appeared to be the area with the largest participation of National Board Certified Teachers (90%) and was considered to be the most significant. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents reported input in the development and/or selection of materials or programs designed to support student learning, while 58% of the respondents developed or produced professional development activities or programs. Other areas of teacher leadership included professional development activities and development of programs and strategies (Kennelly, 2001).

National Board Certified Teachers reported that their attainment of National Board Certification had a major impact for roles that directly involved networking with NBCTs (79%), working with candidates for National Board Certification (74%), advocating for National Board Certification to policymakers (69%), and speaking publicly for National Board Certification (66%). Fifty-five percent of the NBCTs reported that they have been consulted as a policy expert on issues that touch learning and teaching (Kennelly, 2001).

While compensation was linked to some leadership roles, for some roles there was little or no compensation. Among National Board Certified Teachers who mentored candidates worked on NBPTS committees, 66% reported receiving compensation, while 57 % who worked with teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities indicated that they received compensation (Kennelly, 2001).

Participation in leadership activities was thought by 89% of NBCTs responding to the survey to increase their effectiveness as an educator. Leadership activities enhanced the career satisfaction of 94% of the NBCTs, while 91% felt more valued in their profession. Participation in leadership activities increased desire to remain in the teaching profession for 85% of survey respondents and made 81% feel that their profession had a lot to offer. “Moreover the majority of specific leadership activities are viewed as extremely or very enjoyable and as extremely or very professionally rewarding” (Kennelly, 2001, p. 2).

Examination of the data from the survey of National Board Certified Teachers indicated that the NBCTs functioned in leadership roles prior to certification. For example, 80% reported mentoring or coaching new or struggling teachers prior to certification, while 83% did the same after certification, indicating that receiving certification had a role in maintaining or being given a leadership role. Before receiving certification, 86% of NBCTs participated in the development of programs or selection of materials to support or to increase student learning. That number dropped to 80% after certification with 12% indicating that being a National Board Certified Teacher was important in their selection for those leadership responsibilities (Kennelly, 2001).

National Board Certified Teachers reported a drop in participation in school or district leadership from 81% prior to certification to 68% after becoming certified. The largest increase in leadership roles for NBCTs came in the area of mentoring or coaching candidates for National Board Certification. While 15% did so prior to their own certification, 90% reported taking on that role after receiving certification (Kennelly, 2001).

Other data presented indicated that 88% of the teachers participating in this survey rated the administrators in their schools had favorable or somewhat favorable regard of National Board Certification. This compared to 99% of the National Board Certified Teachers having favorable or somewhat favorable regard of National Board Certification (Kennelly, 2001).

Results from the leadership survey were reflected in a survey of California National Board Certified Teachers (Belden, 2002). Ninety percent of the California NBCTs served on school committees prior to certification; an additional 4 % did so after obtaining certification. Seventy-seven percent mentored other teachers prior to certification, while 12% reported mentoring other teachers as a new activity after achieving the certification. A conclusion of this report was that “certification [is] not greatly impacting the NBCTs’ roles as leaders” (Belden, p. 50).

A qualitative study of National Board Certified Teachers in California (Sato, Hyler, & Monte-Sano, 2002) focused on the impact of the National Board Certification process on the teachers’ leadership activities. The teachers studied assumed new leadership activities after certification, often because of opportunities presented to them because they were certified.

The National Board Certified Teachers in California indicated that the certification process influenced the choices of leadership activities they were presented with and the decisions they made about accepting teacher leadership roles. The teachers reported being more focused and having greater confidence in their beliefs as a result of becoming NBCTs. The teachers identified the reflection and analysis of student work required in the certification process as impacting their approaches to leadership as well as

use of National Board Standards. Teachers also reported that collaboration with colleagues was directly linked to the process of certification (Sato, Hyler, & Monte-Sano, 2002).

Waller and Klotz (2001) surveyed Mississippi teachers who had successfully completed the National Board Certification process and a comparative group who had completed the National Board Certification process to determine if there were differences in the leadership behaviors of the two groups of teachers. The 86 teachers who participated in the study completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, an instrument designed to evaluate self-perceived leadership. In each of the five dimensions evaluated by the instrument, challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart, the National Board Certified Teachers scored themselves higher than the teachers who were not National Board Certified (Waller & Klotz).

Waller and Klotz (2001) determined that demographic factors did not influence results, and they concluded that there were two possibilities for the higher perception of leadership practices by National Board Certified Teachers than non-National Board Certified Teachers. One possibility was that those teachers who achieved National Board Certification may inherently possess leadership qualities. The other possibility was that the accomplishment of earning National Board Certification gives teachers “a sense of accomplishment that elevates their self-perception and their leader behaviors” (Waller & Klotz, 2001, p. 73). Waller and Klotz also suggested that National Board Certified Teachers could have dual roles, splitting their time between classroom duties and leadership responsibilities.

Cain (2002) researched the perceptions of principals regarding National Board Certified Teachers. The principals responded to survey questions comparing NBCTs with non-NBCTs on the five core propositions of accomplished teaching. In all areas, the principals rated the NBCTs higher than non-NBCTs. In rating teachers on Core Proposition 5, “accomplished teachers are members of learning communities” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 15), a proposition which related to teacher leadership, 77.1% of the principals rated NBCTs better or much better than other teachers as members of learning communities (Cain, 2002).

Results of a survey of 1,650 North Carolina teachers with 748 respondents indicated that National Board Certified Teachers desired teacher leadership roles and wanted recognition for their accomplishments (Dagenhart, O'Connor, Petty, & Day, 2005). Another finding of this survey was that National Board Certified Teachers “wanted autonomy in making decisions about curriculum, instruction, student needs, and classroom management” (p. 110). In a study of upper elementary teachers in North Carolina, O’Conner (2003) found that 81% of National Board Certified Teachers indicated a need for teacher leadership responsibilities compared to 56% of non-National Board Certified Teachers.

Current Research

In 2002, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards announced 21 research studies designed to examine the impact of National Board Certification. Expected completion date for these studies was 2005. Grants were awarded through an independent review process managed by RAND, an educational research firm. Criteria

for the studies included scientifically-based research that would be replicable. (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2003b)

This study sought to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified teachers in Georgia to determine how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. Qualitative analysis of structured interviews was used.

Section Summary

National Board Certification for teachers has been available since 1993. Questions have been put forward about the efficacy of this certification, its impact on the teaching profession, its fairness, and the role of National Board Certified Teachers. Research commissioned by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has focused on answering some of these questions. The question of fairness, especially to minority teachers was examined in a disparate impact study which found that although a lower percentage of minority teachers than majority teachers achieved National Board Certification, specific elements of the National Board Certification Process were not factors (Bond, 1998b). To examine questions regarding the validity of the National Board Certification process, the products of the students of teachers who had achieved National Board Certification were compared to the work of students of teachers who had attempted but not achieved National Board Certification. On 11 of 13 indicators, there was a statistically significant difference with the work of the students of the National Board Certified teachers receiving higher scores (Bond, Jaeger, Smith, & Hatie, 2000). In a study of the leadership of National Board Certified Teachers, Kennelly (2001) found that while 99% of those teachers participated in leadership activities, most had done so

prior to receiving the certification. These figures were similar to those found in a study of California National Board Certified Teachers (Belden, 2002).

Teacher leadership has been examined as part of some studies. Swogert (2002) found that while 88% of Mississippi's National Board Certified Teachers were involved in leadership activities, most of these activities would be characterized as teacher mentoring. School and district level decision-making opportunities were not offered to National Board Certified Teachers. Additionally the NBCTs reported that they were not offered new professional opportunities after achieving the certification. A study of the perspectives of principals on National Board Certified teachers showed that the principals rated the NBCTs higher than other teachers, but that study did not examine teacher leadership (Cain, 2002). In 2002, research projects were commissioned by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards through grants administered by the Rand Corporation. These studies focused on a variety of topics with one study focused on the teacher leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers.

Chapter Summary

National Board Certification of Teachers is an outgrowth of the reform movements of the 1980s. The public schools and teachers were criticized in *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (1983). Suggestions for improving teaching were made in *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (1986). Among the suggestions were opportunities for teachers to lead outside the classroom and the formation of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. NBPTS developed a process for identifying and certifying accomplished teachers. By 2003, over 30,000

teachers nationwide had earned National Board Certification and 1323 Georgia teachers had earned the certification.

The certification process requires candidates to develop a portfolio and sit for assessment center exercises. Through these activities, National Board Certified teachers demonstrate expertise, collegiality, professional development, and reflection in their practice as teachers. Expertise, collegiality, professional development, and reflection are traits, which are recognized as essential to leadership (Little, 2000; Wasley 1992a; Zepeda et al., 2003; Zinn, 1997). The principal contributes to the opportunities, which allow for teacher leadership.

One of the rationales for providing teacher leadership opportunities (NBPTS, 1989) was to create job satisfaction for teachers. Studies of teachers indicate that autonomy and participation in decision-making are important in job satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001; Rosenholtz, 1989). Leadership opportunities for teachers do give them autonomy and decision-making responsibilities (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Wasley, 1992a).

Research on National Board Certification has focused on several issues. Studies on disparate impact (Bond, 1998b), validity of the National Board Certification process (Bond et al., 2000), and teacher leadership (Kennelly, 2001) have been commissioned by the National Board. Other studies (Belden, 2002; Waller & Klotz, 2001) have described leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers.

The research on the teacher leadership of National Board Certified Teachers has been descriptive in nature. None of these studies examined the perspectives of NBCTs on how the leadership activities they assumed after gaining certification impacted their

relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction and this is why the present study is both important and timely.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their teacher leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. While National Board Certified Teachers have been surveyed about teacher leadership activities (Belden, 2001; Kennelly, 2001, Swogert, 2002), the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on their leadership activities have not been studied.

This study employed a qualitative case study design using the constant comparative method of data analysis. The theoretical framework that guided this study was symbolic interactionism. Over a six-month period, the researcher conducted three individual, semi-structured interviews with each of five National Board Certified Teachers who were certified in 1999 or 2000. Included in this chapter are (a) a synopsis of the overall research questions, (b) a discussion of symbolic interactionism, (c) the design of the study, (d) the data sources, (e) data collection procedures, (f) data analysis methods, and (g) the limitations of the study.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. How has National Board Certification shaped their work as teacher leaders?

2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?

3. Has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Snow, 2001) was the theoretical framework that guided the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data in this study. According to Blumer, reality “is to be discovered in the examination of the world” (p. 77). The actions of individuals are situational and are based on meanings of things which arise from social interaction with others and the interpretation of the social interaction (Hartley, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In articulating symbolic interactionism, Blumer (1967) drew on the work of George Herbert Mead (1934). Mead postulated that meaning about an object is made through the interaction of individuals and the adjustment those individuals make within themselves in relation to that object. As individuals share and become conscious of the differences and similarities in their attitudes towards the object, each individual makes further adjustments in constructing meaning.

In expanding on Mead’s thesis, Blumer (1969) defined symbolic interactionism as follows:

The term ‘symbolic interaction’ refers, of course, to the peculiar and distinctive characteristics of interaction as it takes place between human beings. This peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or ‘define’ each other’s actions instead of merely reacting to each other’s actions. Their ‘response’ is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meanings of one another’s actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behavior. (pp. 78-79)

Using this framework of the interpretations of individuals, this study sought to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified Teachers on their interactions with their principals through examination of the ways the teachers view both teacher leadership and the opportunities for teacher leadership presented by their principals.

Blumer developed three premises of symbolic interactionism:

The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by a person in dealing with the things he encounters. (p. 2)

The actions of human beings with and to things is based on the meaning those things have for them. The things or objects referred to by Blumer included physical objects (e.g., a tree), social objects (e.g., a friend), and abstract objects (e.g., a doctrine or idea). Meanings of the same object may vary according to the individual. Blumer suggested: "a tree would be a different object to a botanist, a lumberman, a poet, and a home gardener" (p. 11).

Similarly, National Board Certification and teacher leadership have different meanings to teachers who have achieved the certification and to their principals. This research focused on the meanings that National Board Certification had for the National Board Certified Teachers who were the participants in this study, especially those meanings they associated with teacher leadership and National Board Certification. What expectations did those teachers have on their potential teacher leadership activities as a result of having earned National Board Certification? A second focus of this research was on the meanings that National Board Certification has for the participants derived from the social interactions with others, specifically their school administrators. Did the

interactions with administrators have impact on the meanings of National Board Certification and teacher leadership held by the National Board Certified Teachers? And last, how were these meanings of National Board Certification interpreted by the National Board Certified teachers in terms of their job satisfaction?

National Board Certification is a relatively new phenomenon and was developed as part of the reform movements which called for teacher leadership responsibilities as one means for keeping qualified teachers in the classroom (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; The Holmes Group, 1986). In her discussion of changes in school leadership, Hart (1995) wrote

Symbolic interactionism provides a perspective on ways these diverse beliefs [on teacher leadership] develop as apparently conflicting answers to pervasive questions about teacher leadership. In turn, it reveals social pressure points and features of communication amenable to intervention that can support the growth and success of teacher leadership. (p. 20)

Hart also indicated “symbolic interaction theory offers a compelling explanation for humans’ shared realities” (p. 18). Patton (2002) indicated that symbolic interactionism was an appropriate means for research into “what is most important to people, what will be most resistant to change, and what will be most resistant to change if the program or organization is to move in new directions” (p. 113). Teacher leadership is a change for schools and symbolic interactionism is an appropriate framework for its study.

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

A qualitative method was chosen for this study. Merriam (1998) wrote, “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed” (p. 6). Creswell (1997) indicated that a qualitative approach should be used “to emphasize the researcher’s role as an *active learner* who can tell the story from the

participants' view rather than as an 'expert' who passes judgment on participants" (p. 18, emphasis in the original). This researcher's interest was in the meanings National Board Certified Teachers have constructed for National Board Certification and teacher leadership through interactions with their principals.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards commissioned a survey on the leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers, finding that 99.6% of responding NBCTs participated in teacher leadership activities (Kennelly, 2001). A descriptive analysis of the survey data was provided. This study sought to go beyond the descriptive data and to look at the meanings teacher leadership activities had for National Board Certified Teachers. Miles and Huberman (1994) indicated that one purpose of qualitative research was to expand on quantitative data. Merriam (1998) described the potential of qualitative research as richly descriptive, indicating a potential for depth of analysis.

The data of qualitative research are the words of the participants. These words can come from a variety of written and spoken sources, including interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Semi-structured interviews of five National Board Certified Teachers provided the data for analysis.

Merriam (1998) wrote that in qualitative research, "some and occasionally all data are collected through interviews" (p. 71). She further stated "interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them," and "interviewing is the best technique when conducting intensive case studies of a few people" (p. 72). According to Fetterman (1989), the interview presented an opportunity for the interviewer to learn from the interviewee.

This study examined an abstraction, the leadership of teachers. Seidman (1998) indicated that an abstraction was “based on the concrete experience of people” (p. 1). Seidman also noted that interviewing was useful as a research methodology in education:

It is a powerful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives constitute education. As a method of inquiry, interviewing is most consistent with people’s ability to make meaning through language. It affirms the importance of the individual without denigrating the possibility of community and collaboration. Finally, it is deeply satisfying to researchers who are interested in others’ stories. (pp. 7-8)

The interviews of National Board Certified Teachers provided the researcher with individual stories on the teacher leadership experiences of the participants. Those stories revealed concrete examples which in the aggregate provided meaning for the concept of teacher leadership, job satisfaction, and the relationship of each to the principal.

Interviews for this study were semi-structured. Merriam (1998) pointed out that the problem with highly structured interviews with predetermined questions was that instead of finding out the perspectives of the interviewee, “you get reactions to the interviewer’s perspectives on the world” (p. 74). In contrast, an unstructured interview is used “when an interviewer does not know enough about a phenomenon to ask relevant questions” (p. 75). The semi-structured interview gives the researcher the opportunity to ask a combination of questions, some which require a specific answer, and open-ended questions to seek the perspective of the interviewee (Merriam).

The questions selected for this study included several structured questions necessary to gain demographic information relating to age, educational background, and years of service as a teacher. These questions aided in describing the research setting. Since this study was intended to expand on data from descriptive quantitative studies on the teacher leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers (Belden, 2001;

Kennelly, 2001; Swogert, 2002), participants were presented a list of teacher leadership activities identified in those studies. However, the participants were also asked to identify any other teacher leadership activities in which they had participated. Open-ended questions were also included. For example, autonomy was identified as a factor in job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). To provide an opportunity for the participants to discuss autonomy, they were asked, “How would you describe your level of autonomy at work?”

Design of the Study

Data for the study came from three interviews with five National Board Certified Teachers who received their certification in 1999 or 2000. The researcher made telephone contact with each of the potential subjects who had been selected with the assistance of the Educator Workforce Division of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Three interviews were arranged with each of the five participants over a three months period. Interviews were semi-structured. A set of questions was used to guide the interviews (see Appendix A).

Data Sources

Purposeful sampling guided selection of participants for this study. Ary, Bacobs, and Razavieh (1996) indicated “qualitative researchers select purposive samples sufficient to provide maximum insight and understanding of what they are studying” (p. 480). Participants in this study were five National Board Certified Teachers who received certification in 1999 and 2000 and who have continued in their role as an elementary school classroom teacher. In the years since becoming certified, these teachers have had an opportunity to interact with their administrators and perhaps to assume teacher

leadership responsibilities. Elementary school teachers were chosen to be participants in this study because of the researcher's interest. The researcher was an assistant principal in an elementary school with two Board Certified Teachers on staff and two teachers who were candidates for National Board Certification.

In November, 2003 Georgia had 1323 National Board Certified Teachers. In 1999 and 2000, 81 Georgia teachers received National Board Certification. Of that number, 41 elementary teachers received their National Board Certification in the areas of Early Childhood Generalist or Middle Childhood Generalist. The names, areas of certification, year of certification, and contact information for National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia were available on the Internet through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards website (<http://www.nbpts.org>) . Teachers for this study were selected with the help of the Educator Workforce Division of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC) that manages and monitors National Board Certification in Georgia (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002).

The GAPSC was asked to check the list of potential participants to help determine if the individuals on the list were still teaching in an elementary school, if they continued to hold a state teaching certificate, and if that certificate was in good standing. Researcher bias in selection of subjects was minimized by receiving help from the Professional Standards Commission. None of the teachers were working in the same school. Convenience of the researcher was considered in making geographical selections, as none of the selected participants were more than a two-hour drive from the workplace of the researcher. A pool of eight National Board Certified Teachers was selected to allow for

willingness of the teachers to participate in the study and life situations, which may have hindered the ability to continue as a participant in the study.

Profile of Research Setting

Participants for this study were chosen from five school districts in Georgia. None of the teachers worked at the same school or in the same school district. The participants worked in schools and school districts that varied in size and socio-economic status.

Information about the schools and school districts is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Profiles of School Districts and Schools

Teacher	School District	Per Pupil Expenditure	School	% Free and Reduced Lunch
Renee Isley	LaCrosse	\$8,498	Elijah	6
Eileen Reynolds	Latrobe	\$6,594	Nettles	37
Tammy Ellis	Kewaunee	\$7,166	Courtway	72
Tiffany Allen	Oconto	\$7,281	Galloway	52
Sara Davis	Coolidge	\$7243	Marshfield	22

The LaCrosse School district is one of the largest in the state of Georgia with over 78,000 students housed in 88 schools. In contrast, Oconto County School district has a student enrollment of 3700 housed in 5 schools. All of these school districts are within an hour drive from the metropolitan Atlanta area. More comprehensive profiles of the schools and school districts can be found in the case studies of each of the participants in this study.

Participants in this study all achieved National Board Certification in 1999 or 2000. Participants received their National Board Certification as Early Childhood (ECG) Generalist or Middle Childhood Generalist (MCG) (see Table 3.2). All of the study participants are female. Examination of a list of National Board Certified Teachers who

received certification in 1999 and 2000 revealed that of the 41 teachers listed, 40 were female. All of the participants in this study were white. One of the two black teachers in the group of 41 National Board Certified Teachers was contacted and asked to participate in this study. Although this teacher indicated interest in being part of the study, family obligations caused her to decline.

Table 3.2

Profiles of Participants

Name	Years in Education	Age	Certification Area	Year of Certification	Highest Degree
Renee Isley	23	52	MCG	2000	M.S.
Eileen Reynolds	21	53	ECG	1999	M.S.
Tammy Ellis	16	54	MCG	2000	Ed.S.
Tiffany Allen	18	46	ECG	2000	M.S.
Sara Davis	21	55	MCG	2000	Ed.S.

Renee Isley has worked as a teacher for 23 years and earned her National Board Certification as a Middle Childhood Generalist. Renee has worked as both a regular education teacher and a special education teacher. In addition to certification in those areas, Renee holds certification in gifted education. Renee has worked at two schools in two school districts since achieving National Board Certification. During that period of time Renee has worked under four principals.

Eileen Reynolds has worked as a teacher for 21 years and earned her National Board Certification in 1999 as an Early Childhood Generalist. Eileen taught first grade for one year, kindergarten for nineteen years, and fourth grade for one year. Eileen has worked for the past nineteen years in the same school. Since Eileen began the National Board Certification process, she has worked under three principals.

Tammy Ellis has worked as a teacher for 16 years and earned her National Board Certification in 200 as a Middle Childhood Generalist. Tammy has taught fourth and fifth grade throughout her teaching career, working in the same school. Since starting the National Board Certification process, she has worked for two principals.

Tiffany Allen has been a teacher for 18 years and earned her National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist in 2000. Tiffany has taught first grade, taught as an Early Intervention Program teacher, and has worked as a literacy coach. Since embarking on the National Board Certification process, Tiffany has worked in three school districts, at four schools, and under five principals.

Sara Davis has worked as a teacher for 21 years and earned her National Board Certification as a Middle Childhood Generalist. Except for one year as a sixth grade teacher, Sara has taught fifth grade. Since starting the National Board Certification process, Sara has worked at two schools under three principals.

Data Collection Procedures

Contacts were made with the National Board Certified teachers selected with the assistance of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Initial contact was made with each of the five participants to explain the research and request a commitment for three face-to-face interview sessions of about one and one-half hours each. Care was taken to ensure that the interviews did not exceed the time limits promised in the initial contact.

Questions for the interviews were generated after examination of the data in the Kennelly (2001) study of the teacher leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers as well as the literature on teacher job satisfaction. A list of questions was

generated and given to seven National Board Certified Teachers who were asked to comment as to the clarity of the questions and their relevance to the research questions. Adjustments to the questions were made after consideration of the comments returned by the six teachers.

In the development and organization of the questions for the interviews, the researcher determined that the interviews would each have a focal point and that this focal point would drive the development of the questions that the researcher would use to guide the discussion. The focal point for the first interview was National Board Certification. After gaining demographic information about the participant, the questions focused on the perspectives of the participants on National Board Certification. Questions for this interview included

- What compelled you to go through the National Board Certification process?
- What are your feelings about the value of the certification process?
- Describe the effects, if any, of the certification process on you as an educator.

The focus of the second interview was on teacher leadership. The participants were asked questions about themselves as teacher leaders both before and after earning National Board Certification. Some of the questions for this interview were:

- Did you consider yourself a teacher leader before you went through the National Board Certification process?
- Do you consider yourself a teacher leader since going through the certification process?
- How do you feel about taking on teacher leadership roles?

To aid in clarifying the term teacher leader, a list of teacher leadership activities mentioned in the Kennelly (2001) study were presented to the participants. (See Appendix B) Participants were asked to indicate which of the listed leadership activities they had participated in prior to and after certification. They also had an opportunity to name any leadership activities that they had engaged in that were not listed.

The final interview focused on the perspectives of the participants on how the teacher leadership roles that they engaged impacted their relationship with their principals and their job satisfaction. Questions for this interview included:

- What are your perspectives on the impact of your school administrator on teacher leadership activities you participated before attaining National Board Certification?
- Did attainment of National Board Certification serve as a catalyst for your administrator to ask you to take on teacher leadership roles?
- How would you describe your satisfaction with your job?

While questions were developed prior to the start of the interviewing process, additional questions were developed based on the responses of the participants.

Additional question included:

- What is good about your current situation? Not so good?
- Are teacher leadership opportunities important to you?
- Why do you think your principal is negative about National Board Certification?
- What aspects of teacher leadership do you enjoy?
- Why do you have so many opportunities for teacher leadership?

- Are you satisfied that most of your teacher leadership activities are outside your school?
- Why do you mentor candidates for National Board Certification?

Lincoln and Guba (1985) wrote, “The writer should maintain an audit trail” (p. 366). An audit trail consists of raw data (tape recordings), data reduction and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, materials relating to intentions and dispositions, and instrument development information. Each interview was tape recorded and transcribed on the day of the interview to ensure that the transcript was as representative as possible to the words of the subject. Transcripts of interviews were sent to the subjects to give them an opportunity to extend their words and ideas in subsequent interviews.

Merriam (1998), who pointed to the importance of observer commentary in qualitative research, also stated:

Comments can include the researcher’s feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interpretations, and working hypotheses. These comments are over and above the factual descriptions of what is going on; they are comments on and thoughts about the setting, people, and activities. In raising questions about what is observed or speculating on what it means, the researcher is actually engaging in preliminary data analysis. The joint collection and analysis of data is essential in qualitative research. (p. 106)

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) also pointed to the usefulness of field notes in providing a reflective opportunity for the researcher. The reflection then informed the researcher in the development of further interview questions.

In addition to the interview data, the researcher kept a journal, recording information about the setting, observations of the participants that would not be apparent in an audiotape such as body language and facial expressions, and the researcher’s feelings

about the responses of the participants. cursory field notes were taken during the interviews to help remind the researcher about the details. The notes were cursory so as to prevent distracting either the interviewer or the participant with the note taking process. This practice provided the researcher with enough cues to allow for meaningful journaling after the interview. On the same day as each interview, the journal entries were made to ensure that memories were fresh and that the journal data would be available for analysis along with the other interview information. Journal entries also provided information that aided the researcher in selecting subsequent interview questions.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method of data analysis was used to examine the data. According to Merriam (1998), “the development of categories, properties and tentative hypotheses through the constant comparative method is a process whereby data gradually evolve into a core of emerging theory” (p. 191). The codes were developed as the interview data was analyzed. Miles and Huberman (1994) wrote:

Coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relationship between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis. This part of analysis involves how you differentiate and combine the data you have retrieved and the reflection you make about this information. (p. 56)

Patton (2002) discussed the challenges of qualitative data analysis because of the massive amounts of data that are generated. He suggested that the process involved “reducing massive amounts of raw information, sorting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal” (p. 433). The researcher recoded or refined the coding until she was satisfied that themes made sense of the data. The transcripts of the

interviews with participants were analyzed and categories were developed. Codes were assigned to the categories, and those codes were used to identify common themes and phrases in the interview transcripts. Table 3.3 represents the codes, categories, and an example of phrases used by the participants.

Table 3.3

Codes, Categories, and Participants' Phrases

Codes	Categories	Participants' Phrases
PRE	Teacher leadership prior to certification	I was team leader 4 or 5 times over the past 20 years
POST	Teacher leadership after certification	I was chosen for Reach to Teach because I was an NBCT
MEN	Mentoring after certification	I moved to the next level and mentored candidates
POS	Principal positive about certification	National Board Certification opened my relationship with my principal
NEG	Principal negative about certification	After I became an NBCT, the principal would cut me off when I would speak
No UND	Principal shows no understanding	The principal announced that I had passed the National Teacher Exam.
COL	Collegiality/collaboration contributed to job satisfaction	The conversations during lunch were the conversations that should happen at any school. I learned from everybody.
AUT	Autonomy contributed to job satisfaction	I have the freedom to do what I need to do.
DEC	Decision-making contributed to job satisfaction	I have input into judgments on test questions,

Each case was analyzed individually using the codes developed from the data. Comparisons were then made across the other case studies. For example, Tammy expressed satisfied with the opportunities for teacher leadership that she has had since becoming a National Board Certified Teacher, while Sara expected more as a result of earning the certification.

It was important to analyze the data in relationship to the original research questions. Concepts and categories were matched to the research questions that the data represented. Table 3.4 provides an example of how data were matched to the research questions.

Table 3.4

Memo Defining Each Category Derived from the Data and Aligned to the Research Question

Research Question	Category	Definition
1. How has National Board Certification shaped their work as teacher leaders?	Teacher Leadership Prior to Certification	Comments included explanation of the teacher leadership activities prior to certification
	Teacher Leadership After Certification	Comments included explanation of the teacher leadership activities after certification
	Mentoring After Certification	Comments included enumeration of mentoring and other activities associated with National Board Certification
2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?	Principal positive about certification	This category was reserved for comments regarding the reaction of the principal to hearing about the certification of the participant as well as principal's statements regarding National Board Certification
	Principal negative about certification	Comments in this category were limited to the perspectives of the participants regarding the attitude and comments of their principals concerning National Board Certification

Table 3.4 Continued

Research Question	Category	Definition
3.. How has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction	Principal shows no understanding of certification	Comments in this category reflected the perspectives of the participants on how the words or actions of their principals indicated a lack of knowledge of National Board Certification.
	Collegiality/Collaboration contributed to job satisfaction	Comments in this category related to participants' perceptions of how interactions with both superiors and peers related to job satisfaction
	Autonomy contributed to job satisfaction	Comments in this category related to participants' perceptions of how autonomy contributed to job satisfaction
	Decision-making contributed to job satisfaction	Comments in this category related to participants' perceptions of how decision-making contributed to job satisfaction

Trustworthiness of the Data

Lincoln and Gobi (1985) point out the concern for trustworthiness, stating, “In the final analysis, the study is for naught if its trustworthiness is questionable” (p. 287).

Merriam (1998) indicated that research results “are trustworthy to the extent that there has been some accounting for their validity and reliability” (p. 198).

Validity

Merriam (1998) suggested five basic strategies to enhance validity:

1. *Triangulation*—using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings.
2. *Member checks*—taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible.

3. *Long-term observation* at the research site or repeated observations of the same phenomenon—gathering data over a period of time to increase the validity of the findings.
4. *Peer examination*—asking colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge.
5. *Participatory or collaborative modes of research*—involving participants in all phases of research from conceptualizing the study to writing up the findings.
6. *Researcher's biases*—clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study. (pp. 204-205)

Methods for this study that enhanced triangulation included multiple data sources by interviewing five National Board Certified Teachers in different schools. In addition, comparison to the descriptive data in the Kennelly (2001), Belden (2001), and Swogert (2002) studies was undertaken to aid in confirmation of emerging findings. Providing transcripts of interviews to the subjects and giving the subjects an opportunity to make comments or clarify their words facilitated member checks. The data were collected over a three-month period to provide for long-term observation. Discussion of ongoing findings was conducted with National Board Certified Teachers who were not participants in the study and who have regular contact with the researcher.

Study participants had a participatory role as the comments from the first interview were used in generating questions for the second. Comments from the second interview were used in generating questions for the third interview. Interviews were semi-structured, allowing subjects to provide information that they thought was needed to extend or to clarify responses and their meanings. The researcher recorded and transcribed a researcher's perspective, her own assumptions and beliefs about the National Board Certification and teacher leadership (see Appendix C). This written perspective was checked during the research process to limit researcher bias.

Validity is enhanced when quantitative data is combined with qualitative data (Silverman, 1993). While this study was designed to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on their teacher leadership roles, it did draw on information from descriptive studies of the leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers (Belden, 2001; Kennelly, 2001; Swogert, 2002). By using the list of teacher leadership activities from the quantitative studies, there was some assurance that this study met the validity test described by Merriam (1998) with the questions, “How congruent are the findings with reality?” and “Do the findings capture what is really there” (p. 201)?

Reliability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested in qualitative studies, reliability was better termed “consistency” or “dependability” (p. 288). Merriam (1998) indicated that elements that were considered part of validity, namely triangulation and an audit trail, were also elements of reliability. Miles and Huberman (1994) pointed to the skills of the researcher as being essential to the reliability of the findings as follows:

Some markers of a good qualitative researcher-as-instrument are:

- some familiarity with the phenomenon and the setting under study
- strong conceptual interests
- a multidisciplinary approach, as opposed to a narrow grounding or focus in a single discipline
- good ‘investigative’ skills, including doggedness, the ability to draw people out, and the ability to ward off premature closure. (p. 38)

As a National Board Certified Teacher, this researcher was familiar with National Board Certification. When working as a classroom teacher, she participated in teacher leadership activities. In her work as an assistant principal, she facilitated leadership activities of members of her school’s teaching staff. The researcher has a strong interest

in and saw the potential for using the expertise of National Board Certified Teachers in teacher leadership positions. This study focused on the empirical evidence of the National Board Leadership Survey (Kennelly, 2001) as well as studies of California NBCTs (Belden, 2001) and Mississippi NBCTs (Swogert (2002). It was the intention of the researcher to use investigative skills in an appropriate manner to complete the study.

Generalizability

Merriam (1998) suggested that the following strategies could be used to enhance generalizability:

- Rich, thick description—providing enough description so that the reader will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred.
- Typicality or model category—describing how typical the program, event, or individual is compared with others in the same class, so that the user can make comparisons with their own situations.
- Multisite designs—using several sites, cases, situations, especially those that maximize diversity in the phenomenon of interest; this will allow the results to be applied by readers to a greater range of other situations. This variation can be achieved through purposeful or random sampling. (pp. 211-212)

The researcher described the individuals and their situations so that the readers could make comparisons to the situations in which they were interested. The National Board Certified Teachers chosen for this study were typical of NBCTs in that they were experienced teachers who had demonstrated as part of the National Board Certification process that they had expertise as teachers, they participated in professional development, they were members of learning communities, and they used reflective behaviors to enhance their professional practice as educators. The subjects all had at least three years of teaching experience prior to attempting National Board Certification, and they have continued working as classroom teachers for four to five years since achieving that certification. Multisite design was addressed by studying subjects across five schools.

Neutrality

The researcher was a National Board Certified Teacher who mentored candidates for National Board Certification and who has participated in a state level organization for National Board Certified Teachers. To limit bias, the researcher's perspectives, including biases and interests, were recorded and transcribed prior to the development of interview questions (see Appendix B).

Additionally, selection of subjects of this study was performed with the assistance of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. This procedure was necessitated by the researcher's familiarity with many National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia. An external audit with monitoring of interview questions prior to the three interviews was used to ensure neutrality.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study include:

1. The sample consisted of five National Board Certified Teachers certified between 1999 and 2000. The number of participants limits generalizability.
2. The sample consisted of teachers in Georgia.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their teacher leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their career satisfaction. This was a qualitative case study using the constant comparative method of data analysis. Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1967) was the theoretical framework that guided this study. In symbolic interactionism, the meanings for an individual are derived from interactions

with the object or idea, from social interactions with others, and through an interpretive process in dealing with the object or idea.

This researcher sought to examine the meanings that National Board Certification and teacher leadership have for the National Board Certified Teachers who were the subjects of this study. The researcher also sought to examine those meanings in light of the interactions of these teachers with their school administrators and how they interpreted those meanings.

Qualitative methods were used to help determine the meanings that were constructed by these teachers. While quantitative, survey data on the leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers have appeared in the literature, the perspectives of the National Board Certified Teachers on those leadership activities have not. However, the quantitative research has informed this study.

Five National Board Certified Teachers were interviewed three times over a six-month period of time. Semi-structured interviews were used. Interview transcripts and field notes were analyzed to determine findings for this study. The researcher recoded or refined the coding until she was satisfied that themes made sense of the data.

CHAPTER 4

RENEE ISLEY

The Context of the LaCrosse County School System

Renee Isley, a National Board Certified Teacher, works at Elijah Elementary School (EES) in the LaCrosse County School System (LCSS). The LaCrosse County School System surrounds a large North Georgia city that has its own school system. The LaCrosse County School System projects that by the end of the 2005-2006 school year it will have over 78,000 students housed in 88 schools. In addition to 52 elementary schools, there are 18 middle schools, 12 high schools, 2 alternative high schools, 1 charter school for grades K-8, and 3 charter middle schools. This school district is organized into 12 clusters supervised by 6 area superintendents. The budget for the 2005-2006 school year is \$669,883,548, providing for a per pupil expenditure of \$8,498.

The LaCrosse County School System serves two distinct geographic regions. Elijah Elementary school is in the northern, affluent region that is suburban with subdivisions, apartments, shopping centers, and office buildings. The southern region of the district is urban with industry, older housing, and housing projects. Demographic data for the school system show that 41% of the students are white, 39% are Black, 9.4% are Hispanic, and 7% are Asian-Pacific Islanders (see Table 4.1). However, examination of data from the cities in the northern and southern parts of the school system indicates whites are a clear majority in the northern section while a greater percentage of African-Americans and Hispanics reside in southern section communities. In the period 2000-

2005, the Hispanic population increased from 6.7% of the total population to 9.4%, while the white population decreased from 46.5% to 41%.

Table 4.1

LaCrosse County School System Percent Ethnicity, 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Asian, Pacific Islander	7%
Black, Non-Hispanic	39%
Multi-racial	3%
Hispanic	9%
White, Non-Hispanic	41%

The LaCrosse County School System was released in 2004 from a court ordered desegregation plan that required an option for students to request transfers from a minority to a majority school. The agreement allowed for phase out of the transfer program by the 2010-2011 school year and acknowledged growing equality in course offerings among the high schools.

The 2004 Annual Report of the school district highlighted two recent accomplishments. In March 2004, LaCrosse County School System became the first school district in the nation to achieve districtwide accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Among the commendations in the SACS report were recognition of its teaching staff and support of the teaching and learning processes. In September 2003, the LaCrosse County School System was inducted into the Balanced Scorecard Collaborative Hall of Fame, again the first school district in the nation to achieve this honor. Other Hall of Fame members include Mobil Oil, UPS, and

Wells-Fargo Bank. Hall of Fame selection was granted because of the strategic planning engaged by the school district to determine goals and to evaluate performance in the areas of student achievement, instructional and administrative programs, staff learning, and growth, and financial performance.

In 2005, the LaCrosse County School System did make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as 92% of the system’s schools made AYP according to the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. The school district points with pride to some of its academic accomplishments. The average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score for the county has risen from slightly below the national average in 1999 to 37 points above the national average in 2005. At the same time, the number of test takers has risen and exceeds both the state and national averages (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

LaCrosse County SAT Scores in 2005

	Average SAT Score	Number of Test Takers
LaCrosse County	1057	89%
State	989	66%
Nation	1020	48%

All 52 elementary schools in LaCrosse County met the criteria for Adequate Yearly (AYP) Progress in 2004 and 2005. In 2004, 10 secondary schools failed to meet AYP, compared to 20 secondary schools failing to meet AYP standards in 2003. In 2005, 6 secondary schools failed to meet AYP standards.

Context of National Board Certified Teachers in the LaCrosse County School District

In its 12 page Annual Report for 2003, the LaCrosse County School District devoted a full page to its program for National Board Certified Teachers. The school district funds the application fee for National Board Certification for a limited number of teachers and offers a series of 16 candidate support workshops for any LaCrosse County teacher attempting the certification. National Board Certified Teachers in the LaCrosse County School System receive not only the 10% salary increase on the state salary schedule but also a 10% increase in the local supplement. Teachers who receive the candidate fee support from LaCrosse County are expected to remain in the school district for at least two years after achieving certification and to assist future candidates by serving as mentors in the candidate support workshops. As noted in the system's Annual Report for 2005, with 164 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) as of November 2004, the LaCrosse County School District ranked first in the state in the number of NBCTs.

The Professional Learning Department of the LaCrosse County School District disseminates information on National Board Certification through meetings designed to acquaint teachers with the program. The Professional Learning link on the school district website provides information on workshops and financial support for National Board Certification candidates, as well as links to other websites about National Board Certification.

In addition to serving as mentors for certification candidates, NBCTs are hired by the Professional Learning Department to teach Professional Learning courses. Of the 10

teachers who serve as instructors in the Teacher Support Specialist program, 5 are NBCTs.

Context of Elijah Elementary School

Elijah Elementary School opened in August 2000 with a mission to build a community of learners by putting children first. This school has 835 students in kindergarten through grade 5. Of the 100 staff members, 60 are teachers and 14 are instructional paraprofessionals. The professional staff also includes a principal, an assistant principal, and two counselors. A curriculum support teacher, who provides support to teachers in meeting the needs of students, and an instructional support teacher, who assists special education teachers, are also part time staff members.

The teaching staff is relatively young and inexperienced, which may be due to the speed with which the school district is growing and the need to hire teachers to serve the growing student population (see Table 5.3). The average number of years of experience for teachers at Elijah Elementary School is 8, compared to an average of 11 years for the system and 12.5 years for the state. At this school, 43% of the faculty have a master’s degree or higher. This compares to 46% of the teachers in the county and 49.8% in the state (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Comparison of EES Teachers’ Years of Experience and Advanced Degrees Earned

	Years of Experience	Advanced Degrees Earned
Elijah Elementary	8	43%
LaCrosse County Schools	11	46%
Georgia	12.5	49.8%

Elijah Elementary School (EES) is located in the northern part of LaCrosse County. The students at this school are mostly white (69%) with the second largest population group being Asian (13%) (see Table 4.4). There has been little variance in the demographics of the school’s population in the five years since it opened.

The school is in an affluent suburb that grew from a rural town to an extension of the largest metropolitan area of the state. Few of its teachers live in the school community, partly because of the high cost of housing. The ethnic composition of the school does not mirror that of the LaCrosse County School System.

Table 4.4

Elijah Elementary School Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Asian, Pacific Islander	13%
Black, Non-Hispanic	7%
Multi-racial	4%
Hispanic	5%
White, Non-Hispanic	69%

EES offers a curriculum that includes language arts, math, social studies, and science. In addition, all students receive weekly instruction in art, music, and physical education. For one class period each week, students have opportunities to extend learning in a computer lab. Resource services are offered for students who meet state criteria for placement in the following programs: Behavior Disorders, Learning Disabilities, and Speech/Language Therapy. Students who have been identified as intellectually gifted are

provided services in the Talented and Gifted Program. An ESOL teacher provides English as a Second Language (ESOL) services for children who have a native language other than English.

In 2005, Elijah Elementary School met Adequate Yearly Progress. In grades one through five, 96 % of all students scored at the proficient or advanced level in both reading/language arts and mathematics. This compares to the LaCrosse County School System rate of 85% scoring at the proficient or advanced level in math and 89% scoring at the proficient or advanced level in reading/language arts (see Table 4.5).

Table 4.5

Percent of EES Students at each AYP Level

<u>Arts</u>	<u>CRCT Mathematics</u>			<u>CRCT Reading/Language</u>		
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Elijah ES	4%	47%	49%	4%	31%	65%
LCSS	15%	50%	35%	11%	42%	47%

The school maintains a web site providing information on school programs and activities. Links for e-mail addresses of grade level teachers are available, and the media specialist has a page on technology and media in the school. On the school website, a list of Accelerated Reader books, as well as a link to a PTA website for parents of children at EES is accessible. ParentConnect_{xp} introduced at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, provides parents with online access to the following information about their children: midterm and semester grades, attendance, and discipline.

The school has an active Parent Teacher Association. This association sponsors fund- raising activities for the school. The PTA has been instrumental in funding the

Accelerated Reader Program as well as providing playground equipment, supplemental classroom materials, and technology.

Context of National Board Certification at Elijah Elementary School

The Elijah Elementary School faculty currently includes three National Board Certified Teachers. Two years after achieving National Board Certification, Renee Isley came to EES. Another teacher received National Board Certification in 2003 while teaching at the school. A third teacher, new to Elijah Elementary School in August 2004, received notification of her National Board Certification in November 2004 and was honored at a called assembly of the faculty. A teacher who achieved the certification in 2000 while on staff at the school left the school in August 2004, to take a job within the LaCrosse County Schools as a curriculum support teacher. Two faculty members entered candidacy for National Board Certification at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year.

Context of Teacher Leadership at Elijah Elementary School

The administrative staff at Elijah Elementary School includes a principal and assistant principal. A curriculum support teacher assists teachers in the regular program in meeting the needs of individuals and groups of students. An instructional support teacher serves a similar role with the special education staff. The curriculum support teacher and the instructional support teacher do not have regular classroom assignments and each works 2 ½ days per week at Elijah Elementary School. Both the instructional support teacher and the curriculum support teacher work 210 days, and both receive a higher local supplement than regular classroom teachers.

A school leadership team includes a team leader from each grade, the counselor, the media specialist and one representative of the art, music, physical education, and technology teachers who teach students at all grade levels. Individuals wishing to become a team leader submit a letter of interest to the principal who selects a team leader from among the interested individuals. Grade level teams were reconfigured for the 2004-2005 school year with special education teachers assigned to specific grade level teams. Only regular education teachers were asked to indicate interest in serving as a grade level team leader. Consequently, special education teachers do not serve on the school leadership team.

Another teacher leadership responsibility at the school involves peer mentoring. Teachers with Teacher Support Specialist certification may receive assignments to provide formal, structured mentoring to beginning teachers or other teachers who need support. The Curriculum Support Teacher at the school assigns Teacher Support Specialists to mentor other teachers.

Elijah Elementary School has had three principals and four assistant principals in its five years of operation. The principal who transferred from the school at the end of the 2003-2004 school year took about 20% of the faculty to his new school. Changes in administration and turnover in the teaching staff have hampered the development of informal teacher leadership networks.

Renee Isley, National Board Certified Teacher

“I just knew I was born to teach.”

Renee Isley spent her childhood playing at being a teacher, relating, “As a child I always wanted to be a teacher. My mother had stories of me teaching my brothers and

teaching my dolls. It's just something I always wanted to do." After graduating from college in 1980 with a degree in elementary education, Renee found that public school positions were difficult to obtain, explaining that "there was a surplus of teachers." After working for a few years in a parochial school in Maryland, Renee decided she was "not making enough money" and moved to the private sector. After working in customer service and then as a flower shop manager, Renee returned to teaching soon after getting married. She summarized, "I was in education, got out, wanted more money, came back again because it was my first love." Renee has been a teacher for 23 years, 15 of those years in public schools.

A career move by Renee's husband brought the family, which includes two sons, from Maryland to Georgia. Renee has taught in two adjacent Georgia school districts, Ranier for 13 years and LaCrosse for 3. Ranier County has been the Isley family's home since moving to Georgia. Since beginning the National Board Certification process in 2000, Renee has worked in two schools under four principals (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6

Renee Isley's Work History Since 2000

School Year	School District	School	Principal
1999 -2001	Ranier	Lakeland	Ann Baker
2001-2002	Ranier	Lakeland	Carol Decker
2002-2003	LaCrosse	Elijah	Edward Fine
2003-2004	LaCrosse	Elijah	Edward Fine
2004-2005	LaCrosse	Elijah	Gerry Holt

Having worked as both a regular education teacher and a special education teacher, Renee maintains state licensure in both areas, as well as in gifted education. Renee attributes working in six different schools within Ranier County to the needs of the school district to “meet the requirements for serving special education populations.”

Motivated by her own personal and professional needs, Renee accepted a position in LaCrosse County. Long-range plans include teaching for “at least 15 more years.” This is due in part to Renee’s desire to have “at least 30 years of service count towards retirement.”

National Board Certification: *Intriguing and possible*

Renee became interested in National Board Certification after reading an article in a professional magazine and attending a school system workshop on the certification. Renee indicated that she was “intrigued” by National Board Certification because it was “a way of looking at your teaching to find out what are you doing right, and what are some other things you might try to make you more effective as a teacher. It was a self-help activity.” At that time, Renee had a master’s degree and wanted to pursue another degree. However, Renee commented, “Going back to school was not an option.” The combination of family life and school responsibilities did not allow the time needed to attend classes. Because the National Board Certification process could be done at home, participation in the certification was a “possibility.” “I thought National Board Certification was an opportunity for me to grow personally and professionally and still meet the needs of my family,” Renee shared. In 1999, when Renee started working through the National Board Certification process, she was beginning her third year at Lakeland Elementary in Ranier County. .

National Board Certification: “I grew as a teacher.”

Renee reports that going through the National Board Certification process was a positive experience:

It is invaluable. There is simply not a dollar limit that you could put on it, simply because it is so qualitative. My students grew emotionally, academically. I grew as a teacher, becoming more reflective, more analytical, more driven. [Now,] what I teach and how I teach it are the results of going through the certification process.

When asked if she has changed because of going through the certification process, Renee answered, “I am more student-focused.” Renee indicated that this student-focus can sometimes create “difficulty in working with the regular education teachers” with whom she shares her students. When advocating for her students, Renee explains, “If I feel what I am proposing is in the best interest of my students, I will pursue it to whatever I have to do to meet their [the students’] needs.”

Renee reports that relationships with other teachers have been positive since she achieved National Board Certification. Since other teachers tend to come to her and ask for advice, Renee feels she has “a mentor kind of status.” Renee added, “There is a new level of collaboration with teachers” and that teachers see her as a “solid resource to go to for support.” Further explaining why other teachers come to her, Renee stated:

Part of my personality is that if something’s broke, I am going to fix it. If something is not working, I am going to find another way to fix it or to make it work or to improve upon. You know, probably that was my personality anyway.

Renee indicated that working through the Documented Accomplishments sections of the National Board Certification Portfolio made her “aware of the collaborative relationships” she had with the teachers with whom she was working and that the reflection process “kind of honed it a little bit.” Completion of the National Board

Certification process made Renee realize that “as a learner, I wasn’t taking care of myself.” As a result, Renee found time to take the courses to enhance her technology skills as well as courses to earn gifted certification.

During the second interview, the researcher showed Renee a list of teacher leadership activities delineated in a survey of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Renee was asked to check teacher leadership activities in which she participated prior to becoming a National Board Certified Teacher and those in which she participated after becoming a National Board Certified Teacher (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7

Leadership Activities of Renee Isley

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Consulted as policy expert on teaching	Consulted as a policy expert on teaching
Advocate for change in school technology	Advocate for change in school technology
Advocate for change in school policies	Advocate for change in school policies
Involvement in school/district leadership	Involvement in school/district leadership
Seek grants to support teaching/learning	Seek grants to support teaching/learning
Develop instructional strategies/curricula	Develop instructional strategies/curricula
Develop or select programs/materials	Develop or select programs/materials
	Help NBPTS offer National Board Certification
	Mentor, coach, or encourage Certification candidates
	Speak publicly about quality teaching or NBC

Table 4.7 (continued)

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Involvement in school/district leadership	Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers
	Participation in a network of NBCTs
	Serve on a state education committee
	Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school or community organization
	Advocate for general school improvement
	Advocate for change in teaching/learning activities
	Serve on education related committee
	Expanded responsibility for teaching training
	Conduct research on teaching/learning
	Work with college teacher prep programs
	Develop professional development activities

Examination of the data indicated that prior to earning National Board Certification, Renee participated in eight teacher leadership activities. Formal teacher leadership activities included serving as a president of her local education association. In that capacity, she advocated for change in school policies and for change in school technology. Serving on district-wide committees, Renee participated in the process of developing teacher evaluation instruments and the process of selecting textbooks. Additionally, Renee wrote grants to obtain materials for her classroom.

Since achieving National Board Certification, Renee has participated in 23 teacher leadership activities. Of the post-certification teacher leadership activities Renee checked, six are directly involved with mentoring candidates for National Board Certification and advocating for the certification process. Renee has been approved as a mentor by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Renee served on a state committee which she explained “examined the process for assisting candidates for National Board Certification.” An outgrowth of that work provided Renee with the opportunity to work with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission developing the outline for a course, The Knowledgeable Teacher. Completion of The Knowledgeable Teacher course is a prerequisite for applying for state funding of National Board Certification fees. Renee shared that in 2005 she will be working on “updating and making some adjustments to The Knowledgeable Teacher course.”

Since receiving National Board Certification, Renee has had the opportunity to work with two state universities. At one university, Renee “helped develop a program for mentoring special education teachers who wished to pursue National Board Certification.” Renee consulted with the education department at another university that embedded National Board Certification into a degree program. Renee commented, “I enjoy the collaboration with higher education.”

During the summer of 2004, Renee participated on a team that worked on “finding teachers to bring diversity to my school.” In addition, Renee “taught Teacher Support Specialist courses” for the Lacrosse County School System, and she has also “mentored a peer.” A comparison of Renee’s teacher leadership activities prior to and

after certification shows a significant increase in teacher leadership activities after achieving National Board Certification.

National Board Certification: *Does my principal get it?*

Since starting the National Board Certification process in 1999, Renee has worked in one school in Ranier County and one in LaCrosse County. At each school, Renee worked under two principals. Ann Baker, the principal at Lakeland Elementary School in Ranier County during the year Renee went through the National Board Certification process, celebrated the achievement of her certification, but Renee was never sure the principal understood National Board Certification. According to Renee, Baker had “not informed the faculty of school district workshops or information sessions about National Board Certification.” Further illustrating the principal’s lack of knowledge regarding National Board Certification, Renee stated, “When I asked my administrator to sign verification forms, she [Baker] said, ‘Explain to me what this is.’ Even when I told her, I am not sure she understood the significance of the accomplishment.” Renee felt that Ms Baker did not provide support when Renee requested “assistance in completing the needed videotaping of lessons.” Renee characterized the videotaping required in the National Board Certification process as the “hardest to work through ever.” However, after Renee became National Board Certified, Baker appointed Renee as “department chair for special positions at the school” and made her “part of the school leadership team.” In addition, Baker asked Renee “to serve as chair and contact person for the School of Excellence application to be written during the 2001-2002 school year.” In discussing Baker, Renee stated:

She did not understand it [National Board Certification] at first, but she came away with a clear understanding of what it was all about after she saw me go

through the process. I think it opened the relationship with my principal. There was then a more open consideration of how I could be a leader at my school.

Renee knows Baker has since had other teachers in her school achieve National Board Certification, and Renee has “heard that the principal now understands more about National Board Certification and is more helpful to candidates.”

In Ranier County, Renee found that most of her teacher leadership opportunities came at the school district level. Renee volunteered for many of these opportunities, explaining, “In most cases it was I want to do this, and nobody else wanted to. I would rather be on the cutting edge and seeing where it goes from the beginning.” Volunteering gave Renee an opportunity to “serve on the textbook adoption committee and to pilot textbooks at her school.” Renee also “served on a school district committees to develop lesson plans and to develop and implement a teacher evaluation program.” By working on these committees, Renee indicated that she “became known at the school district level and was asked to become certified as a Teacher Support Specialist and later to serve as a ‘trainer of trainers’ for the Teacher Support Specialist course.”

Leadership opportunities, but...

A new principal, Carol Decker, came to Lakewood Elementary School the year after Renee achieved National Board Certification and asked Renee to continue her work on the School of Excellence application. Although it was necessary to be out of her classroom to complete the work, Renee reports that “no substitute teachers were provided.” Renee’s special education students were sent back to their regular classrooms. Renee commented, “My new administrator couldn’t help me fulfill that leadership role and still meet my classroom responsibilities.” Renee found it “frustrating that the needs of students were not being met.” When the School of Excellence application was almost

complete, Renee was “disappointed” when she found that since the school had been classified as Needs Improvement, the School of Excellence application would not be considered. Renee said she was “frustrated” because her administrator had her “work toward a futile cause.”

When discussing her teacher leadership opportunity as the chair of the School of Excellence application committee, Renee stated:

I don’t know who they would have asked to do the School of Excellence application; as far as teacher leadership, the entire special education department left the building, so I was the only one who was left. So, again, I don’t know whether it was the right place at the right time or whether it was a thoughtful placement, although I am not so naïve to think that it was.

Renee’s demeanor and voice as well as her words indicated that she did understand that this leadership opportunity might have just happened because of circumstances, but that was “alright.”

During this same year, Renee reported that she “was asked by the Professional Standards Commission to participate in the development of ‘The Knowledgeable Teacher, a course designed to help teachers interested in National Board Certification learn more about the process.’” Renee characterized development of the course as “my strongest contribution because The Knowledgeable Teacher course now allows candidates to pre-qualify themselves for National Board Certification.”

When the Georgia Teacher Center started its mentoring program during the 2001-2002 school year, Renee indicated that she “was asked to serve as a mentor during the weekend mentoring sessions that were offered for National Board Certification candidates.” It was necessary for the mentors to miss school on the Fridays of the mentoring weekends. Renee added, “The superintendent had meetings for National Board

Certified Teachers.” Renee was “granted duty leave for six days to participate in the mentoring and attend the superintendent’s meetings.” Reporting, “I missed a total of 10 days, including 4 sick leave days, that year,” Renee indicated, “I was not prepared for my principal’s reaction to continued teacher leadership activities.”

In 2002, Ranier County was “starting a new initiative, called Units by Design, which would involve teachers in the development of curriculum units to be used throughout the school system.” Renee was asked to work on the project and was interested. Renee stated, “I am a learner and I wanted to be involved in it.” When the principal was asked to sign the needed forms so that Renee could work on the Units by Design initiative, the principal denied Renee the opportunity. Renee relate that Decker “told me that I would not receive approval in the future to attend any staff development meetings or National Board mentoring that would take me out of my classroom.” When Renee was asked how she felt about having her opportunities for professional activities diminished, she said, “Frustrated.” Renee further explained:

I was essentially told by that administrator that there would be no more staff development; there will be no more district committees. Your time will be spent here in the building and in the classroom. I just thought that that was extremely stifling, that she was telling me that I should not pursue any staff development opportunities. If there were any opportunities for leadership, I could not go.

Renee began to think about leaving the Ranier County School System, and she shared:

So that is when I seriously considered how much work I have done at this school, and then I had to figure out if it is this school I need to leave or if it is the system I need to leave.

While “satisfied” with the teacher leadership responsibilities offered at the system level, Renee determined that she would look in another system for a school where her “teacher leadership needs could be fulfilled.”

LaCrosse County: Things are looking good.

Networking with National Board Certified Teachers brought an opportunity to meet Edward Fine, the principal at Elijah Elementary School in LaCrosse County. Renee explained, “Mr. Fine was pleased with the National Board Certified Teacher that he had on his staff and was willing to hire me, partly because I was another National Board Certified Teacher.” Renee went to the district office of the LaCrosse County School System and talked to the staff development department about her background as a trainer in the Teacher Support Specialist program. Renee said,

So I had to sell myself. I had to go and say this is what I can do and I was given an opportunity to show what I can do and, as a result, I have been able to be utilized to a high capacity with staff.

An opportunity to demonstrate her skills was given to Renee and she was subsequently “hired to teach Teacher Support Specialist courses.” In addition, Renee explained, “I will be going through a train the trainer course so that I will be certified to train new teachers to become TSS mentors.” Renee further stated, “As far as working with staff development, I am having some strong opportunities.”

As a new teacher at Elijah Elementary, Renee understood that she might not have teacher leadership opportunities, stating: “As a new employee to the system and a new employee to the school, I’ve had to wait and learn the roles and become familiar with the school climate before I try and jump in there with leadership.” Renee said, “I feel that my teacher leadership opportunities will increase a little this year and a little more next year.” Renee also indicated that she “hoped to become part of the school management team in the next couple of years.” During her second year at Elijah Elementary School, Renee perceived a need to “assist the PTA with the Accelerated Reader program.” Renee

volunteered, her help was accepted, and she served as a liaison between the school and PTA in that project. She expressed pleasure with her situation at EES, explaining, “The setting at my school is very relaxed, very collaborative. I guess I click.”

Renee shared that during the summer of 2004 she participated in a district level team on “promoting diversity and finding teachers to bring diversity to the schools.” Serving as an instructor for the Teacher Support Specialist program, Renee commented, “Staff development [at the school system level] has kind of taken me under their wing, and I’m getting some high activity at that level.” In addition, Renee reported working with an area college to support a National Board Certification component in their Educational Specialist Program and teaching two online courses. Expressing optimism, Renee commented, “Things are happening now. Whereas where I was, they weren’t happening. So life is looking good.”

Another new principal brings changes.

At the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year, Renee reported a change of principals at Elijah Elementary School. Fine, who had hired Renee, left the Elijah Elementary and was succeeded by the assistant principal, Gerry Holt. Renee indicated that the teachers in the fifth grade team from the previous school year “had some difficulties” and that the principal decided that the fifth grade teachers needed to be “totally separated.” As a fourth and fifth grade resource teacher, Renee commented, “I was sort of involved in that separation and told in spring I would be teaching resource students in second and third grade” Renee further stated, “I do what I am told to do. I was not happy about it, but that’s fine, I understand.” In August, Renee was reassigned as the special education resource teacher for the restructured fifth grade team. According to

Renee, “specific assignment of special education teachers to grade level teams was new to this school,” and Renee indicated that she was “pleased” to be with the fifth grade even though she was told two days before school started that she would be teaching fifth grade rather than second grade. Renee elaborated, “I look at that as perhaps a grudging, grudgingly given opportunity for leadership. I am not complaining because it is another acknowledgement of my leadership experience, being National Board Certified”

Two weeks after school started, increased enrollment at EES made it necessary for new classrooms to be added in second and third grade, and Renee’s classroom was taken from her. “I was told at 2:15 on a Monday that I would have to vacate my classroom by Wednesday.” Even though “unhappy” with the situation, she found something positive:

The problem with that was there is no space in the building for me to have a classroom so that I am homeless in that I do not have a classroom. And I think the decision was made that I’d be the one of the four special education teachers who does not have a classroom simply because I would be the one who could handle it better.

Renee further stated that she felt that “it was an acknowledgement of my leadership because I could do my job without having a classroom.”

Subsequently, Renee found it necessary “to fight to have adequate and appropriate space for her students.” Renee reported that the school administration made the decision for her to “teach language arts to fifth graders in a kindergarten classroom.” Discussing this further, Renee commented, “They didn’t seem to know or care that the furniture was inappropriate for the older students, making the teaching and learning situation difficult.” Renee explained, “I try to provide solutions rather than problems for the administration, so I found a classroom and classroom furniture that was sized for fifth graders.”

Subsequently, Renee went to the administration and “asked for the opportunity to share a classroom with another resource teacher.” Renee stated that she had a plan in mind to deal with the situation:

I just get the feeling that this year, I’m just going to lay low and do my job and meet the needs of my students within the parameters that I am being given and continue my activities outside of the school as long as they don’t interfere with the day to day operation of my classroom.

Renee acknowledged that “advocacy for my students” was the driving force behind her fight to find space and furniture.

The Curriculum Support Teacher asked Renee to serve as a mentor for a special education teacher who was new to the school. Renee commented:

I am glad for the opportunity to work with this teacher. I don’t think my principal would have picked me to do this mentoring, but since I am the only special education teacher with TSS certification, there may have been no choice.

Renee reported that this was “the only formal teacher leadership activity” that she had been offered at the school for the 2004-2005 school year.

Renee indicated, “I wanted to continue the work started the previous year with the PTA Accelerated Reader project. The assistant to the media specialist was given that responsibility in my place.” When the researcher asked Renee how she felt about not having the responsibility of working with the PTA, Renee said, “It was taken away from me.” When the researcher asked why the principal assigned the task to another staff member, Renee flatly stated, “She was taking it away from me.”

When queried if Holt ever refers to her National Board Certification, Renee said, “She uses it as a weapon.” Renee described a situation when she was late to school because of traffic problems:

I was late for work because of rainy conditions and traffic. I had called at 7:05, and I called again at 7:15 which is when I was supposed to be there and said I will be there within the next 5 minutes. Well, my administrator happened to be monitoring the halls and realized that I wasn't there. She called me over the loudspeaker to find out where I was and I had just walked in the building. I did what I was supposed to do. I had called the secretaries and twice explained, here is my status, and I am on my way. I said, "I called in twice. The secretaries knew I was coming late." And she said, "This door needed to be manned; a National Board Certified Teacher would have gotten someone to cover their space until you got there." I was five minutes late.

When describing the situation, Renee commented, "There was no reference to my National Board Certification when my teaching assignment was changed just before school started or when I was asked to give up my classroom. In fact it is never mentioned."

Renee's perspectives on her principal's attitude towards her as a National Board Certified Teacher were indicated in the following statements: "It is as if being a National Board Certified Teacher requires that 100% of the day I do exactly what she expects me to do. So it is almost a reprimand, saying 'You're a National Board Certified Teacher.'" Renee's voice and her demeanor indicated displeasure with the principal's attitude.

Job satisfaction: *It is about the students.*

During the interviews, Renee repeatedly said, "My job is to be an advocate for my students." Renee explained:

Meeting the needs of my students is my strongest motivation for remaining in the classroom, for accepting whatever comes as long as it does not have an adverse impact on my students, and for doing whatever is needed to provide for my students.

As an example of advocating for students, Renee indicated that she "really wanted to promote keyboarding for my students." Renee found that some assistive technology keypads owned by Lanier County Schools were not being used and requested that

equipment for her students. Renee's eyes sparkled when she described the enthusiasm of her students when using the assistive technology keypads, indicating that "the students were just beside themselves" and they were "excited." To help state her case for the use of the technology, Renee is "collecting good data and making it an action research kind of project." Knowing that the placement of the current equipment may only be temporary, Renee said, "I am writing a grant to get a set of keypads that would stay with my classroom."

Renee told the principal and assistant principal about using the assistive technology and about her collection of data. Renee stated, "It was received very favorably. The administrators were very interested in the activity and the whole scenario in bringing the keyboards in to improve student writing skills." However, Renee characterized the attitude of the administrators as "grudging enthusiasm."

When discussing the decision that took her from having her own classroom, Renee indicated that she was concerned with the impact on her students:

I have studied brain-based learning and had equipped my rooms with lamps so that I would not have to turn on the fluorescent lights. I had camp chairs to make the environment friendly for reading. My students wanted to know if they would still have the camp chairs that they use for reading groups and writing conferences and the lamps.

Renee appears to find a positive note in her displacement from her classroom, stating, "Once the needs of my students were met, I was more satisfied with my job." However, Renee quantifies her feelings about her job satisfaction by saying it is 50%, adding, "This year has not been good."

Collaboration is satisfying.

Renee indicated she finds working with adults to be “important to job satisfaction.” She further stated, “Collaboration with other teachers to help meet the needs of my students is very satisfying. I enjoy working with adults and planning together to help the students.” According to Renee, she “enjoys having a mentor-mentee relationship with another teacher and teaching the TSS classes because I learn from the teachers I work with.” She elaborated on the satisfaction she received from teaching the TSS classes:

It gives me an opportunity to connect across different settings, in different buildings. At each TSS meeting that we have, I come out with ideas on how to improve what I do. I value the connection with other teachers. It validates a lot of things that I do that are working as well as validating for other teachers.

Renee also stated, “Communication with my mentee builds that collegiality that is very important to me. I also like to know that when I help a teacher, I am also helping that teacher’s students.”

Although Renee knows that the assignment to serve as a mentor to a special education teacher in her school did not come from her principal, she is “happy” that she has the opportunity. Renee explained, “It is gratifying to me that the Curriculum Support Teacher thought highly enough of me to make the assignment.”

Renee also indicated that the opportunities she has to teach professional development courses are factors in her job satisfaction, stating:

It is getting me an opportunity to work with other teachers, to work at a system level, to do some professional learning development, and to work with other teachers. That is part of it. That part of my professional goals have been reached because I have had some good contacts with some professional learning.

Renee elaborated on her perspective that she feels respected by the Professional Learning Department of the school district, saying, “At the professional development level, being National Board Certified is something that is honored and respected.”

Renee also found “satisfaction from the collaborative efforts of developing teacher evaluation instruments for her school system and from being on textbook adoption committees.” Renee commented, “Important decisions had to be made for the school district. I felt that my expertise was valued because I was allowed to participate in making those decisions.” Renee indicated, “I am proud of the decisions that were made and my part in the process.”

“I would love to have more of a leadership role.”

Renee indicated that she “expressed interest” in being a grade level chair so that she would have an opportunity to serve on the school leadership team, but “special education teachers do not get that responsibility.” Renee said, “Special education teachers are left out quite a bit.” For example, Renee related, “An e-mail was sent only to homeroom teachers outlining grading procedures even though special education teachers also give grades and need to be informed of grading procedures.” Renee handled the situation in the following manner:

I took it upon myself to talk to the Curriculum Support Teacher and ask that special education teachers be added to the distribution list for grade book information and other pertinent school information. As a result, the special education teachers are being included in e-mails and are more informed on school matters.

Renee acknowledged that this is not formal teacher leadership, saying, “I do not have a direct channel to impact on school level decisions. Usually, I do not know if anyone is listening when I talk.”

The teacher leadership Renee experiences with teaching professional learning courses and collaborating with a college program contribute to her satisfaction with being an educator, explaining that working with college programs “keeps me busy, gives me opportunity to network with others, and makes me feel valued for my expertise.” Renee describes her feelings on teacher leadership with the following comments:

I embrace teacher leadership because as a teacher leader it is an opportunity to be a catalyst, to help teachers to help students, to help improve student learning, to help teachers impact students. So I look to opportunities for leadership. And now I am just starting to explore for additional opportunities as much as I can.

The researcher noted that Renee independently sought leadership opportunities.

What's next?

At the end of the 2003-2004 school year, Renee expressed excitement about the potential for the 2004-2005 school year. Renee indicated that she would be “going to graduate school in the next couple of years” and wanted to “pursue a teacher leadership role in the LaCrosse County School System.” Elaborating further, she stated “I am interested in a position as an Instructional Support Teacher at a school or possibly working at the school district office in professional development.” Renee explained, “I’m not necessarily interested in being an administrator. I don’t want to deal with a bunch of discipline slips.”

After the experience of losing her classroom space, Renee has voiced thoughts of requesting a transfer to a middle school for the next school year, stating, “Well, I am here for this year, but frankly as soon as I can arrange a transfer, I am going to transfer to a middle school.” Renee further indicated that experience in a middle school might “enhance my chance to become an Instructional Support Teacher.” While Renee’s wishes

“to leave Elijah Elementary School” she does not wish to leave the LaCrosse County School System, explaining

I am comfortable in LaCrosse County. I won't leave LaCrosse County. I have all the materials I need to teach. I have a support person in my building 2 ½ days a week. From a special education perspective, LaCrosse County is supporting teachers, and I respect that and that is why I will stay.

Renee further indicated that “as a special education teacher with National Board Certification, a transfer to another school will be no problem.”

By the middle of the 2004-2005 school year, Renee had become more definitive and had decided to pursue either an “Educational Specialist or Doctor of Education Degree” at the beginning of the next school year. Renee expressed an interest in “programs that focus on teacher leadership,” explaining:

The situation has strengthened my resolve to be an advocate and a leader of teachers because reflecting on this particular incident and with the relocation of my classroom and my students, I don't feel that I have support for me and my immediate supervisor has pretty much not been supportive.

Renee stated that she is planning to “apply for an instructional support teacher position next year.”

Case Summary

Renee Isley, a teacher with 23 years of experience, achieved National Board Certification in 2000. While Renee held teacher leadership positions, mostly at the school district level prior to her certification, she held almost three times as many leadership positions after certification. Many of the new teacher leadership activities were associated with advocating for National Board Certification and mentoring National Board Certification candidates. Renee attributes many of her activities to her willingness to take on responsibilities that others do not want.

Since achieving National Board Certification, Renee has worked for four principals in two school districts. Renee reports mixed response from the principals concerning her National Board Certification. Renee received additional teacher leadership responsibilities from the principal for whom she worked when she achieved National Board Certification. However, her next principal refused to allow her to participate in any activities that took her away from her classroom responsibilities. That included school district committee work as well as work mentoring National Board Certification candidates. The third principal hired Renee partly because she was a National Board Certified Teacher, and she felt she was on the way to more teacher leadership opportunities. After two years, the principal went to another school and Renee found herself working for a fourth principal. Renee's perspective is that this principal is not positive about her National Board Certification. Renee indicated that she hoping to transfer to another school.

Renee has found some job satisfaction in her teacher leadership work, enjoying the opportunity to teach professional learning courses and to collaborate with a university. Renee trains teacher support specialists for her school district and serves as a mentor to a new teacher. While Renee enjoys these activities, she would very much like to have a teacher leadership role in her school.

The researcher found that Renee is focused on being a teacher. Renee mentioned advocating for her students 11 times during the three hours of interviews. Although not happy with some aspects of her current situation, Renee finds solace in working with the children, saying:

I don't want to be anywhere else right now because of my students. So I grin and bear it and I go to work every day and I put in my hours and I do my job because I am there for the kids.

Renee appreciates the support of the LaCrosse County School System for National Board Certification and wants to continue to work in that school system. Renee sums up her feelings by stating: "I am doing my job. That is why I became National Board Certified; that is why I am going to continue to grow professionally, because it is the students who make the difference."

CHAPTER 5

EILEEN REYNOLDS

The Context of the Latrobe County School System

Eileen Reynolds, a National Board Certified Teacher, works at Nettles Elementary School (NES) in the Latrobe County School System (LCSS) in Northeast Georgia. The Latrobe County School System surrounds a major city which has an independent school system. In 2005, the Latrobe County School System had a student enrollment of 22,431 housed in 19 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, 6 high schools, and one evening high school. The budget for the 2004-2005 school year was approximately 153 million dollars, providing for a per pupil expenditure of \$6594.

The Latrobe County School System serves a community that has become increasingly suburban. A large lake is a catalyst for vacation homes and tourism. Growth in commercial activities and housing has had an economic impact on the county while agriculture remains a strong component in the community.

The Latrobe County School System has experienced an increase in its Hispanic population from 22% in the 2001-2002 school year to 28% in the 2004-2005 school year. During this period, there has been a decrease in the white population from 69% to 63%. These two groups comprise 91% of the school system population (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

Latrobe County School System Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Asian, Pacific Islander	1%
Black, Non-Hispanic	5%
Multi-racial	2%
Hispanic	28%
White, Non-Hispanic	63%

The Latrobe County School System is accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Council. All 32 of its schools have earned accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as well as the Georgia Accrediting Council.

Students in the Latrobe County Schools scored higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than students in Georgia, but slightly lower than students in the United States. The percentage of high school seniors tested is 3% higher than the percentage tested in the nation, but 15% lower than the percent tested in Georgia (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2

Latrobe County SAT Scores in 2005

	Average SAT Score	Percent Tested
Latrobe County	1009	51%
State	961	66%
Nation	1026	48%

The Latrobe County School System did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005, although 21 of its 31 schools (68%) did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress. Academic performance was a factor in the failure to make Adequate Yearly progress for 2 middle schools and 3 high schools. Latrobe County School system results represent an improvement over 2003 when 20 schools, representing 63% of the total, made Adequate Yearly Progress.

Context of National Board Certification in the Latrobe County School District

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards reported that 35 teachers in the Latrobe County School System had achieved National Board Certification as of November 2004. An examination of the school system website revealed a news release dated December 10, 2003, giving the names of teachers who received the certification in 2003. On November 30, 2004, a link was posted to an article in a local newspaper which reported that 16 additional Latrobe County School System teachers had achieved National Board Certification.

The Latrobe County School System adds 10% to its local supplement for National Board Certified Teachers. This mirrors the 10% salary supplement the State of Georgia gives to National Board Certified Teachers. The school system does not provide financial assistance to its teachers in paying the fees for the certification process. No organized staff development is offered to teachers attempting certification. However, the system does provide technical support for candidates through the media and video production departments of the secondary schools. A review of the website of the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in which the Latrobe County School participates revealed that no support for National Board Certification candidates is offered through the RESA.

Context of Nettles Elementary School

Nettles Elementary School, which was opened in 1956, is located in the northern section of Latrobe County. In 1956, the school community was mostly rural. In recent years, subdivisions have flourished, providing a mix of rural and suburban. Over 650 students were enrolled during the 2004-2005 school year. During the 2004-2005 school year, 37% of the students at Nettles Elementary School were eligible for free or reduced lunch. This compares to 46% for Latrobe County and 48% for the state.

The staff of Nettles Elementary School includes a principal, an assistant principal, and an instructional coach. There are 42 teachers, a media specialist, and a counselor. Paraprofessionals are assigned to kindergarten classrooms and the media center. With an average of 16 years of experience, the staff exceeds the average experience levels of both the Latrobe County School System and the State of Georgia. At Nettles Elementary School, 53% of the classroom teachers have a degree higher than a four year degree. This compares to 58% of all Latrobe county teachers and almost 50% across the state (see table 5.3).

The mission statement of the Nettles Elementary School reads, “Respect, responsibility and relevance guide Nettles School and Community in nurturing independent, productive citizens.” All students receive daily instruction in reading, math, science, and social studies. Students participate in art, music, and physical education instruction once a week. Special education, English as a Second Language, and gifted services are provided for students who meet qualifications.

Table 5.3.

Comparison of NES Teachers' Years of Experience and Advanced Degrees Earned

	Average Years of Experience	Percent with Advanced Degrees
Nettles Elementary	16	53%
Latrobe County School System	12.65	58%
Georgia	12.5	49.8%

When Nettles Elementary School opened, it served a largely white population. The Hispanic community has increased from 9% in 2001 to 15% in 2005. As a result of the increase in this population, English as a Second Language services have been offered. The total population of the school has increased from 583 in 2001 to 654 in 2005. Hispanic and white students comprise 96% of the student body (see Table 6.4).

Table 5.4

Nettles Elementary School Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	1%
Multi-racial	2%
Hispanic	15%
White, Non-Hispanic	81%

Nettles Elementary School did not meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005. In grades one through five, 81% of the NES students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 78% of the students in the

Latrobe County School System. In Reading/Language Arts, 82% of the NES students scored at the proficient or advanced level compared to 80% for the school system (see Table 5.5). While the percentage of the total school population meeting or exceeding state goals was higher than required for the school to make adequate yearly progress, the percentage of one student group, students with disabilities, was not high enough in both mathematics and reading/language arts. This was the first year that Nettles Elementary School had not met the provisions of Adequately Yearly Progress.

Table 5.5

Percent of NES Students at each AYP Level

<u>Arts</u>	<u>CRCT Mathematics</u>			<u>CRCT Reading/Language</u>		
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Nettles ES	19%	57%	23%	17%	52%	30%
LCSS	22%	54%	23%	19%	47%	34%

The school maintains a website providing information on school programs and activities. In September 2005, the website was updated to include teacher profiles. The profile of each teacher includes a picture, educational background, teaching experience, other professional experience, and contact information. The Nettles Elementary School website also provides access to the electronic catalog of the media center collection, school lunch menus, and the school calendar, as well as information on the Parent Teacher Organization.

Context of National Board Certification at Nettles Elementary School

There are four National Board Certified Teachers at Nettles Elementary School. Eileen Reynolds received certification in 1999. Since then, four other teachers achieved

the certification. One National Board Certified Teacher has left the school. Since September 2005, National Board Certification has been listed on the school website profiles of the NBCTs. There was no mention on the website of the school having National Board Certified teachers prior to that date. There have been no candidates for National Board Certification since 2002.

Context of Teacher Leadership at Nettles Elementary School

The administrative staff at Nettles Elementary School includes a principal and an assistant principal. An instructional coach is assigned half-time to Nettles Elementary School and half-time to another school in the Latrobe system. The instructional coach assists teachers in meeting the needs of individuals and groups of students and also monitors implementation of the curriculum.

A school improvement team which meets monthly includes a team leader from each grade, as well as representatives from special education and non-academic classes. At Nettles Elementary School, the teachers in each grade take turns serving as team leader. Teachers who are not on the school improvement team may submit questions for discussion to their team leader. The principal uses the improvement team as a sounding board and also asks the improvement team to disseminate information, as well as to get opinions from teachers on matters of interest to the staff.

A curriculum committee is made up of representatives from each grade level. This committee works with the administration and the instructional coach to plan implementation of the curriculum. This committee is responsible for monitoring the development of curriculum maps. Since the introduction of Georgia Performance

Standards, a new state curriculum, this committee has managed the shift from the Quality Core Curriculum to the new curriculum.

Other committees include the sunshine committee, media committee, technology committee, and staff development committee. Staff members sign up for committee preferences but are assigned to specific committees by the administrative staff.

Eileen Reynolds, National Board Certified Teacher

“I always wanted to be with children”

Eileen Reynolds grew up knowing that she “wanted to be with children.” Eileen stated, “I was very interested in teaching high school biology when I finally decided that teaching was what I wanted to do.” However, her father, a 30 year career educator who had served as a high school principal, told Eileen, “That would not be a good choice for you because high school students were getting more and more difficult to deal with and with your personality, you would be shot.” Eileen’s related that her father suggested that she “needed to work with young children” because “you are good with them.” Eileen commented, “So I went into early childhood education, and he was right as he usually was, and that was a good choice for me.”

After graduating from college with a degree in early childhood education from North Georgia College, Eileen took a job as a first grade teacher in Miller County, serving in first grade for one year and then teaching kindergarten for one year. During those two years, Eileen earned a Masters of Education degree, also from North Georgia College. Eileen then began an 8 year hiatus from teaching. Eileen explains, “I have been in the education field for about 29 years, including the eight years I stayed home with my own children.” Upon returning to the classroom, she took a job at Nettles Elementary

School in the Latrobe County School System. Eileen taught kindergarten at Nettles for 19 years. For the 2005-2006 school year, Eileen moved into a fourth grade classroom. Since beginning the National Board Certification process in 1998, Eileen has worked in one school under three principals.

Eileen “enjoys” working at Nettles elementary school, describing the school as “fairly large” with “about 650 students.” There is a “good working relationship among the teachers,” and Eileen indicates that there is “a very supportive parent component.”

In 2005, Eileen “completed coursework for an Add-on Certificate in Leadership” through a cohort program offered in Latrobe County by the University of Georgia. When asked about her reasons for joining the leadership cohort, Eileen said, “I am not sure what I want to end up my career being.” Eileen further indicated, “My goal is just to be sure that I have my options.”

National Board Certification: “I wanted another challenge.”

Eileen learned about National Board Certification from an education association lobbyist. The lobbyist related that his wife was a National Board Certified Teacher and that his wife had told him that “she had learned more in going through that process than anything she had ever done.” Later a friend of Eileen’s, Sally Lincoln, went through the process and said, “Eileen, you have to do this.” Eileen “appreciated the encouragement” and “wanted to do it because it was a learning process.” Eileen commented, “I was to the point where I wanted to do something different” and “I wanted another challenge.” The challenge was “the reason I decided to pursue National Board Certification.”

National Board Certification: *It validated what I do.*

Eileen reports that the National Board Certification process was

the hardest and the best thing that I have ever done. It is more taxing than any college course that I ever took. It was much more personal; you were not writing to please a professor; you were writing to prove that you were an accomplished teacher.

For Eileen, “the certification was valuable to me because it validated what I do.” There was also a “personal satisfaction in being able to accomplish National Board Certification.”

When asked about the effects of the certification process on her, Eileen stated:

At first it isolated me because I barricaded myself in my room until 6:00 every night. It made me withdraw during the months I was going through the process. But I think it made me more giving after that [completing National Board Certification] because I felt validated that I have good ideas and good strategies with students and it made me always look at why I do what I do in my classroom.

Eileen elaborated on the “impact reflection had,” explaining, “It made me look at the units, and why I did them the way I did. I felt I had a great responsibility to teach what was really needful. I think I teach better than I did before.”

During the second interview, the researcher showed Eileen a list of teacher leadership activities delineated in a survey of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Eileen was asked to place a check mark beside teacher leadership activities in which she participated prior to receiving National Board Certification and those in which she participated after receiving the certification (see Table 5.6).

Data indicate that prior to earning National Board Certification, Eileen participated in nine leadership activities. Eileen’s formal teacher leadership activities include serving twice as president of the Latrobe County Education Association (LCEA), serving as a legislation liaison with the Georgia Association of Educators. As LCEA

president, Eileen attended all Latrobe County School System Board meetings. In 1998, Eileen served as co-chair for the Nettles Elementary School Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation review preparation team. The role of team leader rotates among members of a grade, so Eileen “has been team leader four or five times prior to certification.” Eileen “worked on a statewide committee in the development of a kindergarten assessment instrument” and “served on a staff development committee for Latrobe County.” In 1999, Eileen was “a part of a team of Nettles Elementary School teachers who attended the Quality Schools Initiative.”

Table 5.6

Leadership Activities of Eileen Reynolds

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Consulted as policy expert on teaching	Consulted as a policy expert on teaching
Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association	Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association
Develop instructional strategies/curricula	Develop instructional strategies/curricula
Develop or select programs/materials	Develop or select programs/materials
Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers	Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers
Serve on a state education committee	Participation in a network of NBCTs
	Seek grants to support teaching/learning
	Help NBPTS offer National Board Certification
	Mentor, coach, or encourage Certification Candidates

Table 5.6 (continued)

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
	Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school or community organization
	Speak publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification
	Advocate for general school improvement
	Advocate for change in learning activities
	Serve on education related committee
	Conduct research on teaching/learning
	Develop professional development activities
	Develop materials to support or increase student learning

Eileen checked a total of 19 leadership activities that she participated in after becoming certified. Eileen commented, “After I became certified, I kept up with most of the activities I had done before, but then added the next layer which was mentoring other candidates.” Her mentoring activities were in several venues. Eileen and another teacher participated in the teaching of The Knowledgeable Teacher, a course to “introduce prospective candidates for National Board Certification to the certification process.” In addition, Eileen “mentored candidates” at workshops set up by the Georgia Association of Educators and at workshops sponsored by the Georgia Teacher Center. Eileen has been approved as a mentor for National Board Certification candidates by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

In 2003, Eileen again served as co-chair of the Nettles Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation review preparation team. When Georgia Performance Standards in language arts were introduced, Eileen was given the responsibility of “overseeing the unpacking of the kindergarten standards and planning learning activities to meet the standards as well as having assessments and rubrics in place.” Eileen also “worked on a curriculum map to ensure systematic covering of the standards.” Although a new member of the fourth grade team, Eileen has been asked to “oversee the same process for that grade level.”

At the county level, Eileen has” served on the staff development committee for several years and the textbook adoption committee from 2001-2004.” Presently, Eileen is a member of the Latrobe County School System assessment committee.

Eileen and another National Board Certified Teacher “applied for and received an action research grant from the Georgia Teacher Center to disseminate information about National Board Certification to administrators in the Latrobe School District.” As Eileen stated, “Not many people were applying to become candidates for National Board Certification and we wanted to see if educating administrators about National Board Certification would have an impact on the number of candidates in our county.” The grant helped to “pay for subs so we could attend meetings with administrators.” At the meetings, the two national Board Certified Teachers explained “how administrators could support National Board Certification candidates.” In addition, “we gave them handouts to give to their teachers.” After the meetings with administrators, “an informational meeting for teachers was held. About 12 teachers came; that was down from the 40 that came to a

similar meeting three or four years ago.” The number of candidates for certification in Latrobe County “did not increase.”

National Board Certification: *Does my principal get it?*

Eileen has worked under three principals since entering candidacy for National Board Certification. During the year Eileen was working on her certification portfolio, her principal, Carol Jones, “was supportive and sent memos saying what can I give you? What kind of support do you need?” Eileen related, “She would check on me occasionally and ask ‘How is it going?’” Although Jones was at another school when Eileen received notification that she had become certified, Jones “sent flowers to me at school and offered her congratulations.” Eileen “regrets not asking Jones to read her portfolio because that would help Jones understand the process better.”

A new principal, Denise Moses, came to the school at the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year. When Moses found out that Eileen had become a National Board Certified Teacher, she made an announcement that Mrs. Reynolds “had passed the National Teacher Exam.” Eileen eyes flashed as she elaborated, “She had no clue what I had done. She put it in the school newsletter, but she had to ask me twice what I had done. She has never talked to me about the process.” When discussing support given to other National Board Certification candidates from her school, Eileen stated,

[Moses] had been supportive when one of the candidates asked for a special microphone to use when video-taping. She [Moses] agreed to pay for it. But as far as anything else, she has not shown considerable support for those teachers either.

Eileen also noted that Moses “has not discussed National Board Certification with any of the teachers, has not suggested that any teacher consider candidacy, and has not

demonstrated any interest.” Under Moses’ tenure, there was no mention of National Board Certified Teachers on the school website.

Moses retired in 2005 and has been replaced by a new principal, Neil Goggins. According to Eileen, Goggins “has not had any conversations with me about National Board Certification.” Goggins has “asked the four National Board Certified Teachers to take on teacher leadership responsibilities, but three of the four have leadership certificates also.” Eileen added, “The new principal also urges us to participate on county committees and forwards opportunities often. For that reason, I am serving on the county assessment committee.” The school website which was updated since the arrival of the new principal now mentions National Board Certification in teacher profiles.

In discussing her perspectives on administrators’ views on National Board Certification, Eileen stated:

I don’t think there is a strong feeling among administrators, the typical administrator, that NBCTs are leaders. I don’t think they understand that National Board Certification shows that you are an accomplished collaborator, as well as an accomplished teacher. I don’t think that they see that piece of it or value it.

In talking about her action research study, Eileen said, “One of the reasons I did the study was so that I could go to the administrators and tell them about National Board Certification. I know that some of them told their teachers.” Eileen related that after discussing National Board Certification with the superintendent, she felt that the superintendent “may not be convinced that the certification itself makes a difference.” According to Eileen, the superintendent feels that “people who attempt certification are the better teachers anyway. You can reflect more, but it is the same teaching.” Eileen suggested, “If the superintendent of your system doesn’t value National Board Certification any more than that, it probably trickles down to other administrators.”

Leadership: I seek it out and lots of it comes my way.

When discussing her teacher leadership activities, Eileen points to her education association activities as a possible catalyst for many of her leadership opportunities.

Eileen explains:

Because I am the Georgia Association of Educators representative that is assigned to attend school board meetings, people at the central office have gotten to know me. I think that is how I got to be on the system staff development committee and the system textbook committee. When I was president of the local education association, I served on the committee to select the school system Teacher of the Year.

Eileen added, “One of the curriculum directors submitted my name as an individual who could go to other school systems as part of a Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation Team. I served on several teams.”

In 1998, Eileen was asked by Principal Carol Jones to serve as co-chair of the Nettles SACS review preparation team. When asked by Denise Moses in 2003 to co-chair the SACS review preparation team for a second time, Eileen said, “No, I am not going to be doing it.” The principal asked again and Eileen repeated, “I am not going to do it.” Eileen was finally “convinced to do it by the teacher who had been co-chair five years earlier. That teacher said that the principal asked her to convince me.”

Mentoring of National Board Certification candidates has provided additional teacher leadership opportunities for Eileen. Eileen “became a mentor at the weekend academies sponsored Georgia Teacher Center” in part because of her “affiliation with GAE” and in part because the individual “who had encouraged me to try National Board Certification had become a Teacher-in-Residence at the Georgia Teacher Center.” After being trained by the Professional Standards Commission to teach the Knowledgeable Teacher Course for certification pre-candidates, Eileen and another National Board

Certified Teacher were asked by the Latrobe County School System “to provide the course for system teachers.” Eileen reports, “I did it once and found out after committing to do it that the system split the stipend for teaching the course between us. It wasn’t worth the time and energy.” Eileen has also “worked at mentoring workshops provide by the Georgia Association of Educators.”

Although her principal nominated another kindergarten teacher to manage the redelivery of the Georgia Performance Standards in Language Arts during the 2004-2005 school year, Eileen “was given the responsibility for the redelivery even through the other teacher, who had moved away, had received the initial training.” Even without the training, Eileen “led the process and we finished unpacking and planning all the language arts standards and had all assessment and rubrics in place for implementation on time.” Eileen accepted a position as a fourth grade teacher for the 2005-2006 school year, and she was assigned to lead the fourth grade team in the unpacking of standards. Eileen explained:

The fourth grade team accomplished almost nothing last year under another teacher. The new principal thought that I could accomplish with fourth grade what I had accomplished with kindergarten. This is odd since I am new to the grade level. This team is not willing to meet and there has been much discussion and disagreement.

Eileen anticipates “a long year in unpacking the standards, and making adjustments in teaching to reflect the new curriculum.”

When working on the kindergarten standards, Eileen took it upon herself “to enlist the other kindergarten teachers to draft a pacing guide for the language arts program.” That pacing guide was “taken by the instructional coach to her other school.” Eileen elaborated, “According to our school improvement plan, everyone is supposed to

have a pacing guide to make sure that you covered the objectives before the testing. We do what we are supposed to do.” Eileen smiled when asked if all grade levels did a pacing guide and responded, “I do what I am supposed to do.” When asked if the administration at her school was aware of the pacing guide, Eileen said, “They never commented on it.”

Eileen related that when talking to the instructional coach about some graduate school options, the instructional coach mentioned a “cohort that was being formed to provide teachers with an opportunity to earn a Leadership Add-On Certificate.” Eileen asked for “more information and how to sign up” and was told, “You have to have a recommendation from your principal.” The instructional coach also told Eileen that “principals had been asked to recruit people for the cohort.” Eileen “asked around and found that no one on her faculty knew about it.” Finally, Eileen went to the principal and asked for her recommendation. The principal said, “I would be glad to recommend you.” Eileen stated that “the principal told me that she didn’t put out the word because she was afraid that the people who would want to do it would be those that she wouldn’t want to recommend.”

Eileen found that “when the cohort started, there were only 13 teachers enrolled, far short of the projected number of 25.” Eileen was “the only National Board Certified Teacher of the 26 in the school system who was part of the cohort.”

In discussing National Board Certification and teacher leadership, Eileen stated:

I haven’t been asked by my principal not by my district to be involved in leadership because I am National Board Certified. There hasn’t been an instance that I am aware of that National Board Certification has made the difference.

Eileen also commented, “I think that our administrators do not have a lot of knowledge about the National Board Certification process, and when you don’t know about something, you don’t value it.”

However, Eileen explained, “I don’t think I had an expectation about how becoming an NBCT would affect my relationship with administrators. I guess I assumed that any additional credibility of my skill and knowledge would be seen as an asset.” While Eileen did have more leadership responsibilities at the school, “It was not because of National Board Certification.” Eileen stated, “With administrators, I have been outspoken and assertive. Most have channeled those qualities by giving me additional responsibilities.” Eileen does “think” that she “was chosen for more system committees because of National Board Certification.” National Board Certification was also a factor in “receiving more committee jobs with GAE.”

Job satisfaction: *I’m satisfied; I’m not satisfied.*

Eileen’s first answer about her job satisfaction was “I’m satisfied. Actually with the teaching, I’m very satisfied.” Eileen attributes her satisfaction “to being a teacher who can get in her own classroom and do her own thing.” So when in her classroom, Eileen is “very satisfied.” She explained, “I love what I do. I love working with the kids, even when they have exceptionalities and difficulties. I love doing that.”

Eileen pointed to teacher leadership activities that have “proven satisfying.” “Service on a statewide committee to develop a kindergarten assessment” made Eileen “feel like I was on the cutting edge of influencing kindergarten teaching across the state.” Eileen also “valued the time spent on curriculum and textbook committees because of the opportunity to provide input into system decisions on those matters.” Even the time

Eileen spent “chairing the SACS committee allowed for having an influence on what went on at the school.”

Eileen continued, “However, there are parts of my job that I am not real satisfied with.” Eileen indicated that because of going through National Board Certification, “the blinders are off and I see so many other things school wide, and I now see a bigger picture. I can never go into that isolated classroom again.” Eileen explained, “I think that our school ought to be much stronger in a game plan rather than me sitting in my room and doing what I think I ought to do.”

While Eileen enjoys “being able to shut the door and teach,” she explains how going through the National Board Certification process has changed her:

After National Board, you can never go back into that isolated classroom again. Your perspectives forever change. You begin to understand that so many of the decisions that you make in the classroom are based on decisions that were made somewhere else. And then you really believe that first core proposition that you are committed to kids and their learning. And then you figure out that not everybody is. It just drives you crazy.

In discussing her dissatisfaction with her school, Eileen commented, “There is just not enough focus in my building. I know exactly what I want to accomplish with my kids but that focus is not the same school wide.”

In one of her cohort classes, Eileen was asked to write on paper on “Why are you enrolled in a leadership certificate program?” Eileen said that she focused on The Five Core Propositions of National Board Certification, relating, “I believe so strongly in the five core propositions that I want to be in a position that I can advocate for them. And not get knifed in the back.”

A collaborative situation is satisfying.

When talking about the kindergarten team of teachers, Eileen stated, “My grade level works pretty collaboratively together.” Eileen pointed out that there is one individual on the team who has to be “grudgingly brought around,” but “generally there is a lot of collaboration on the kindergarten team, and that is satisfying to me.”

Eileen discussed collaborative situations: “When I chaired the SACS team, twice, for my school, I felt tremendous accomplishment and appreciation for being able to contribute to what I hoped would be important work in improving our school.” Eileen added, “As I have worked on various committees, I have been happy for the opportunity to influence policy and procedures at the school and system level. It is important to me to have a voice in what happens.” The collaborative aspects of teacher leadership activities make Eileen “more satisfied as a teacher.”

In discussing future plans, Eileen commented, “If I was to go to another school, it would be because there was more collaboration going on.” She added, “I don’t view my building where I am at now as having strong collaboration, and if I had an opportunity to work at an elementary school where I thought there really was a professional learning community, I’d move.” According to Eileen, there is “a lot of potential at Nettles Elementary School.” Eileen explained:

The clientele at my school should have much higher test scores. And I don’t like it when I say our scores need to be higher than I’m told by someone in leadership, “Why are you concerned about the test scores.” That boils my blood. I’m sorry, but it does.

Eileen explained, “I don’t see us working as a team to try to move our school forward and take it to where I think we are capable of going. I don’t see any big push to do that.” She indicated that the school is “real reactionary” with an attitude of “let’s get by but let’s not

worry about the big picture of moving everybody forward. Let's just make sure that nothing comes back to bite us." Eileen described the situation she would like to work in as being "very proactive," where the attitude is "let's make this place the best it can be, instead of let's not rock the boat."

Eileen talked about "the conversation" in collaborative schools. That conversation would include "talking about best practices as a faculty, talking about the best ways to meet the needs of every child." Eileen explained, "That conversation is taking place in some building and I would love to be part of that." Eileen also pointed out "the need for a focus" in a collaborative situation. According to Eileen, "At Nettles, we have mission statements and we have desired pupil learning outcomes written, but I don't see us building on that. I don't see us focusing on trying."

In discussing her situation at Nettles, Eileen stated:

There is very little communication with me about my teaching practices. You know, they say you are doing a good job with your duties and responsibilities, and your test scores are good. That is about the extent of it. There is no conversation about how to be better.

Eileen paused before adding, "But there is no pressure either."

Eileen's eyes sparkled when she talked about a conversation that led to "consistency between grade levels." In that conversation, teachers discussed, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we were all using the same pictures to represent the letters across grades levels." That conversation led to "an application for a grant that provided money to buy the same alphabets for all classrooms across all grades." For Eileen, the process "made so much sense." Eileen stated, "I love it when things make sense," and then she added, "And are acted on. That's fun."

What's next?

Eileen has considered her options because, "I've got nine more years in this business before I have my 30, and I don't want to be in a classroom when I'm not physically and mentally there." To prepare for the future, Eileen has earned an Administrative Add-on Certificate and is working on a reading endorsement.

The recent move from kindergarten to fourth grade was prompted by "aspirations to become an administrator" and the need for "upper grade experience to demonstrate knowledge and provide credibility." Eileen has "applied for some assistant principal positions, was interviewed, but wasn't selected."

Eileen is hoping that "soon" she will be an assistant principal or instructional coach, perhaps before retirement," Eileen would like to be an elementary principal. While Eileen acknowledges that the atmosphere at her school "seems to be improving with the new principal," she is determined to "move on from classroom teaching."

Case Summary

Eileen Reynolds, a teacher with 21 years of experience, achieved National Board Certification in 1999. Eileen was an acknowledged teacher leader prior to achieving her certification, as her leadership activities included serving as president of her local education association, chairing her school's Southern Association of Colleges and Schools review preparation team, and serving on a state committee that developed a student assessment instrument. After certification, her leadership activities expanded to include mentoring and supporting National Board Certification Candidates, advocating for National Board Certification, and an action research project. In addition, Eileen has led grade level teams in planning instruction to match the Georgia Performance Standards

in Language Arts. Eileen feels that she gets leadership opportunities because she is knowledgeable and capable.

Eileen has worked at Nettles Elementary School for 19 years. Since Eileen started working on her portfolio for National Board Certification in 1998, there have been three principals at her school. The first principal was supportive during the year Eileen went through the certification process and although that principal had left the school before Eileen received notification that she had achieved National Board Certification, the principal sent flowers to Eileen to celebrate the accomplishment. The next principal at Nettles Elementary School was not knowledgeable about National Board Certification and did not appear to value National Board Certification even though five faculty members became National Board Certified Teachers. The latest principal offers teachers opportunities to serve in leadership positions but he has not made any mention of National Board Certification.

Eileen professes to be both satisfied and dissatisfied with her work. Eileen enjoys working with children but would like to be in a school where collaboration was an important part of working environment. Eileen finds satisfaction in teacher leadership opportunities which have an impact on school improvement. Eileen would like to be in a proactive school where the conversation centered on school improvement,

While Eileen enjoys teaching, she has recently become certified in school leadership and has taken courses for a reading endorsement. Eileen would like to move into an instructional coach or assistant principal position. Eileen's rationale for moving into a fourth grade teaching position after teaching kindergarten for 20 years was that it would give her more knowledge and credibility.

When Eileen went through the National Board Certification process, she had no expectations about a change in roles for National Board Certified Teachers. Now, Eileen believes “there needs to be a larger role of National Board Certified Teachers. And I am excited about that conversation.”

CHAPTER 6

TAMMY ELLIS

The Context of the Kewaunee County School System

Tammy Ellis, a National Board Certified Teacher, works at Courtway Elementary School (CES) in the Kewaunee County School System (KCSS) in North Georgia. The Kewaunee County School System is 30 miles east of Georgia's largest city. In 2005, the Kewaunee County School System had a student enrollment of 14,600 housed in 11 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 3 high schools, one alternative school, and one evening high school. The budget for the 2004-2005 school year was approximately 99 million dollars, providing for a per pupil expenditure of \$7166.25.

The Kewaunee County School System serves a community that was largely rural but has become increasingly suburban. Growth in manufacturing, retailing, and housing has had an economic impact on the county. There has been a steady influx of residents from out-of-state and from the large metropolitan area to the west.

In the five years between 2000 and 2005, the Kewaunee County School System has experienced an 8% increase in its student population. The Black population grew from 28% in the 2001-2002 school year to 36% in the 2004-2005 school year. The Hispanic population has increased from 4% to 7%. During this period, there was a decrease in the white population from 64% to 53% (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1

Kewaunee County School System Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	36%
Multi-racial	3%
Hispanic	7%
White, Non-Hispanic	53%

Students in the Kewaunee County Schools scored higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than students in Georgia, but lower than students in the United States. The percentage of high school seniors tested is 1% lower than the percentage tested in the nation and 19% lower than the percent tested in Georgia (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2

Kewaunee County SAT Scores in 2005

	Average SAT Score	Percent Tested
Kewaunee County	1005	47%
State	989	66%
Nation	1020	48%

The Kewaunee County School System did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005, although 17 of its 18 schools (94%) did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress. Academic performance was a factor in the failure to make Adequate Yearly

progress for one middle school. This is the second consecutive year that the school system failed to meet the standards of Adequate Yearly Progress.

The Context of National Board Certification in the Kewaunee County School District

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards reported that 15 teachers in the Kewaunee County School System had achieved National Board Certification as of November 2005. An examination of the school system website revealed a news release giving the name of one teacher who achieved certification in 2005. The news release was listed under the category of employee achievements. In the 2003-2004 annual report of the school system, the names of teachers who achieved National Board Certification in 2003 and 2004 are listed under the heading of "Leadership."

The Kewaunee County School System does not provide a financial incentive for teachers who complete National Board Certification. There are no preparation activities potential candidates for National Board Certification offered by the system, and organized mentoring for candidates is not provided. A review of the website of the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in which the Kewaunee County School participates revealed that no mentoring sessions for National Board Certification candidates is offered through the RESA. Neither the system nor the RESA has offered "The Knowledgeable Teacher," a professional learning course for pre-candidates.

Context of Courtway Elementary School

Courtway Elementary School, which was opened in 1969, is located in Kewaunee County's largest city. Over 450 students were enrolled during the 2004-2005 school year. During the 2004-2005 school year, 72% of the students at Courtway Elementary School

were eligible for free or reduced lunch. This compares to 38% for Kewaunee County and 48% for the state. Courtway Elementary School is a Title I school.

The staff of Courtway Elementary School (CES) includes a principal and an instructional lead teacher. There are 37 teachers, a media specialist, and a counselor. Paraprofessionals are assigned to kindergarten classrooms and the media center. With an average of 13 years of experience, the staff exceeds the average experience level of teachers in the State of Georgia. However the experience level of teachers at Courtway Elementary is lower than that for the Kewaunee County School System. At Courtway Elementary School, 53% of the classroom teachers have a degree higher than a four year degree. This compares to 55% of all Kewaunee county teachers and almost 50% across the state (see table 6.3).

Table 6.3

Comparison of CES Teachers' Years of Experience and Advanced Degrees Earned

	Average Years of of Experience	Percent With Advanced Degrees
Courtway Elementary	13	53%
Kewaunee County School System	15	55%
Georgia	12.5	49.8%

The mission statement of the Courtway Elementary School reads, “Respect, responsibility, and relevance guide Courtway School and community in nurturing independent, productive citizens.” All students receive daily instruction in reading, math, science, and social studies. Students participate in art, music, and physical education

instruction once a week. Special education, English as a Second Language and gifted services are provided for students who meet qualifications.

Courtway Elementary School reflects the changing demographics of the city in which it is located. The Black population of the school has increased from 47% in 2000 to 56% in 2005, while the white population has decreased from 42% to 23%. The Hispanic community has increased from 9% in 2001 to 15% in 2005. As a result of the increase in this population, English as a Second Language services have been offered. The total population of the school has remained at just under 500 for the past five years. (see Table 6.4).

Table 6.4

Courtway Elementary School Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	56%
Multi-racial	4%
Hispanic	16%
White, Non-Hispanic	23%

Courtway Elementary School did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005. In grades one through five, 78% of the NES students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 85% of the students in the Kewaunee County School System. In Reading/Language Arts, 88% of the CES students scored at the proficient or advanced level compared to 91% for the school system (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5

Percent of CES Students at each AYP Level

	<u>CRCT Mathematics</u>			<u>CRCT Reading/Language Arts</u>		
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Courtway ES	19%	57%	23%	17%	52%	30%
KCSS	22%	54%	23%	19%	47%	34%

The school maintains a website providing information on school programs and activities. The website has links to a school profile which was part of the documentation for its 2004 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation study.

The Context of National Board Certification at Courtway Elementary School

Tammy Ellis is the only National Board Certified Teacher at Courtway Elementary School, receiving certification in 2000. Another Courtway Elementary teacher completed certification in 2001 but has since moved into an administrative position at another school. Two teachers attempted certification in 2002 but were not successful. Since Courtway Elementary School is not defined as a needs improvement school, there are no financial incentives provided by the state for payment of National Board Certification fees. In addition, by state law, teachers who began the certification process after 2004 must work at a needs improvement school to receive a state paid 10% salary supplement upon certification.

The Context of Teacher Leadership at Courtway Elementary School

The administrative staff at Courtway Elementary School includes a principal and an instructional lead teacher. A school leadership committee includes a team leader from each grade, as well as representatives from special education and non-academic classes.

This school leadership committee meets at the direction of the principal. In a typical school year, the committee meets two or three times. The leadership committee does not play an active role in school governance as the administration makes all governance decisions. Team leaders are selected by the principal.

The instructional lead teacher chairs the instruction committee which includes one representative from each grade level. Since the introduction of Georgia Performance Standards, a new state curriculum, the instruction committee helps manage the shift from the Quality Core Curriculum to the new curriculum. The instruction committee is responsible for monitoring the development of curriculum maps.

Other committees include the garden committee, sunshine committee, media committee, technology committee, and staff development committee. Staff members sign up for committee preferences but are assigned to specific committees by the principal.

Tammy Ellis, National Board Certified Teacher

I wasn't looking for a career.

Tammy Ellis grew up thinking that “women did not need to be career oriented.” Tammy stated, “I remember playing school with my dolls and my friends, but I never thought seriously about becoming a teacher.” In college, she “majored in business with additional courses in business education.” She explained, “The idea was that I would be a highly qualified secretary/accountant until I met the right fellow. I thought I might teach to supplement my husband’s salary when the children were in school.” After college, Tammy married, moved to Miami, and started a family. While in Miami, Tammy taught night classes at two vocational schools. When the family moved back to Georgia because

of a job transfer for her husband, Tammy “taught accounting and computer programming at night.”

In 1989, Tammy took a teaching job with Kewaunee County with the provision that she “complete certification requirements for certification in elementary education.” After completing requirements for certification, Tammy earned a masters degree in 1993 and an education specialist degree in 1997, both from West Georgia State University. In addition, she earned an add-on leadership certificate through coursework at Georgia State University in 2004. Tammy has taught at Courtway for 16 years under two principals. When asked about receiving certification in leadership, Tammy stated, “I am not sure if I ever want to leave the classroom, but I got a late start in teaching and I may want some other options before I am eligible for retirement.”

Tammy grew to “love teaching and love learning” and “teaching became more than a way to supplement my husband’s income.” As it became evident that “the marriage was not going to last,” Tammy “began to think of teaching as a career, luckily a career I had fallen in love with.”

National Board Certification: *You should do this.*

Tammy heard about National Board Certification when she “had an opportunity to be a facilitator at a conference at Georgia Tech.” Tammy related, “The director of the program walked by my desk and placed a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards brochure in front of me. He said, ‘You should do this.’” Tammy stated, “I read the brochure and I was definitely interested. I saw this as a way to extend my professionalism.”

In 1998, the fee for National Board Certification was \$2000. Tammy “applied for and received a grant from the Professional Association of Georgia Educators.” The grant helped the newly divorced Tammy with the expenses of certification and also included provisions for mentoring. Tammy looked forward to receiving a state provided 5% raise upon achieving certification since “my paycheck was no longer supplemental.” Tammy also stated, “Timing was great because I had just completed my Educational Specialist Degree, and I was in the mode of writing papers and doing projects.”

National Board Certification: *I needed it to validate my worth.*

As Tammy was a candidate “before the big pay incentives and before many people knew what National Boards was,” the certification became “very personal.”

Tammy explained:

I needed it [National Board Certification] to validate my worth, intelligence, and strength as an individual. The process increased my confidence in myself, repaired my self-esteem, and introduced me to a new group of colleagues who have become my closest allies.

Tammy added, “I was able to focus on the positive aspects of being a teacher. The reflection required in the portfolio spilled over into all aspects of my life. I could feel myself growing as a teacher and person.”

During the second interview, the researcher showed Tammy a list of teacher leadership activities delineated in a survey of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Tammy was asked to place a check mark beside teacher leadership activities in which she participated prior to receiving National Board Certification and those in which she participated after receiving the certification (see Table 6.6).

Table 6.6

Leadership Activities of Tammy Ellis

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Consulted as policy expert on teaching	Consulted as a policy expert on teaching
Advocate for change in school technology	Advocate for change in school technology
Advocate for change in school policies	Advocate for change in school policies
Involvement in school/district leadership	Involvement in school/district leadership
Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association	Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association
Develop instructional strategies/curricula	Develop instructional strategies/curricula
Develop or select programs/materials	Develop or select programs/materials
Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers	Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers
Serve on a state education committee	Participation in a network of NBCTs
	Seek grants to support teaching/learning
	Help NBPTS offer National Board Certification
	Mentor, coach, or encourage Certification Candidates
	Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school, or community organization
	Speak publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification
	Advocate for general school improvement

Table 6.6 (continued)

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
	Advocate for change in learning activities
	Serve on education related committee
	Develop professional development activities
	Develop materials to support or increase student learning

Prior to National Board Certification, Tammy was involved in 10 categories of teacher leadership activities. Tammy started in teacher leadership “by playing a more active role in teacher associations.” The involvement with professional associations “led to becoming a presenter at conferences.” Tammy noted:

The next step was invitations to more and more state-wide programs. It seemed that each program was led to fellowship opportunities for two summers. During these summers I was placed at Zoo Atlanta where I worked with the Georgia Department of Education and the zookeepers.

Tammy further explained, “A requirement for the fellowship experiences at Georgia Tech was to use the information in my classroom and to continue the exchange of ideas with fellowship contacts.” The fellowships at Georgia Tech “were sponsored by over 200 businesses, one of which was Zoo Atlanta.”

In her school, Tammy was on “leadership committee for the school’s 1999 SACS study.” In addition, she “served as a grade level chair.” Tammy stated, “I was available and willing to do whatever was needed at school. I had the time and I had the interest, things some of my colleagues did not have.”

After receiving certification, Tammy indicated that she participated in 20 categories of teacher leadership activities. Many of Tammy's leadership activities "have centered on mentoring candidates for National Board Certification." Tammy reports, "I have worked as a mentor for candidates in my county, a neighboring county, the Professional Association of Georgia Educators, and the Georgia Teacher Center." Tammy serves as "the National Board Certification consultant to the Professional Association of Georgia Educators." In addition, Tammy has "taught the Knowledgeable Teacher Course for Pre-Candidates and offered a course to certify National Board Certified Teachers as Georgia Professional Standards Commission approved facilitators and mentors." Tammy has also "made presentations about National Board Certification to fellows at Georgia Tech." Tammy has been approved as a mentor for National Board Certification candidates by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Tammy is on the Executive Board for Georgia's National Board Certification Committee and in that capacity "helps plan conferences for Georgia's National Board Certified Teachers and works to advocate for National Board Certification." As Georgia moves to a Master Teacher designation, Tammy is serving on the "Georgia Leadership Advancement Panel which is working on Professional Teaching Standards for Georgia teachers. These standards are aligned with National Board Standards and Georgia Performance Standards for Students."

In 2001, her principal nominated Tammy for training as a Teacher Support Specialist. After completing the training, Tammy "served as a mentor for new teachers in my building." Mentoring included "documenting 45 hours of supportive activities which could include observation, examination of lesson plans, guidance about discipline, and

help in dealing with parents.” Tammy noted, “I share materials, lesson plans, and ideas. I enjoy collaborating with others. I feel that if I am working with other teachers, then there is a multiplier effect on my impact on student learning.”

Tammy became very animated and her eyes sparkled when she discussed another endeavor, the Reach to Teach Program. Reach to Teach is funded through a United States Department of Education Transition to Teaching Grant. In this program, “teachers going through alternative certification who are working in high needs schools receive face-to-face mentoring and virtual mentoring through LiveText.” Working in the Reach to Teach Program has provided Tammy with “an opportunity to travel throughout the state and work with teachers in several school systems.” Tammy pointed out that she “has been fortunate to have professional conversations with a variety of people in a variety of settings.” For Tammy, “working with these teachers has been a gratifying experience.” Tammy’s school system is compensated for the cost of substitute teachers when she is working for the Reach to Teach project. In addition, Tammy has “received a stipend and has been issued a laptop computer for use in the project.” All 10 Reach to Teach mentors in the project are National Board Certified Teachers who have Teacher Support Specialist certification.

Tammy was appointed by the Georgia Department of Education to be part of the Georgia Curriculum Mapping Team and was sent to Phoenix for training. Tammy then “applied for a grant and trained the staff at my school in curriculum mapping.”

Tammy “chairs the staff development committee for Courtway Elementary School” and serves on the Kewaunee County Staff Development/Professional Learning Committee. As part of the county committee, Tammy has “served on the Teacher

Induction Program Committee” and each year “provides information on National Board Certification for teachers new to Kewaunee County.”

Serving on both county level and state textbook committees, Tammy has “learned about the available science textbooks and had a hand in selecting books for use.” In addition, Tammy has “served on a review panel for the development of science questions for both the old and new Georgia CRCTs [Criterion Referenced Curriculum Tests].” With the “rollout of the Georgia Performance Standards,” Tammy has “served on a system committee to align the standards with the county curriculum and adopted materials” and “is working on benchmark assessments to monitor student progress in meeting those objectives.” Tammy has also “redelivered the information about the Georgia Performance Standards and curriculum alignment to teachers in other schools in the school district.” Tammy noted, “There are some teachers at my school who just don’t get how to incorporate the new curriculum into their teaching. I have done some informal mentoring to help them stay on track with helping their students meet performance standards.” Working with colleagues can be “challenging.” Tammy explained, “I have to walk a fine line between being a fellow teacher and someone who is trying to make some changes. Teachers often want to be independent.”

Previous work with Zoo Atlanta has led to an appointment to the Zoo Atlanta Advisory Panel. In this capacity, Tammy “works with the Georgia Department of Education and the zoo in planning workshops for teachers at the zoo that help teachers use the zoo as a resource in delivery of the state adopted curriculum.” Tammy elaborated, “Working with Zoo Atlanta has been a wonderful way for me to infuse life experiences with academics and help other teachers do the same.”

National Board Certification: *Does my principal get it?*

Tammy has worked for two principals since starting the certification process in 1998. Tammy and colleague started the process together and were the first candidates in the Kewaunee County School System to attempt National Board Certification. Tammy indicated:

At school, there was no understanding of what we were doing and basically no support. We helped each other with video-taping, drove to mentoring sessions together, and commiserated with each other when we did not receive certification on our first attempt. But then again, it was new and not well-publicized.

Tammy elaborated, "I'm not sure we talked about it with others much, and I am not sure that other staff members would have been interested if we did." While stating that her principal "knew, because he signed some paperwork," Tammy indicated that he "never asked how we were doing and basically showed no interest." Both Tammy and her colleague "saw no point in discussing National Board Certification with their principal." Tammy added, "We saw little point in discussing anything about curriculum or instruction with him either. The assistant principal for instruction was too busy to get involved."

When Tammy received certification in 2000, the director of staff development for the system came to the school to present Tammy with flowers. The principal "was informed by the county office but made no announcement to the staff about the certification." When an article highlighting Tammy as her school district's first National Board Certified Teacher appeared in the local newspaper, the "principal did not ever refer to the article or discuss National Board Certification" with Tammy. Later during that school year, "my principal introduced me to a visiting business partner as 'The National

Teacher of the Year.” Tammy grinned when she said, “I made no attempt to correct him.”

In 2001, a new principal came to Courtway Elementary School and Tammy’s colleague “certified on her third attempt.” The principal “announced the certification at a faculty meeting and has on occasion mentioned that he has National Board Certified Teachers on staff.”

Tammy feels:

My principal supports my teacher leadership activities. He has nominated me for some system level curriculum work and textbook adoption committees and has been totally supportive of the Reach to Teach activities, even though these activities cause me to miss many days of school, 15 last school year. I could not participate in these activities without a willing principal.

Tammy feels that “my principal thinks that what I am doing and what I am learning can benefit the school. We do not talk about specifics.”

To help compensate for the time away from the building, Tammy “volunteers for everything possible, like teaching the instructional extension classes after school or helping to cover classes for absent colleagues.” Tammy also “never misses a faculty meeting, a PTO meeting, or any other activity that would make it look like I don’t support the school.” Tammy added:

I am always extremely respectful when dealing with my principal, whether in a group or in private. I never say anything disparaging about him. He is supportive of me, so I am supportive of him. I don’t want to give him any reason to pull the plug on any of my out of school activities.

Tammy explained, “I would like more understanding from the administration about what I am doing and how it can impact student learning.” Tammy’s voice trailed off as she said, “But maybe I would have out-of-school activities restricted. You know, unintended consequences.”

Leadership: Part of being a professional

Tammy “enjoys all of the teacher leadership opportunities” and “wishes for time to pursue more.” Tammy stated, “Teacher leadership makes me happy.” When asked why she thinks she has the opportunities, Tammy commented, “I make myself available. I volunteer for everything. I believe that this is part of being a professional. For some, teaching is an eight-to-four job. For me, it is a way of life.” Tammy acknowledged, “It is easier for me to do these extra things since my children are grown up and I can pretty much set my own schedule.”

Tammy related teacher leadership to the National Board Certification process:

Teacher leadership is an important part of the National Board Certification process. The documented accomplishment entry requires information about teacher leadership activities. I think teacher leaders may be drawn to the certification process because they are already functioning as accomplished teachers.

Tammy explained, “Collaboration is valued in National Board Certification and teacher leaders must collaborate with colleagues. It all goes together. I really love working with other teachers.”

Working with colleagues is “something that requires I be careful of my approach” according to Tammy. Other teachers seems to appreciate help, but “they don’t want to hear anything about me being a National Board Certified Teacher.” The title of NBCT “seems to crate a wedge and inhibit collegiality.” Tammy indicated that her peers “don’t want to do the work that goes along with certification and don’t understand the process, and some resent the 10% salary supplement.”

Tammy discussed the effect of her leadership experiences to her teaching:

By working with Reach to Teach and participating in activities related to curriculum mapping, I gain knowledge that helps me as a classroom teacher. I

attend workshops that provide me with cutting edge information. I do back into my classroom excited to try out what I have learned. My students benefit from my increased knowledge and my increased enthusiasm.

Tammy's students sometimes ask, "Where have you been?" and "What did you learn."

Tammy added, "I share my experiences with my students. I think the trade-off of lost instructional time and the knowledge gained has worked in the favor of my school and my students."

With many opportunities coming her way, Tammy has learned that she "can't do everything." Tammy explained:

I was away from the building quite a bit because of Reach to Teach. I felt that taking on additional responsibilities would have harmed my effectiveness in Reach to Teach and impaired the collegial relationships in my school I had worked so hard to build.

According to Tammy, "I must balance what is good for me professionally and personally and what is good for my school. Choosing what not to do is sometimes difficult because I wonder what further opportunities could arise."

In discussing the impact of National Board Certification on her teacher leadership opportunities, Tammy said, "Being a National Board Certified Teacher has opened some doors, but I was committed to teacher leadership before I attempted National Board Certification. I made my own opportunities. My hand goes up when they ask for volunteers"

Tammy related, "The staff development director of the school system asked me to provide introductory workshops on National Board Certification. I knew she was interested in the certification process." When the staff development director moved to another school system, she asked Tammy to "provide workshops on National Board Certification."

Other leadership opportunities were presented by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE). Tammy stated, “There were many National Board Certified Teachers in 2000, and all of a sudden there was an explosion in the number of applicants. Mentors were needed and PAGE asked me to help.” During the mentoring sessions, Tammy “made contacts which led to mentoring at the Georgia Teacher Center.” Selection as a Reach to Teach mentor was an “offshoot of National Board mentoring activities.”

Job satisfaction: *I'm satisfied.*

Once Tammy decided to pursue a career in teaching, she decided “to make it more than a job,” and she became involved in professional organizations, “attending conferences, meeting people, and volunteering for whatever interested me.” Tammy related, “One activity seemed to lead to the next. One contact seemed to lead to another. Everywhere I turned there was an activity that enhanced my feelings of professionalism and helped me learn ways to be a more accomplished educator.” Participation in professional activities became a “way of life.”

Teacher leadership activities are “very important” to Tammy. In her current job, she is given the “freedom” to have an active professional life. Tammy also “appreciates the autonomy” she has. Tammy explained, “No one is checking up on me. If I say I need to take a day for Reach to Teach mentoring, my principal signs the leave form and I have the day.” Tammy stated, “I think that they know that I am not shortchanging my responsibilities to my school and my students. I have an effective substitute teacher that I use regularly, and I leave good plans.”

In reviewing her teacher leadership activities, Tammy pointed to the “satisfaction” she received from opportunities which allowed her “to make an impact on teaching and learning.” Appointments to her school and school district staff development committees allowed Tammy “to participate in decisions on effective staff development programs.” Participation on the review panel for the science CRCT questions allowed Tammy “to have input into judgments on appropriate test questions.” By serving on committees involved with aligning the curriculum with the Georgia Performance Standards, Tammy “has the opportunity to impact how the curriculum will be delivered.”

Service on the SACS leadership team gave Tammy “input on the school improvement plan which would govern school planning.” Grade level chair responsibilities allowed Tammy “leadership in determining the focus for grade level meetings.” Textbook committee membership allowed Tammy “to have an active role in selecting appropriate textbooks.”

Tammy has spent time and energy advocating for National Board Certification. Tammy “enjoys being on the frontline in supporting National Board Certification.” Tammy also has “satisfaction from working on the Georgia Leadership Advancement Panel.” In this endeavor, Tammy enjoys “making contributions to the effort of aligning National Board Standards and Georgia Performance Standards for Students.”

Job Satisfaction: *Not quite*

While pleased to have opportunities to work in leadership roles outside of her school, Tammy “feels that there is a problem with governance” at her school. Tammy explained, “All decisions at the school are made by the administration with little or no teacher input.” Because “there is no working leadership team that is selected by the

teachers, there is no real forum for suggestions.” Tammy characterizes the approach of administrators to staff as “parenting, where decisions are top-down.” Tammy stated, “Sometimes reasons are given for decisions, most often they are not. Directives from the county office are handled at the last minute so that we run around like chickens with our head cut off without knowing why.”

An example of the “problems” Tammy sees with her school “can be seen in the preparation for the most recent SACS study.” Tammy stated:

In contrast to the earlier study, all of the teachers selected were inexperienced. This allowed the administration to control the process. With only 10 teachers involved, the entire school did not have ownership in the process and true school improvement did not occur.

While Tammy “did not have the time for an active role in the SACS committee,” she “wishes more teachers would have had an opportunity to truly participate.”

Tammy indicated that she is “treated special” by the administration. While Tammy “appreciates the special treatment,” she stated that “most teachers do not have the chance to be the best they can be.” The attitude of the administration does not “encourage collegiality” or “professionalism in teachers.”

Tammy pointed out that she “plays down being National Board Certified.” The “climate of the school is not appreciative of accomplishments of staff members.” According to Tammy, “National Board Certification has received some bad press” and “there is some resentment about the 10% salary supplement given to National Board Certified Teachers.” Tammy said, “It would be great to work somewhere where the accomplishments of individuals were valued and celebrated.”

When asked to describe an ideal teaching situation, Tammy said, “I like working with kids and I like the material I teach. I would like more collegiality. I think the chance

for collegiality would be enhanced if the school administration would encourage all teachers to be teacher leaders.” While Tammy “knows that all staff members would not leap at leadership opportunities, it would open the door to professionalism for more teachers.”

What’s next?

With a leadership certificate, Tammy is prepared to assume “a leadership role in a school district office or at the building level.” Tammy is “more interested in curriculum and instruction than dealing with discipline.” However, the Reach to Teach project is something that Tammy “wants to see through to the end of the grant period, at least a couple more years.” When discussing the potential for a leadership position, Tammy pointed out that “the physical demands of teaching are hard” and that may be a “deciding factor in pursuing another avenue in education.”

Mentoring for National Board Certification candidates through the Professional Association for Georgia Educators has given Tammy “new options for the future.” Tammy has served as lead mentor at a mentoring site at Marathon County in East Georgia. Central office staff members at Marathon County have “encouraged” Tammy to apply for a leadership position in that school district.

Reach to Teach activities have also given Tammy “contact with leadership personnel in other school systems.” Tammy “was asked to apply for a principalship and for a curriculum position in one of those counties.” Tammy stated, “I was interested but not interested enough to complete the application process.” She also noted that accepting either of the positions “would have required moving,” something that she was “not sure about doing.”

Tammy has enrolled in an external doctorate program at Argosy University and “completed about one-fifth of the coursework.” Although Tammy “would like to complete a doctorate,” she is “not sure that this is the best program.” The program is “expensive” and the degree “would not carry the prestige of a doctorate earned from the university system.”

Case Summary

Tammy Ellis earned National Board Certification in 2000. Although she got a “late start” as an educator, Tammy thought of education as a career rather than a job and pursued opportunities in teacher leadership. Prior to achieving National Board Certification, Tammy participated in 10 types of teacher leadership activities. That number doubled to 20 after Tammy became an NBCT. Many of the new activities were presented to Tammy because she was a National Board Certified Teacher.

Tammy has worked for two principals in two schools since starting the National Board Certification process. In both schools, Tammy was given many opportunities for building and school district level teacher leadership. The first principal did not appear to be interested and showed no support for her National Board Candidacy. The second principal has allowed Tammy the freedom to participate in teacher leadership activities which have taken her away from school for as many as 15 days per school year.

Tammy is satisfied with the autonomy she has and with the opportunities to pursue teacher leadership activities in many venues. The teacher leadership activities are very satisfying. However, Tammy would like to work at a school where teachers actually participated in school governance and where there would be more collegiality.

Tammy has completed requirements for a leadership certificate and would like a leadership role that is related to curriculum and instruction. She has started work on a doctorate in administration and may complete that. In the meantime, Tammy enjoys her job and the leadership activities in which she participates. And for now, Tammy's "plate is full."

CHAPTER 7

TIFFANY ALLEN

The Context of the Oconto County School System

Tiffany Allen, a National Board Certified Teacher, works at Galloway Elementary School (GES) in the Oconto County School System (OCSS) in North Georgia. The Oconto County School System is 45 miles South of Georgia's largest city. In 2005, the Oconto County School System had a student enrollment of 3,700 housed in three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The budget for the 2004-2005 school year was approximately 24.5 million dollars, providing for a per pupil expenditure of \$7281.45.

The Oconto County School System serves a largely rural community that is becoming increasingly suburban. A large lake with vacation and year round homes has an economic impact on the county. A major employer in Oconto County is a state prison. There has been a steady influx of residents as the population of the county has increased 14% since 2000. The population in 2004 was approximately 22,500.

As the county has increased in size, so has the Oconto County School System. In 2000, there were 3222 students in the system compared to 3472 in 2005. In that 5 year period, the white population increased from 61% to 63% of the student body, while the Black population decreased from 37% to 33 % of the total (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1

Oconto County School System Percent Ethnicity, 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	33%
Multi-racial	2%
Hispanic	2%
White, Non-Hispanic	63%

Students in the Oconto County Schools scored lower on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than students in Georgia, and students in the United States. The percentage of high school seniors tested is 3% lower than the percentage tested in the nation and 21% lower than the percent tested in Georgia (see Table 7.2).

Table 7.2

Oconto County SAT Scores in 2005

	Average SAT Score	Percent Tested
Oconto County	907	45%
State	989	66%
Nation	1020	48%

The Oconto County School System did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005 with four of its five schools (80%) meeting the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress. Academic performance was a factor in the failure to make Adequate Yearly progress for one middle school. The school system failed to meet the standards of Adequate Yearly Progress in 2004.

Context of National Board Certification in the Oconto County School District

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards reported that four teachers in the Oconto County School System had achieved National Board Certification as of November 2005. The school district office reports that seven National Board Certified teachers are presently employed by the school system, three in administrative positions.

The Oconto County School System does not provide a financial incentive for teachers who complete National Board Certification. In 2002 and 2003, informational sessions on National Board Certification were offered to system teachers as was “The Knowledgeable Teacher,” a professional learning course for pre-candidates. Since 2003, the system has not provided these activities, citing a lack of interest. A review of the website of the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in which the Oconto County School participates revealed that no mentoring sessions for National Board Certification candidates is offered through the RESA. The RESA has offered The Knowledgeable Teacher, a professional learning course for pre-candidates.

Context of Galloway Elementary School

Galloway Elementary School (GES), which was opened in 2004, is located in Oconto County’s largest city. Over 600 students were enrolled during the 2004-2005 school year. During the 2004-2005 school year, 52% of the students at Galloway Elementary School were eligible for free or reduced lunch. This compares to 49% for Oconto County and 48% for the state. Galloway Elementary School is a Title I school.

The staff of Galloway Elementary School includes a principal, an assistant principal, and a learning support specialist. There are 53 teachers, a media specialist, and

a counselor. Paraprofessionals are assigned to kindergarten classrooms and the media center. With an average of 6 years of experience, the staff falls below the average experience level of teachers in the State of Georgia and for the Oconto County School System. At Galloway Elementary School, 12% of the teachers have advanced degrees. This compares to 55% of all Oconto county teachers and almost 50% across the state (see table 7.3).

Table 7.3

Comparison of GES Teachers' Years of Experience and Advanced Degrees Earned

	Average Years of Experience	Percent with Advanced Degrees
Galloway Elementary	6	12%
Oconto County School System	10.8	55%
Georgia	12.5	49.8%

The mission statement of the Galloway Elementary School reads “Preparing Students for the 21st Century.” All students receive daily instruction in reading, math, science, and social studies. Students participate in art, computer, and music classes once a week and physical education instruction twice a week. Special education and gifted services are provided for students who meet qualifications.

Galloway Elementary School reflects the demographics of the school system in which it is located. The student body is mostly white (61%). The second largest demographic group is Black students who make up 33% of the student body. The demographics have remained stable for the two years that Galloway Elementary School has been in operation (see Table 7.4)

Table 7.4

Galloway Elementary School Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	33%
Multi-racial	3%
Hispanic	3%
White, Non-Hispanic	61%

Galloway Elementary School did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005. In grades one through five, 81% of the GES students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 75% of the students in the Oconto County School System. In Reading/Language Arts, 84% of the GES students scored at the proficient or advanced level compared to 82% for the school system (see Table 7.5).

Table 7.5

Percent of GES Students at each AYP Level

	<u>CRCT Mathematics</u>			<u>CRCT Reading/Language Arts</u>		
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Galloway ES	19%	70%	11%	16%	61%	23%
OCSS	25%	60%	15%	18.%	44%	28%

During its first year of operation, Galloway Elementary School applied for and received a federal Reading First Grant. The three year grant provided monies for assessment and teaching materials and for training teachers in effective practices in the

teaching of reading. One of the provisions of the grant was the creation of the position of literacy coach, a teacher who works with other teachers to help student learn to read. The literacy coach manages a web-based reading assessment program, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, and uses this program to monitor the progress of individual students and classes in meeting literacy benchmarks.

The Context of National Board Certification at Galloway Elementary School

Tiffany Allen is the only National Board Certified Teacher at Galloway Elementary School, receiving certification in 2000. However, two administrators, the principal and the learning support specialist, are also National Board Certified Teachers. All three of the National Board Certified Teachers received certification while working for other school systems. There are no current candidates for National Board Certification at Galloway Elementary School. Since Galloway Elementary School is not classified as a Need Improvement School by the Georgia Department of Education, teachers at the school are not eligible for state sponsored stipends for payment of fees for the certification process. In addition, teachers at Galloway Elementary School who complete certification would not be eligible for a 10% salary supplement.

The Context of Teacher Leadership at Galloway Elementary School

The administrative staff at Courtway Elementary School includes a principal and an instructional lead teacher. A school leadership committee includes a team leader from each grade, representatives from special classes, and the literacy coach. The principal uses the meetings to disseminate information. Team leaders are expected to take the information back to members of their teams. The principal sets the agenda and runs the meetings.

Team leaders also serve on the school's professional learning committee. This committee makes suggestions to the system professional learning committee about professional learning options for staff members. Other school committees include media, technology, and sunshine. Appointments to committees are made by the principal.

Tiffany Allen, National Board Certified Teacher

I always knew I would become a teacher

Tiffany Allen remembers growing up "wanting to be a teacher." She related:

When I was seven or eight, I was a tomboy, and the boys wanted me on a team. So I would make them play school with me before I would play baseball with them. I remember having all of the boys in my neighborhood sitting on my porch steps with me playing teacher and giving them little gold stars I bought with my allowance.

Tiffany added, "I used to make out worksheets and tests." Teaching was Tiffany's "goal through school." Tiffany pointed out, "When I was a teenager, I remember teachers who made a difference in the lives of their students and that made me feel that teaching was my calling."

While in college to become an English teacher, Tiffany was asked to "help out" at a private Christian school until the school could "find somebody." Tiffany "taught in a study lab in the morning" and was "the instructor for health and home economics in the afternoon." Tiffany smiled as she commented, "I guess they never found anybody because I finished the year, and they asked me back to teach English to sixth and seventh graders." Tiffany taught English at the Christian school for four years.

Tiffany and her husband "started a family" and she "took some time off to be with my boys." After six years at home, Tiffany "went back to school" while "working part-time teaching Pre-K at another Christian school." Tiffany stated, "This is when I decided

that this is what I wanted to do, and I changed my major from English to Early Childhood even though it would take an extra year to complete my degree.” Tiffany received her bachelor’s degree from Georgia State University in 1991.

Tiffany’s public school career began with teaching first grade for four years. After a year as a second grade teacher, she spent four years in the Special Instructional Assistance program “teaching remedial reading to students in kindergarten through grade three.” Teaching reading was “special” to Tiffany. After completing a master’s degree in Elementary Education from West Georgia College in 1999, Tiffany went back to school and “got the reading specialist certification add-on in 2000.”

When the funding for the Special Instructional Assistance Program ended, Tiffany went back to teaching second grade. Because she “wanted to be more involved in reading,” Tiffany changed schools and school systems. She accepted a position teaching reading to kindergarten to third graders in the state funded Early Intervention Program. The program was “new to the school,” and Tiffany “was asked to help set it up.” After three years as an Early Intervention Program teacher, Tiffany was “asked to apply for a position as literacy coach” at Galloway Elementary School in Oconto County. Tiffany has worked for two years as literacy coach.

National Board Certification: *Intriguing*

Tiffany “read about National Board Certification” in a professional magazine and was “intrigued from the very beginning.” Tiffany explained:

When I was growing up, I put teachers on a pedestal. I looked on teachers as being professionals just like doctors and lawyers. My parents, who had high school educations, taught my siblings and I to respect teachers. It was a big shock to me when I became a teacher that other people did not look on teachers in the same way. I thought that if there was a National Certification that is rigorous, then it would be like a lawyer passing the bar exam.

Tiffany continued, “I want to learn more about the certification because I thought it was important to my profession.”

Tiffany also felt that going through the National Board Certification process would make her a “better teacher” and would “demonstrate to others that I am an accomplished teacher.” Tiffany reminisced:

It helped bring back the excitement you have while learning to be a teacher and going through student teaching.... I realize that I had gotten stale and going through this process helped me remember what it was like to go in and do the job for the kids and not go in and just do what you are told to do. Doing it for the kids is a first priority.

National Board Certification also helped Tiffany “realize how to improve” and “to realize what I do well.”

National Board Certification: *I’ve come out of my comfort zone*

Becoming a National Board Certified Teacher was “affirming” to Tiffany. She stated, “National Board Certification made me feel better about myself. That has given me the courage to step out of my comfort zone.” She smiled shyly when she said, “People who have known me for a long time are amazed when I tell them that I travel and do workshops in front of people. That’s what I mean by stepping out of my comfort zone.” Tiffany indicated that has “done this to help other people go through the same process and reap the rewards of it.” Once National Board Certified, Tiffany wanted to “spread the word.” She stated, I felt that I needed to help other teachers go through the process so I started to facilitate and mentor other teachers.”

Being National Board Certified has caused Tiffany to become “bold” in the places where she works. She pointed out that as a “more mature beginning teacher,” she was always a “mother hen to other new teachers.” Tiffany described herself as a “teacher

nurturer rather than a teacher leader before going through the National Board Certification process.” While Tiffany indicated that she had been “helpful” and “one to try to solve problems,” she stated, “I was never one to initiate.”

Once Tiffany received National Board Certification she “became more comfortable going to the school administration and saying have you thought about doing this or this needs to be done.” Now Tiffany “has the courage to sound off.” She added, “People listen to me. I guess I never expected that”

During the second interview, the researcher showed Tiffany a list of teacher leadership activities delineated in a survey of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Tiffany was asked to place a check mark beside teacher leadership activities in which she participated prior to receiving National Board Certification and those in which she participated after receiving the certification (see Table 7.6).

Table 7.6

Leadership Activities of Tiffany Allen

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Involvement in school/district leadership	Involvement in school/district leadership
Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association	Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association
Involvement in school/district leadership	Involvement in school/district leadership
Develop instructional strategies/curricula	Develop instructional strategies/curricula
Serve on education related committee	Serve on education related committee
Develop professional development activities	Develop professional development activities

Table 7.6 (continued)

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers	Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers
Advocate for change in learning activities	Advocate for change in learning activities
Develop materials to support or increase student learning	Develop materials to support or increase student learning
Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school or community organization	Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school, or community organization
Conduct research examining issues related to the improvement of teaching and student learning	Conduct research examining issues related to the improvement of teaching and student learning
	Participation in a network of NBCTs
	Seek grants to support teaching/learning
	Help NBPTS offer National Board Certification
	Advocate for National Board Certification and quality teaching to policy makers
	Advocate for change in school policies
	Mentor, coach, or encourage Certification Candidates
	Speak publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification
	Advocate for general school improvement

Prior to National Board Certification, Tiffany was involved in 10 categories of teacher leadership activities. These activities were at the school and school system level.

In 1996, Tiffany was nominated by her principal for training as a Teacher Support Specialist. Tiffany earned certified as a Teacher Support Specialist and in that capacity has “mentored at least one beginning teacher each year.”

In 1998, Tiffany applied for and received a grant from her school system to do an action research project on Family Literacy. She repeated that action research three years later in another school system.

Tiffany served on her system’s textbook adoption committee for language arts in 1997-98 and for health in 2000. In both cases she was appointed by her principal. She has also served on committees to develop curriculum. From 1994-1996, Tiffany “served on the leadership committee at her school and as leader of a grade level team.”

Tiffany has been involved in professional organizations, “serving as building representative for the Professional Association of Georgia Educators.” She has “been a member of the Georgia Reading Council and chaired a local reading association.”

After receiving certification, Tiffany reports that she participated in 16 categories of teacher leadership activities. Many of her activities center on mentoring candidates for National Board Certification. Tiffany served as a mentor for the Georgia Teacher Center and in that capacity participated in weekend seminars for candidates. In addition, Tiffany was appointed as a lead mentor for the Professional Association of Georgia Educators National Board Certification mentoring program. Tiffany also served as an “advisor/candidate facilitator” for National Board Candidates in the school system where she worked from 2001-2004. Tiffany has been approved as a mentor for National Board Certification candidates by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Tiffany's action research activities continued after certification. The topics for her post-certification research included "family literacy, cultural awareness through storytelling, boys' book clubs, and integrating reading into content areas."

In 2001, when Tiffany was hired as an Early Intervention Program (EIP) teacher, she was given "the responsibility of setting up the EIP program which was new to that school." Tiffany was asked to "set up schedules for the teacher, evaluate the available materials and make suggestions for additional materials, and work with the other EIP teachers to create procedures for the delivery of reading services."

As literacy coach, Tiffany has responsibility for redelivering information from Reading First meetings. In addition, Tiffany observes teachers and monitors the progress of students in each class. An essential component in Tiffany's job description is "to work with teachers to improve student learning." Tiffany commented, "In my training for this job, I have been told that I not an administrator and that teachers need to feel free to come to me for help." An additional responsibility as literacy coach "is the ordering and inventorying of materials purchased through the Reading First grant."

During the 2003-2004 school year, Tiffany served on a team involved in correlating the Georgia Performance Standards to the system curriculum. As literacy coach, Tiffany is charged with "monitoring the implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards in language arts." In 2002 and 2004, Tiffany "served on committees to interview and make recommendations regarding the selection of school principals."

Tiffany was chosen to be part of Kennesaw State University's Courage to Teach cohort. Originally developed by the Georgia Teacher Center, the Courage to Teach cohort

of 12 educators meets four times a year for two years. According to Tiffany, the meetings are designed to “nurture, energize, and encourage educators who will take the ideas back to their colleagues.” Tiffany finds the meetings “stimulating and exciting.” Tiffany relates, “I go back to work charged up and anxious to share what I learned. I am very pleased to be part of Courage to Teach.”

National Board Certification: *Does my principal get it?*

Tiffany has worked for five principals since beginning the National Board Certification process in 1999. She related:

The principal I was working for when I was going through the process didn't understand the concept but knew it was a good thing because the other five teachers in my county that had the certification at the time were well thought of and highly respected.

A concern of the principal was whether Tiffany could “handle both the certification process and her job.” While the principal “did not hinder” Tiffany, “no support was offered.” Once Tiffany “finished the process and began speaking with other teachers about reflective practices in teaching and what is right for kids,” Tiffany “felt that the principal was upset for some reason.” Tiffany explained, “She seemed to resent the fact that teachers came to me for advice rather than going to the office. When I would speak up at a faculty meeting, she would cut me off. Others noticed her change towards me.”

In fall of 2000, Tiffany had a new principal. Tiffany said, “This principal did not have a clue about National Board Certification, but she did know it was a good thing.” Tiffany recalls being introduced at a PTA meeting as “a teacher who could now go anywhere in the United States and teach.” Tiffany felt that the principal wanted her on staff for “bragging rights,” and that principal did recommend Tiffany for a system-wide committee. However, Tiffany was “miserable” at that school. She explained:

I felt like the administration as a whole and that the teachers at the grade level I was working on saw me as a threat. They were happy with the way things had been. They saw me as a new person coming in with a title and rocking the boat by offering new ways and ideas on how to do things.

Tiffany decided to “move on” to another school in another school system.

In 2001, Tiffany changed schools and found a principal who “understood what National Board Certification was about and was very knowledgeable about the process.” Tiffany commented, “She [the principal] even said if they came out with something like that for principals, she would be interested in going through it.”

The principal would ask Tiffany “questions about the process” and how Tiffany “interpreted things as a result of going through the process.” When Tiffany had opportunities to work at mentoring sessions, the principal allowed Tiffany to take “professional leave.” Tiffany had “opportunities to talk with the principal about ideas learned from mentoring.” Tiffany stated, “She seemed interested in hearing what I had to say and in adopting some of the ideas I brought to her.” Tiffany worked with that principal for three years.

In 2004, a school in a nearby county advertised the position of literacy coach. Tiffany was interested because she “loved the teaching of reading and wanted to help other teachers.” Posted requirements for the job included Teacher Support Specialist certification and a background in reading. When Tiffany looked into the job, she found that the learning support specialist at the school was a National Board Certified Teacher that Tiffany had mentored through the certification process. The learning support specialist “recommended that Tiffany be interviewed for the literacy coach position.” Tiffany felt that the recommendation was made because “the learning support specialist

knew that I could mentor teachers in the process of analysis and reflection on their own teaching.”

Tiffany was hired for the literacy coach position. She noted, “I think that my reading background and the knowledge that I did know how to mentor teachers was more important to him [the principal] than the National Board Certification.” But the principal “was proud that he had two teachers on his staff that were NBCTs, and he encouraged others to go through the process, citing us as examples of what NBCTs are.”

At the end of Tiffany’s first year as literacy coach, “the principal resigned to move back to his home state.” The learning support specialist became the new principal. Tiffany stated, “A National Board Certified Teacher herself, this principal certainly does get it. We have the same high expectations and we think alike. I think because we have been through the same process, it helps us to work easily together.”

Leadership: *I want to make a difference.*

Leadership “happened to” Tiffany. She stated, “I never thought of myself as a leader. I think I am a caretaker, a nurturer. Because I thought National Board Certification was important, I tried to spread the word. That seems to have put me in leadership positions.”

Tiffany explained:

Because I was among the first National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia, it seemed that I was needed for mentoring by my professional organization and my school system. When the supplement for National Board Certified Teachers went from 5% to 10%, interest in certification went way up and teachers who were already National Board Certified were needed to mentor candidates. I was among those asked.

Mentoring for a professional organization “led to mentoring at the Georgia Teacher Center.” Tiffany noted, “As I did more mentoring, I made more contacts, and I had more

opportunities. I see a direct relationship between mentoring and opportunities like my present job and participating in the Courage to Teach Cohort.”

When asked about the leadership involved in Teacher Support Specialist mentoring, Tiffany replied, “I really thought of that as nurturing, as being a caretaker.” When asked why she thinks she was chosen to be trained as a Teacher Support Specialist, she answered, “I guess it is because I was already doing the mentoring informally.” Tiffany acknowledged, “I feel good about the mentoring because I have helped teachers help students. I have also learned from the teachers I mentored.”

Tiffany is “a worrier.” She stated, “I am intimidated by the decisions I have to make as a leader. I worry if I am prepared; will I make the right decision?”

Tiffany finds working with teachers to be “interesting.” She noted, “I think it is easier to get the attention of a group of 6 year olds than a group of teachers.” For Tiffany, “part of working with teachers is easy.” Tiffany “enjoys saying, I love the way you do this, I hadn’t thought about doing it that way.” The hard part is “telling someone that they are doing the wrong thing.”

Tiffany “recognizes that the literacy coach position is a true teacher leadership position.” This position lets Tiffany “make even more of a difference in children’s lives because of working with many children and teachers instead of just one class.”

Job Satisfaction: *I’m satisfied, very satisfied.*

Tiffany is “very pleased” with her current position. The leadership that comes with the literacy coach position gives Tiffany what she describes as “the feeling that I can make even more of a difference in children’s lives in that I work with many teachers and students rather than just my own class of students.” Tiffany noted:

I never thought I would be a teacher leader and now I can't imagine teaching without having teacher leadership responsibilities. The ability to have greater impact on what happens at a school and the opportunities to have collegial relationships with staff members both made me more satisfied as an educator.

Tiffany thought for a moment and added, "I guess I have the perfect job."

The literacy coach position affords Tiffany "a great deal of autonomy." Tiffany commented, "As I grow more comfortable in this position, autonomy has become more important to me. For me to work effectively with teachers, I must have autonomy. I must be seen as separate from administration" Tiffany added, "Since I have been a literacy coach, both principals have given me autonomy and allowed me to do what I thought was best. The autonomy I have contributes to the satisfaction I have with this job." Tiffany noted that because she is a "doer rather than a follower." She is "glad for the chance to get the job done rather than wait for others."

As Tiffany has grown "more comfortable with the literacy coach position," she has learned to "trust" her "intuition when it comes to making leadership decisions." Tiffany elaborated, "I find that my superiors are asking for my opinions and/or agreeing with my assessments of situations which makes me feel more confident in my leadership abilities."

Tiffany also feels "comfort in the level of conversation with the administrators at school." Tiffany said, "We talk about reflective practices and collegiality. When we discuss instructional issues, it is as if the five core propositions are on the wall. I enjoy the conversation."

Tiffany found "other teacher leadership opportunities to be satisfying." When she was hired to implement an EIP program, Tiffany "enjoyed setting the program up and helping make decisions about how the reading program would be delivered and what

materials would be needed.” Tiffany also “liked the decision-making that was part of the literacy coach position: setting schedules; buying materials; helping teachers make reading groups.”

When asked if there was anything that was not satisfying, she paused and said, “I wish that teachers at my school had a greater part in decision-making at school.”

Tiffany’s indicated that “many staff members do not seem interested in decision-making perhaps because of their lack of experience.” Another factor may be “a principal who is learning her job and who may not be ready to relinquish control.”

What’s next?

Tiffany “really enjoys” her job as a literacy coach. She explained:

I love to work with teachers. I love to work with students. I love to work with reading. I get all three as literacy coach. The Reading First grant is for three years with the possibility of renewal for three more. I would like to stay as long as I can in this position.

With a smile, Tiffany acknowledged that “the grant will end eventually, and it is possible that the school system will not fund the position”

While going back into the classroom, “is not an awful possibility,” Tiffany would like to “find a similar job.” She declared, “I don’t think I want to be an administrator because I like to be around children, but I might like becoming an Instructional Lead Teacher or Learning Support Specialist. I want a job which is involved with instruction.”

While Tiffany has indicated interest in instruction, she also stated, “I may have to go back to school to get leadership certification. I think that may give me a better chance of getting a job in another school or school system.”

In the meantime, Tiffany will “work 220 days per year as a literacy coach” and “ponder the future” while she “enjoys the present.”

Case Summary

Tiffany Allen, a teacher with 14 years of experience, achieved National Board Certification in 2000. Prior to achieving the certification, Tiffany held 10 types of leadership positions, mostly at the school and school system level. After receiving certification, Tiffany has participation in leadership activities in 16 categories of teacher leadership. Tiffany thinks of herself as a “nurturer” rather than a leader. However, she “came out of her comfort zone” once she became an NBCT because she felt it was important to advocate for and support National Board Certification.

Tiffany has worked for five principals since beginning the National Board Certification process. As Tiffany gained knowledge and confidence she found that some of her principals did not want her to be heard and that there was some resentment on her faculty. The next two principals valued her as a teacher leader. Her current principal is a National Board Certified Teacher. Tiffany noted that she and her principal think alike about collaboration and reflection.

Tiffany works as a literacy coach. Tiffany’s job description requires her to manage a reading program and work with other teachers. In her training for the position, she was told that she was “to provide support for teachers and help make them better, more effective teachers.” The position “embodies teacher leadership.”

Tiffany is very satisfied with her job. She loves reading, she loves working with children, and she enjoys teacher leadership. The position gives Tiffany autonomy and collegiality, which she appreciates.

Tiffany would like to continue working as a literacy coach. She knows that this position is funded by a grant and will end in the next few years. Tiffany would like a similar job in the future where she can “impact instruction and help teachers and kids.”

CHAPTER 8

SARA DAVIS

The Context of the Coolidge County School System

Sara Davis, a National Board Certified Teacher, works at Marshfield Elementary School (MES) in the Coolidge County School System (CCSS) in North Georgia. The Coolidge County School System is 50 miles east of the state's largest city. In 2005, the Coolidge County School System had a student enrollment of 6000 housed in five elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. The budget for the 2004-2005 school year was approximately 42.3 million dollars, providing for a per pupil expenditure of \$7243.22.

The Coolidge County School System serves a community that is a mix of agriculture and subdivisions. There is little industry in Coolidge County. However, shopping areas have expanded in recent years. Latest census data indicate that the county has almost 27, 000 residents and has experienced a 10% population growth since 2000.

As the county has increased in size, so has the Coolidge County School System. In 2000, there were 5403 students in the system compared to 5947 in 2005. In that 5 year period, the white population decreased from 87% to 86% of the student body, while the Black population increased from 5% to 7% of the total. The Hispanic population has increased from 3% to 4% (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1

Coolidge County School System Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	5%
Multi-racial	4%
Hispanic	4%
White, Non-Hispanic	86%

The average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score for students in the Coolidge County Schools was higher than for students in Georgia and students in the United States. The percentage of high school seniors tested is 33% higher than the percentage tested in the nation and 15% higher than the percent tested in Georgia (see Table 8.2).

Table 8.2

Coolidge County SAT Scores in 2005

	Average SAT Score	Percent Tested
Coolidge County	1059	81%
State	989	66%
Nation	1020	48%

The Coolidge County School System did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005 with all of its nine schools meeting the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress. The system has met the provisions of Adequate Yearly Progress for the past three years.

Context of National Board Certification in the Coolidge County School District

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards reported that 26 teachers in the Coolidge County School System had achieved National Board Certification as of November 2005 with three teachers achieving the certification in 2005. Each year, teachers who achieve National Board Certification are listed in the Annual Report of the Coolidge County School System. The Coolidge County School System has recognized National Board Certified Teachers at school board meetings and has provided local media with press releases concerning teachers who received National Board Certification.

The Coolidge County School System does not provide a financial incentive for teachers who complete National Board Certification. The Professional Learning Department of the school district does not provide mentoring for candidates. An examination of the website of the Education Service Agency (RESA) in which the Coolidge County School participates revealed that no mentoring sessions for National Board Certification candidates are offered through the RESA. Neither the system nor the RESA has offered The Knowledgeable Teacher, a professional learning course for pre-candidates.

Context of Marshfield Elementary School

Marshfield Elementary School (MES), which was opened in 1995, is located in a rural area of Coolidge County. Over 450 students were enrolled during the 2004-2005 school year. The enrollment has dropped by over 250 students since 2000 due to rezoning caused by the opening of a new elementary school. During the 2004-2005 school year, 22% of the students at Marshfield Elementary School were eligible for free or reduced

lunch. This compares to 26% for Coolidge County and 48% for the state. Marshfield Elementary School is a Title I school.

The staff of Marshfield Elementary School includes a principal and an assistant principal. There are 28 teachers, a media specialist, and a counselor. Paraprofessionals are assigned to kindergarten classrooms and the media center. With an average of 16.53 years of experience, the staff’s average experience level is high than the average years of experience for teachers in the State of Georgia and in the Coolidge County School System. The education level of the staff is higher than that of Georgia or the Coolidge County School System with 79% of the staff having advanced degrees. (see table 8.3).

Table 8.3

Comparison of MES Teachers’ Years of Experience and Advanced Degrees Earned

	Average Years of Experience	Percent with Advanced Degrees
Marshfield Elementary	16.53	79%
Coolidge County School System	14.75	71%
Georgia	12.5	48.8%

The mission statement of the Marshfield Elementary School reads, “Our goal is to foster motivated, independent learning in a safe and caring environment.” All students receive daily instruction in reading, math, science, and social studies. Students participate in art, music, and physical education instruction once a week. Special education, English as a second language, and gifted services are provided for students who meet qualifications.

The student body of Marshfield Elementary School is mostly white (75%). The second largest demographic group is Hispanic students who make up 14% of the student body. In the past four years, there has been a demographic change as the percentage of Hispanic students has doubled and the percentage of white students has decreased by 10% (see Table 8.4).

Table 8.4

Marshfield Elementary School Percent Ethnicity 2005

Ethnic Group	Percent of Population
Black, Non-Hispanic	6%
Multi-racial	4%
Hispanic	14%
White, Non-Hispanic	75%

Marshfield Elementary School did meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress in 2005. In grades one through five, 90% of the NES students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 90% of the students in the Coolidge County School System. In Reading/Language Arts, 93% of the NES students scored at the proficient or advanced level compared to 94% for the school system (see Table 8.5).

Table 8.5

Percent of MES Students at each AYP Level

	<u>CRCT Mathematics</u>			<u>CRCT Reading/Language Arts</u>		
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Marshfield ES	10%	52%	38%	7%	45%	48%
CCSS	10%	47%	43%	6.%	37%	57%

The Context of National Board Certification at Marshfield Elementary School

Sara Davis is the only current staff member at Marshfield Elementary School who has received National Board Certification. Two National Board Certified Teachers who were on staff have moved to other schools. Sara worked on her portfolio when employed by another school district but received word of her certification during her first year at Marshfield Elementary School. There are no current candidates for National Board Certification at Marshfield Elementary School. By state law, teachers who begin the certification process in 2005 must work at a needs improvement school to receive a state paid 10% salary supplement upon certification. Marshfield Elementary School is not a needs improvement school.

Context of Teacher Leadership at Marshfield Elementary School

The administrative staff at Marshfield Elementary School includes a principal and an assistant principal. A school leadership committee includes a team leader from each grade, as well as representatives from special education and non-academic classes. The school leadership committee has monthly meetings which deal mostly with procedural matters. At Marshfield Elementary School, the teachers in each grade take turns serving as team leader. Teachers who are not on the school leadership team receive information

about the actions of the leadership committee from their team leader. Teachers may also submit questions or items for discussion to the team leader.

Subject area curriculum and instruction committees meet monthly. With the introduction of the Georgia Performance Standards, these committees have been working on aligning the school's curriculum with the performance standards. The subject area committees include reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies.

Other committees include the sunshine committee, media committee, technology committee, and staff development committee. Staff members sign up for committee preferences but are assigned to specific committees by the principal.

Sara Davis, National Board Certified Teacher

I wanted to be a teacher, but I got married.

Sara Davis always thought she would become a teacher. She relates:

I would line my dolls up and teach lessons to them. I would assign homework to them and give them tests. I would do the same to my playmates any chance I could get. When I was eight or nine a teacher asked me to help a little boy in my class who had trouble with math. She had to stop me when she found out that I was making out tests and assigning grades to him. I even had a grade book.

Sara commented, "When I was in high school, I was a member of Future Teachers of America and tutored other students." Once in college, Sara "enrolled in a teacher preparation program." During her freshman year, Sara "got engaged." Sara "took business classes" during her sophomore year so she could "work after getting married the next summer," because she did not "want to ask parents for money." Sara characterizes this decision to change her plans so that she did not complete college and become a teacher as "a big mistake."

After having three children, Sara did decide to return to college and become a teacher. She recalls, “Sitting at a typewriter on Christmas Eve in 1980, I decided that life was too short not to pursue what I had always wanted to do.” Sara enrolled in the University of South Carolina—Spartanburg in 1981 and completed her teaching degree in 1984.

Sara “started teaching in South Carolina in 1984.” In 1986, the family “moved to Georgia for business reasons.” Since, 1986, Sara has worked “at four schools in three school districts.” “Except for one year as a sixth grade teacher,” Sara has worked in fifth grade classrooms.

Sara continued her education after moving to Georgia. Sara earned a Master of Education from the University of Georgia in 1989 and an Education Specialist Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Piedmont College in 2002.

National Board Certification: *I started as an assessor*

Sara “first heard about National Board Certification in 1993.” Sara recalled, “My principal got an announcement from the Performance Assessment Lab at the University of Georgia saying that experienced teachers in grades three through six were needed to score a portfolio assessment. She thought I might want to do it.” Sara “went to an introductory meeting and first heard about the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and National Board Certification.” Sara explained:

The Performance Assessment Lab at the University of Georgia had a contract to create the assessment for the Middle Childhood Generalist certificate. The requirements for that certificate were being field tested and assessors were needed to score the portfolios. The pay was good and I was interested in the whole concept.

For Sara, “it was the beginning of a seven year experience scoring National Board Certification portfolios.”

For Sara, “work at the Performance Assessment Lab led to work for the Psychological Corporation as NBPTS consolidated all certificates under one scoring umbrella.” After two years of work as an assessor, Sara became “a trainer of assessors.” Sara stated, “For several summer, I flew to New Jersey where I would train assessors and manage the scoring of portfolio entries.” Sara “enjoyed the travel and talking to teachers throughout the country.” The work on scoring National Board portfolios ended when Sara “decided to pursue National Board Certification” and again when she “needed the time to pursue graduate work.”

National Board Certification: *The most exciting time in my teaching career*

Sara had to make a decision “between being an assessor and being a candidate since NBPTS rules did not allow an individual to do both at the same time.” Sara stated, “I also knew that my credibility for working with assessors would be enhanced if I became an NBCT. More and more of the people I was training had earned National Board Certification.” But Sara had another reason:

I believe in the process. I learned so much from assessing portfolios and I wanted to put myself up against the same standard. Assessors only work with one of six portfolio entries. I was pretty confident in my ability to do well on that entry, but there were five other entries and the assessment center to work through.

Sara worked independently through the certification process and “did not have any mentoring.” Sara commented, “I won’t recommend going through the certification process in isolation. One can learn so much through collegiality.”

Sara commented, “National Board Certification impacted me tremendously both as a person and as an educator when I was going through it.” Sara felt that “it changed the

way I thought about planning lessons that could motivate and activate my students, as well as the way I worked with colleagues.” Sara indicated that she has “always been a reflective person, but reflections have become more intense and directed toward what you do and how students are impacted.”

Sara worked as an assessor for a short time after achieving National Board Certification. She commented, “National Board is phasing out the certification area I was trained in, summer vacations are shorter, and the assessing is no longer managed by Psychological Corporation, so I no longer have contacts.” Sara “has no plans to work as an assessor in the future.” However, she does characterize her years as an assessor and candidate “as the most exciting time in my teaching career.”

During the second interview, the researcher showed Sara a list of teacher leadership activities delineated in a survey of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Sara was asked to place a check mark beside the teacher leadership activities in which she participated prior to receiving National Board Certification and those in which she participated after receiving the certification (See Table 8.6).

Table 8.6

Leadership Activities of Sara Davis

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Help NBPTS offer National Board Certification	Help NBPTS Offer National Board Certification
Involved in licensure, evaluation, and/or accreditation of teachers and schools	Involved in licensure, evaluation, and/or accreditation of teachers and schools
Advocate for change in school technology	Advocate for change in school technology

Table 8.6 (continued)

Prior to Receiving Certification	After Receiving Certification
Advocate for general school improvement	Advocate for general school improvement
Develop professional development activities	Develop professional development activities
Advocate for change in school policies	Advocate for change in school policies
Advocate for change in your school--teaching and learning policies	Advocate for change in your school—teaching and learning policies
Involvement in school/district leadership	Involvement in school/district leadership
Develop materials to support or increase student learning	Develop materials to support or increase student learning
Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association	Leadership roles within your union or Disciplinary association
Develop instructional strategies/curricula	Develop instructional strategies/curricula
Develop or select programs/materials	Develop or select programs/materials
Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers	Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers
Serve on a state education committee	Participation in a network of NBCTs
Seek grants to support teaching/learning	Seek grants to support teaching/learning
	Mentor, coach, or encourage Certification Candidates
	Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school, or community organization
	Speak publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification
	Advocate for change in learning activities
	Serve on education related committee

Prior to National Board Certification, Sara was involved in 15 teacher leadership activities. Sara was “thrown into teacher leadership right after starting teaching.” She explained:

I came into teaching so much older than beginning teachers and I think my principal wanted to test what I could do right away. So he assigned me the responsibility of being in charge of a huge production for the October PTO meeting.

Sara commented, “I think the program turned out fine, but that is not the kind of leadership I want.”

After moving to Georgia, Sara participated in some teacher leadership activities that were more to her “liking.” Sara “enjoyed being on the Superintendent’s Teacher Advisory Board.” She commented, “There was a good exchange of ideas and I felt that I learned more about the ins and outs of the system.” Appointment to the Teacher Advisory Board was made by her principal.

Another “enjoyable” activity was serving as staff development director for her school. There were “opportunities to plan school level staff development activities and to learn about other staff development offerings.” Sara stated, “I felt like I had the inside track on what was available. I took advantage of some of the learning opportunities.”

At the school district level, Sara “had an opportunity to serve on the committee to select the curriculum director.” Sara found the process to be “interesting” and “grueling,” but it gave Sara “knowledge about how things were done and what it takes to be selected for an administrative job.” Sara “also served on committees to select school principals, which was fascinating.” Another committee assignment involved “sitting on the school district elementary instruction committee.”

In 1999, Sara was nominated by her principal for training as a Teacher Support Specialist. Sara noted, “I believe that she saw that I was always helping out other teachers and that this would be a way to formalize my mentoring and give me an opportunity to be paid for mentoring.” Sara found the training to have a “positive impact” on her career. Sara noted, “I think that from the training I learned about handling people in a positive fashion so that they could accept the help offered.”

Prior receiving National Board Certification, Sara worked at school that “celebrated teacher leadership.” Teachers “had all kinds of opportunities to be leaders.” At that school, Sara “served as After School Program Director and Parent Teacher Organization Teacher Representative.”

Sara served as Chair of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation Leadership Team in 1998. Responsibilities included “managing the work of each committee to see that it was completed in a timely manner and that it was completed well.”

“The most invigorating and exciting” teacher leadership experience for Sara was serving as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Portfolio scoring. Sara commented, “What started as a local activity for me grew into an activity where I traveled out of state and met people from all over the United States. I learned quite a bit about managing and training people.”

After receiving National Board certification, Sara reported that she participated in 20 categories of teacher leadership activities. Once Sara certified, she was “quickly asked to mentor candidates for National Board Certification.” Sara commented, “With just over 100 National Board Certified Teachers and hundreds of candidates because the

legislature had increased the supplement from 5% to 10%, the services of willing mentors were in demand.” Sara “served as a mentor for workshops sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators. Sara “continued working as a mentor for a couple of years.” Sara also “offered to provide information sessions for teachers and to provide workshops for candidates” for the Coolidge County School System.” Sara “did resume work as a trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolios for a short time.

There were teacher leadership activities that Sara continued after certification. She again served as chair for her school’s Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation review preparation team. Sara commented, “They knew I had done it before at another school. I guess I was a logical choice.” Sara “also served as a Teacher Support Specialist in working with beginning teachers at her school, at least one per year.”

Sara was “nominated” by her school system to “serve on a statewide committee for Georgia Performance Standards Test and Item Analysis Review for language arts.” This activity required “missing a couple of days of school.” In addition, Sara “served on district committees on reading/language arts and report cards and assessment.”

Sara served as a “member of the school leadership team, representing the fifth grade.” Sara explained, “Grade level team leaders automatically serve as members of the leadership team. The position of grade level chair is rotated among the teachers in a grade.” In addition, Sara served “as a teacher representative on the school council.” The council meets quarterly and is “made up of school stakeholders, including parents, representatives of local businesses, and teachers.”

National Board Certification: *Does my principal get it?*

Sara has worked for three principals since starting the certification process in 1999. The principal who gave Sara the information about serving as an assessor for National Board Certification was Sara's "principal while going through certification."

When talking about this principal, Sara's eye's sparkle. Sara commented:

This principal asked me about my experiences assessing National Board portfolios and she encouraged me to become National Board Certified. When I was going through certification, she asked me regularly about how my portfolio was coming and what she could do for me.

Sara "moved to another school system during the summer between working on the certification process and receiving word of certification."

When the names of the new National Board Certified Teachers were announced in November 2000, Sara's "former principal called with congratulations and sent flowers." Her principal at Marshfield Elementary School "announced the certification at a faculty meeting and informed parents through a newsletter." Sara describes this principal as "enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and encouraging." Two other faculty members attempted certification after being encouraged by the principal. Sara noted, "Those teachers knew that they had the full support of the principal. He made sure that they had help with videotaping and would periodically ask if there was anything they needed"

In 2003, Marshfield Elementary School had a new principal as the former principal "opened a new school, taking one of the National Board Certified Teachers with him." Sara became "the only National Board Certified Teacher on staff as the other NBCT moved to an adjoining school district." Sara indicated that "National Board Certification is never mentioned and does not seem valued." Sara also stated, "There have been no new candidates. No one talks about going through the process. Without

administrative encouragement, it appears to be a dead issue at my school.” When asked if she had talked to her latest principal about the certification process, Sara replied, “She knows I am National Board Certified. She was assistant principal at this school when there were three NBCTs, actually when two of them were going through the process. I just don’t think she is interested.”

Leadership: An important part of teaching

Sara “enjoys teacher leadership.” Teacher leadership is “what lets teachers get out of their little boxes and share with others.” Sara indicated that “teacher leadership opportunities are out there for teachers who are willing to do the work.” Sara added, “Teachers are professionals who should have an opportunity to contribute to the decisions about what happens in a school. We are on the front line and sometimes have the best information.”

When discussing her reasons for taking on teacher leadership responsibilities, Sara said, “I take on teacher leadership opportunities because I am passionate about improving teaching and learning.” Sara feels that “being involved in teacher leadership promotes professional learning, and that is vital for our profession.” Sara “finds it exciting to try to make the difference in the lives of teachers and students.”

Sara sees “collaboration as an important component of teacher leadership.” She elaborated, “When teacher share ideas and work together, whatever they come up with will be better than what they would have done individually.” Sara declared, “While it is the responsibility of the principal to create an atmosphere for the exchange of ideas, teacher leaders may have to act on their own to see that it gets done.”

Sara characterizes an “important aspect” of her teacher leadership as “having dialogue with people about teaching situations.” According to Sara, this dialogue “can promote the interchange of ideas and lead to substantive change in a school.” She elaborated, “I have gotten some of my best ideas just talking to other teachers with someone saying ‘Have you tried this?’ and someone else adding to the discussion.”

According to Sara, “Principals and teachers must both work towards teacher leadership. Excellent principals foster opportunities for true teacher leadership, and teachers must take advantage of the opportunities.” In contrast, “principals who lack vision and commitment to excellence do not create climates in which teacher leadership is valued.”

Job satisfaction: *I’m not satisfied, but sometimes I am.*

As an assessor for National Board portfolio entries, Sara “had an opportunity to share ideas with teachers from all over the county.” She commented:

Not only did I get to look at portfolio entries from accomplished teachers, but I was working with dynamic talented educators. The conversations at lunchtime and breaks were the conversations that should happen at school. I learned from everybody. I expect the same where I work and it doesn’t happen.

Sara also stated, “Sometimes the culture of a school does not cultivate open discussions and I am afraid that is the nature of my school.”

While Sara “loves the kids” and finds it “satisfying to work with children,” she “expects more.” Sara noted, “I have taught in a school where teacher leadership was prevalent and valued and where most of the faculty was on the same page as far as having a passion for what we do.” Sara characterized that setting as “invigorating and exciting” and one she “misses very, very much.”

Sara noted, “I really expected my National Board Certification to open more doors than it has.” Sara is “frustrated knowing that most administrators don’t understand or know about National Board Certification” She crossed her arms and said, “Administrators should know more about National Board Certification and National Board Certified Teachers. If they knew, they would show more respect and make sure the NBCTs had more leadership opportunities.”

While Sara does concede that she has had “plenty of leadership opportunities” and that sometimes her “plate is too full” to take on any more, she thinks “leadership opportunities should come to National Board Certified Teachers automatically.” Sara commented, “It would help if the central office administrative staff knew more about National Board Certification. Perhaps a knowledgeable superintendent who showed respect for NBCTs would influence principals to do the same.”

Sara elaborated on the opportunities for leadership she has had through her career. Sara noted that she “had two principals who provided leadership opportunities that I found very satisfying.” These principals “understood the value and collegiality that came from including teachers in the decision-making process.” Sara also commented that “one of those principals was totally committed to school improvement which provided excellent leadership opportunities for teachers.” There were situations in Sara’s career where “teacher input was not valued and what input was asked for was not used.” For Sara, “that was not satisfying.”

Some teacher leadership roles that “have been satisfying” include “serving on the Superintendent’s Teacher Advisory Council, the committee to select the curriculum director, committees to select principals, and the school district elementary instruction

committee.” Sara explained, “Being part of those committees gave me insight on how decisions were made and allowed me to participate in decision-making.” Sara also enjoyed the “decision-making that was part of being staff development director for her school.” Sara commented that “it was especially satisfying to participate on the statewide committee for Georgia Performance Standards testing and item analysis review for language arts. The decisions made by that committee will affect all of Georgia’s students.”

For Sara, “it is satisfying to be a mentor and help another teacher. I found I learned as much from mentoring, maybe more, than the teacher I was mentoring.” Sara also commented on the collegiality that comes from teacher leadership, saying, “When teachers pool ideas, we can have an impact on a whole grade or a whole school.” Sara added:

I can’t imagine being a teacher and not having teacher leadership responsibilities. I guess I want to be part of making the decisions in my school. And I want to share ideas with my colleagues. That is what makes teaching a profession, not just a job

Sara also commented on the satisfaction she received when serving as co-chair for her school’s Southern Association of Colleges and Schools visitation preparation team.

Serving as co-chair of the SACS preparation team was very hard work. But there was a pay-off in that it brought the teachers together to discuss school improvement. While for some the collaboration was forced, most saw the benefits of the work that was done.

Sara noted, “Any time I can be part of a collaborative process that makes a difference, my satisfaction with my career is enhanced.”

Sara told the story of a friend she met while assessing National Board Certification portfolios:

My friend was runner-up to the National Teacher of the Year and a passionate teacher. The last time I saw her she was depressed because she was in a school with a principal who showed no appreciation or acceptance of the talents my friend brought to the table in her school.

Sara then smiled and said, "I'm not really depressed; don't get out the Prozac, but I understand how she felt."

Sara characterizes her present situation as "being like teaching in a one-room school house." However, she "does get satisfaction from trying to provide the best possible learning opportunities for students."

When asked if she has autonomy in her job, Sara answered, "I do feel that I have enough autonomy to positively affect my job satisfaction. That autonomy occurs mostly in my classroom when I am working with my students." Sara pointed out that her autonomy is sometimes affected "by the climate of today's schools."

Sara closed the interview, saying, "Even though there are some things that bother me, I am glad that I became a teacher. I can't think of anything else I would want to do."

What's next?

Sara plans "to teach for five more years and then retire." Although Sara "has entertained the idea of getting leadership certification," she feels that she "would not be working long enough after completing the certification to make the time and the expense worthwhile."

If a teacher leadership position would open up which did not require state leadership certification, Sara "might pursue it." But that opportunity would "have to be local and would have to be something really interesting."

In the meantime, Sara "intends to pursue teacher leadership opportunities at school while still working" and "may try to establish a good collaborative relationship at

least within the fifth grade team.” For Sara, teaching children “is still the most important thing and makes it worthwhile to get up and come to work each morning.”

Case Summary

Sara Davis, a teacher with 21 years of experience, achieved National Board Certification in 2001. Sara has been involved in teacher leadership throughout her career. Prior to earning National Board Certification, Sara was involved in 15 types of leadership activities. Sara had leadership opportunities at her school and at the school district level. Sara also worked as an assessor and trainer of assessor for the scoring of the portfolios of National Board Certification candidates, an activity that she found very enjoyable.

After achieving National Board Certification, Sara was involved in 20 categories of teacher leadership activities. Sara continued to participate in some of the same kinds of teacher leadership activities; she added mentoring of candidates and advocating for National Board Certification.

Sara has worked for three principals in two school districts since beginning the National Board Certification process. The principal Sara worked for while she was working on her certification portfolio and the principal she worked for when she became certified were supportive and knowledgeable. Her current principal makes no mention of National Board Certification and does not appear to value teacher leadership.

Sara feels that administrators should be aware of National Board Certification and that they should use NBCTs as teacher leaders. While Sara has many opportunities for teacher leadership, she would like to work in a situation where all teachers were encouraged to participate in meaningful leadership activities.

Sara's greatest satisfaction in her job comes from working with children. While she gets some satisfaction from her leadership activities, she would like to work in a school with a culture that embraced teacher leadership.

While Sara has thought about pursuing an administrative position, she now believes that she will retire in about five years as a teacher. She indicated she will continue to work with children and continue to take on teacher leadership responsibilities. For Sara, "National Board Certification has been the best and most exciting part of a teaching career."

CHAPTER 9

CROSS CASE ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of five National Board Certified Teachers on how their teacher leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. How has National Board Certification impacted their work as teacher leaders?
2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?
3. Has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

The purpose of the cross case analysis was to compare and contrast the data gathered from interviews with the individual participants. Findings were developed from this analysis and those findings were investigated. The researcher interviewed five National Board Certified Teachers who received their certification in 1999 or 2000 and who were currently serving as teachers to examine their perspectives on how their leadership activities after gaining National Board Certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction.

After conducting interviews with the participants, the constant comparative method of data analysis was used to examine the data across cases (Merriam, 1998). The collecting of data across several cases is cross case analysis. Data from several sources increases the generalizability of the data beyond one specific case. According to Merriam

(1991), substantive theory can be developed by building categories and themes that conceptualize the data. As data were collected, the researcher looked for common experiences and recurring phrases. The words of the participants were gathered for analysis. As data emerged from the interviews, categories were developed. Patterns of those categories were observed and notated for the purpose of comparing the common themes among the participants. Miles and Huberman (1994) wrote:

Coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes, transcribed or synthesized, and to dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relationship between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis. This part of analysis involves how you differentiate and combine the data you have retrieved and the reflection you make about this information. (p. 56)

Patton (2002) discussed the challenges of qualitative data analysis because of the massive amounts of data that are generated. He suggested that the process involved “reducing massive amounts of raw information, sorting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal” (p. 433).

The data for this study were collected over a five month period from five (N=5) National Board Certified Teachers who received that certification in 1999 or 2000. All of these teachers were employed in elementary schools and had teaching positions.

Research Question 1: How has National Board Certification shaped their work as teacher leaders?

The first research question sought to examine how National Board Certification impacted their work as teacher leaders. Three findings evolved that demonstrated the perspectives of the five National Board Certified Teachers that participated in this study.

1. All of the teachers were actively involved in teacher leadership activities prior to certification
2. All of the teachers increased their leadership activities after certification.

3. Common post-certification activities involved the mentoring of National Board Certification candidates and promoting National Board Certification.

Table 9.1 lists the cases and identifies the case or cases in which the findings emerged.

The codes used by the researcher are listed with the findings.

Table 9.1

Findings from Research Question 1

Findings	Case I	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case5
PRE Teacher Leadership Activities Prior to Certification	X	X	X	X	X
POST Increase in Teacher Leadership Activities After Certification	X	X	X	X	X
MEN Mentoring National Board Candidates after Certification	X	X	X	X	X

As illustrated in Table 9.1, all of the findings were present in each case study. Teacher leadership activities were discussed in each of the individual case studies.

Finding 1-1: All of the participants were actively involved in teacher leadership activities prior to certification.

All of the participants were actively involved in teacher leadership activities prior to certification. Prior to certification, participants in this study were involved in 8 to 15 categories of teacher leadership activities that were delineated in a study of National Board Certified Teachers (Kennelly, 2001).

Table 9.2

Number of categories of Leadership Activities Participated in Before Receiving National Board Certification

Teacher	Number of Activities Prior to Certification
Renee Isley	8
Eileen Reynolds	9
Tammy Ellis	10
Tiffany Allen	10
Sara Davis	15
Average	11.4

While each of the participants in this study was active as a teacher leader prior to certification, there are similarities and differences in the activities they were involved in and how they became involved. A short summary of the pre-National Board Certification teacher leadership activities of the participants follows:

Renee Isley

Renee reported participating in 8 categories of teacher leadership activities prior to receiving National Board Certification. She worked at two school districts, Ranier County School District and LaCrosse County School District. While working for the Ranier County School District, Renee found that most of her teacher leadership opportunities came at the school district level. She stated, “It was I wanted to do this and nobody else wanted to.” By working on district level committees, Renee “became known at the school district level and was asked to become certified as a Teacher Support

Specialist and later to serve as a ‘trainer of trainers’ for the Teacher Support Specialist Course.” In addition Renee “served as president of her local education association.”

Eileen Reynolds

Prior to National Board Certification, Eileen reported that she participated in 9 categories of teacher leadership. Eileen served as president of her local affiliate with the Georgia Association of Educators. At her school, Eileen served as team leader in her grade “four or five times” and “co-chair for the Nettles Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation Review preparation team.” In 1999, Eileen was “a part of a team of Nettles Elementary School teachers who attended the Quality Schools Initiative.” At the school district level, Eileen was “a member of the district staff development committee.” Eileen has also “served on a state committee for the development of a kindergarten assessment instrument.”

Tammy Ellis

Tammy Ellis participated in 10 categories of teacher leadership activities prior to achieving National Board Certification. Tammy, who started teaching after having children, “began to think of teaching as a career” when it became apparent that her “marriage was not going to last.” Her first step in teacher leadership came by taking “an active role in teacher associations.” This led to “being a presenter at conferences.”

Tammy was selected for a fellowship at Georgia Tech. Her assignment as a fellow was to work with Zoo Atlanta, where she “worked with the Georgia Department of Education and the zookeepers.” Requirements of the fellowship were that she use the information gained in her classroom and that she “continue the exchange of ideas with fellowship contacts.”

At her school, Tammy “served as grade level chair” and as a member of the “leadership committee for the school’s 1999 SACS study.” Tammy indicated, “I had the time and the interest, things some of my colleagues did not have.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany Allen reported that she participated in 10 categories of teacher leadership prior to achieving National Board Certification. Before going through the National Board Certification process, Tiffany thought of herself as a “teacher nurturer rather than a teacher leader.”

Prior to earning National Board Certification, Tiffany had teacher leadership responsibilities at the school and school district level. As a Teacher Support Specialist since 1996, Tiffany “mentored at least one beginning teacher each year.” Her principal twice nominated Tiffany to serve on a system textbook adoption committee. In addition, Sara “served on the leadership committee at her school and as a leader of a grade level team.” Another teacher leadership activity involved writing a grant for and conducting action research on family literacy.

Tiffany also served as “building representative for the Professional Association of Georgia Educators.” A member of the Georgia Reading Council, Tiffany “chaired a local reading association.”

Sara Davis

Sara Davis reported that she participated in 15 categories of teacher leadership prior to achieving National Board Certification. Sara indicated that “teacher leadership opportunities are there for teachers who are willing to do the work.”

Before receiving National Board Certification, Sara served on the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Board, an activity which she "enjoyed." Also at the school district level, Sara served on a "committee to help select the curriculum director" and "the school district elementary instruction committee." Sara reported finding it "enjoyable" to serve as staff development director for her school. Sara was pleased that she "had the inside track on what was available [in staff development offerings]." Sara also served as "After School Program Director and Parent Teacher Organization Teacher Representative." Sara was chair of her school's Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation review preparation team.

In 1999, Sara was nominated by her principal to be trained as a Teacher Support Specialist (TSS). Sara noted that her principal knew that Sara "was always helping out other teachers and that this would be a way to formalize my mentoring." Sara felt that the TSS training had a "positive impact" on her career.

Sara worked as "an assessor of National Board Certification portfolios prior to being certified." Sara assessed and then trained and monitored assessors. This opportunity became available because of a recommendation by her principal.

Finding 1- 2: All of the participants in this study increased their teacher leadership activities after achieving National Board Certification.

All of the participants increased their level of involvement in teacher leadership activities after becoming National Board Certified Teachers. Teachers participating in this study were given a list of categories of teacher leadership that were used in the Kennelly (2001) study, and they were asked to indicate which activities they participated in after achieving National Board Certification (see Table 9.3).

Table 9.3

Number of Categories of Leadership Activities Participated in After Achieving National Board Certification

Teacher	Number of Activities After Certification
Renee Isley	23
Eileen Reynolds	19
Tammy Ellis	20
Tiffany Allen	16
Sara Davis	20
Average	19.6

Participants in this study had a greater number of teacher leadership activities after achieving National Board Certification. For this group of five educators, the average number of categories of teacher leadership checked increased from 11.4 before certification to 19.6 after certification.

Renee Isley

Renee participated in 23 categories of teacher leadership after achieving National Board Certification. Renee was given “several opportunities to participate in Teacher Leadership activities as a result of becoming National Board Certified.”

When Renee moved to the LaCrosse County School System, she went to the staff development department of the school district and offered to teach courses. Renee reported:

I had to sell myself. I had to go and say this is what I can do and I was given an opportunity to show what I can do and, as a result, I have been able to be utilized to a high capacity with staff.

Renee was subsequently given the opportunity serve as an instructor for Teacher Support Specialist Courses.

Renee was also asked to serve on a district level team “promoting diversity and finding teachers to bring diversity to schools.” Renee commented that “staff development [at the school system level] has kind of taken me under their wing, and I am getting some high activity at that level.” Renee has also had opportunities “to teach two online courses. She reported, “Things are happening now. Whereas where I was, they weren’t happening. So life is looking good.”

Renee has had difficulty finding teacher leadership at the school level. Renee’s only opportunity came when she was asked to serve as a mentor to a new teacher. Renee was “glad for the opportunity.” However, Renee felt that her principal would not have “picked her for the mentoring,” except for the fact that she was “the only special education teacher with TSS certification.”

Renee “embraces teacher leadership because as a teacher leader it is an opportunity to be a catalyst, to help teachers to help students, to help improve student learning.” Renee also stated, “I am starting to explore for additional opportunities as much as I can.” Renee indicated a desire to “pursue a teacher leadership position” in the future and said she would “be going to graduate school in the next couple of years.”

Eileen Reynolds

Eileen Reynolds reported that she participated in 19 categories of teacher leadership after achieving the National Board Certification. Eileen participated in activities at the school, school district, and state level before and after achieving the certification. In 2003, Eileen again served as co-chair for the Southern Association of

Colleges and Schools Accreditation Review preparation team. In addition, Eileen was given the responsibility of “overseeing the unpacking of kindergarten standards” relative to implementation of the Georgia Performance Standards. Once moved to fourth grade, Eileen was given the same responsibility for that grade.

When asked how teacher leadership opportunities come to her, Eileen stated, “I seek it out and lots of it comes my way.” In discussing National Board Certification and teacher leadership, Eileen said:

I haven’t been asked by my principal nor by my district to be involved in leadership because I am National Board Certified. There hasn’t been an instance that I am aware of that National Board Certification has made the difference.

Eileen attributes her leadership opportunities at her school to her being “outspoken and assertive.” However, National Board Certification was a factor in “receiving more committee jobs with GAE.”

Eileen has completed work on a Leadership Add-On Certificate.” It is her intention to “move on from classroom teaching” and become “an assistant principal or instructional coach.”

Tammy Ellis

Tammy indicated that she participated in 20 categories of teacher leadership activities after earning National Board Certification. In 2001, Tammy’s principal nominated her for training as a Teacher Support Specialist and she has since “served as a mentor for new teachers.” The combination of being a National Board Certified Teacher and a Teacher Support Specialist made Tammy eligible to serve as a mentor in the Reach to Teach Program, in which she mentored “teachers going through alternative certification programs.”

Other teacher leadership activities since achieving National Board Certification included serving on the school and system staff development committees, being a member of local and state textbook adoption committees, and working on the alignment of the school district curriculum to the Georgia Performance Standards. In addition, Tammy “served on the Zoo Atlanta Advisory Panel.” Tammy has earned a leadership certificate and is prepared to assume “a leadership role in a school district office or at the school building level.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany reported that she participated in 16 categories of teacher leadership activities after she became a National Board Certified Teacher. As an Early Intervention Program (EIP) teacher, Tiffany had “the responsibility of setting up the EIP program which was new to that school.” Tiffany continued with action research, exploring topics as “family literacy, cultural awareness through storytelling, boy’s book clubs, and integrating reading into content areas.”

In 2004, Tiffany was hired to be a literacy coach. In this position, Tiffany worked “with teachers to improve student learning.” Tiffany observed teachers and monitored the progress of students in each class. Tiffany noted, “I have been told that I am not an administrator and that teachers need to feel free to come to me for help.”

Tiffany was chosen to be part of Kennesaw State University Courage to Teach cohort. This group of 12 educators meets 4 times a year for 2 years. According to Tiffany, the meetings are designed to “nurture, energize, and encourage educators who will take the ideas back to their colleagues.” Tiffany found the meetings “stimulating and exciting.” Tiffany “might like to be an Instructional Lead Teacher or Learning Support

Specialist.” Tiffany acknowledges that she “may have to go back to school to get leadership certification.”

Sara Davis

After achieving National Board Certification, Sara reported a total of 15 categories of teacher leadership activities. Sara has sustained her work as a Teacher Support Specialist, ‘working with beginning teachers at her school, at least one a year.’ Sara served “as a member of the school leadership team, representing fifth grade.” In addition, Sara has served “as a teacher representative on the school council.”

Sara was part of a “statewide committee for Georgia Performance Standards Test and Item Analysis Review for language arts.” Since achieving National Board Certification, Sara “served on school district committees on reading/language arts and report cards and assessment.”

Sara indicated that she feels that “leadership is an important part of teaching.” Sara also stated, “I take on teacher leadership opportunities because I am passionate about improving teaching and learning.” Sara “has entertained the idea of getting leadership certification,” but she feels she would not be working long enough after completing the certification to make the time and the expense worthwhile.” Sara “might pursue” a teacher leadership position that did not required state leadership certification.

Finding 1-3: Common post-certification activities involved the mentoring of National Board Certification candidates and promoting National Board Certification.

Each of the five participants reported mentoring candidates for National Board Certification. The participants indicated that they participated in the same four categories of teacher leadership that involved mentoring candidates and promoting National Board Certification. Those categories include the following:

1. Participating in a network of National Board Certified Teachers
2. Helping NBPTS offer National Board Certification
3. Mentoring, coaching, or encouraging Certification candidates
4. Speaking publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification

A discussion of the mentoring activities of each of the participants follows.

Renee Isley

Since achieving National Board Certification, Renee has been involved in advocating for National Board Certification and mentoring candidates. Renee was asked by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to participate in the development of “The Knowledgeable Teacher, a course designed to help teachers interested in National Board Certification learn more about the process.” Renee characterized the development of The Knowledgeable Teacher as “my strongest contribution.” Renee also served as a mentor for National Board Certification Candidates at the Georgia Teacher Center. Renee has been approved as a mentor for National Board Certification candidates by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Renee had opportunities to work with two state universities in promoting National Board Certification. At one university, Renee “helped develop a program for mentoring special education teachers who wished to pursue National Board Certification.” At a second university, Renee “consulted with the education department in embedding National Board Certification into a degree program.”

Eileen Reynolds

After achieving National Board Certification, Eileen noted, “I kept up with most of the activities I had done before, but then added the next layer which was mentoring

other candidates.” Eileen taught The Knowledgeable Teacher course “to introduce prospective candidates for National Board Certification to the certification process.” In addition, Eileen “mentored candidates” at workshops set up by the Georgia Association of Educators and at workshops sponsored by the Georgia Teacher Center. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission has approved Eileen as a mentor for National Board Certification candidates by

Eileen and another National Board Certified Teacher applied for and received “an action research grant from the Georgia Teacher Center to “disseminate information about National Board Certification” to administrators in her school district. The two teachers attended meetings with administrators to explain “how administrators could support National Board Certification candidates.” The goal of the research project was to see if the “dissemination of information would have an impact on the number of candidates in Latrobe County.”

Tammy Ellis

Many of the leadership activities Tammy participated in after achieving National Board Certification “centered on mentoring candidates for National Board Certification.” Tammy was a “lead mentor for National Board Candidate workshops sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators.” In addition, Tammy taught The Knowledgeable Teacher, a course to introduce pre-candidates to National Board Certification, and she mentored National Board Candidates for the Georgia Teacher Center. Approval for Tammy to mentor candidates for National Board Certification has been granted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Tammy was selected to be on the Executive Board for Georgia's National Board Certification Committee and in that capacity "helps plan conferences for Georgia's National Board Certified Teachers and works to advocate for National Board Certification." In addition, she was on the Georgia Leadership Advancement Panel which is working on Professional Teaching Standards for Georgia teachers. These standards are aligned with National Board Standards and Georgia Performance Standards for Teachers.

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany mentored candidates for National Board Certification, working with programs sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators, the Georgia Teacher Center, and her school district. In the school system where she worked from 2001-2004, Tiffany served as "an advisor/candidate facilitator" for National Board Certification candidates. Tiffany has received approval for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to mentor National Board Certification candidates.

Sara Davis

Sara has served as a mentor of National Board Certification candidates, working at mentoring workshops sponsored by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators. Sara has "offered to provide information sessions for teachers and to provide workshops for candidates in her school system." Sara's work as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolios was interrupted when she went through the certification process. Sara did work as an assessor "for a short time" after becoming a National Board Certified Teacher but stopped because she "no longer had the time."

Sara does concede that she has had "plenty of leadership opportunities" and that sometimes her "plate is too full" to take on any more. However, Sara thinks that

“leadership opportunities should come to National Board Certified Teachers automatically.” Sara also stated, “I expected National Board Certification to open more doors than it has.”

Research Question 2: How Has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?

The teachers participating in this study worked under a total of 17 principals in 10 schools while involved in candidacy for National Board Certification and since achieving National Board Certification. Two participants worked for three principals during candidacy and since certification, while one worked for five principals, one worked for four principals, and one worked for two principals (see Table 9.4).

Table 9.4

Number of Principals and Schools Since Participants Started the Certification Process

Teacher	Number of Principals	Number of Schools	Years since Starting Certification Process
Renee Isley	4	2	6
Eileen Reynolds	3	1	7
Tammy Ellis	2	1	6
Tiffany Allen	5	4	6
Sara Davis	3	2	6

In discussing how National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools, participants in this study presented information that varied from principal to principal. According to the perspectives of the participants, overall findings from the data indicate the following:

1. Some principals were positive about National Board Certification.

2. Some principals were negative about National Board Certification.
3. Some principals had no understanding of National Board Certification.

As illustrated in Table 9.5, two of the findings were present in each of the five cases, and one of the findings was present in two of the cases. Codes used in analysis are paired with statement of findings.

Table 9.45

Findings from Research Question 2

Findings	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
POS Principal is positive About National Board Certification	X	X	X	X	X
NEG Principal is negative About National Board Certification	X			X	
No UND Principal does not Understand National Board Certification	X	X	X	X	X

Finding 2-1: Some principals were positive about National Board Certification

All five study participants reported working with at least one principal who was positive about National Board Certification. The following discussion examines the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers regarding principals who were positive about National Board Certification.

Renee Isley

When discussing the principal she worked under when she became National Board Certification, Renee commented that National Board Certification “opened the

relationship with my principal. There was a more open consideration of how I could be a leader at my school.” Renee was appointed as “department chair for special positions at the school” and became “part of the leadership team.” Renee was also asked to be the “chair and contact person for the School of Excellence application.”

Renee moved to another school district in 2002 and was hired at a school which had a National Board Certified Teacher on staff. Renee noted that the principal “was willing to hire me partly because I was another National Board Certified Teacher.” Regarding school level teacher leadership experiences, Renee commented, “As a new employee to the school, I’ve had to wait...before I try and jump in there with leadership.” Renee added, “I feel that my teacher leadership opportunities will increase a little this year and a little more next year.” Renee had an opportunity to “to assist the PTA with the Accelerated Reader program.”

Eileen Reynolds

Eileen found one of the three principals she worked with to be positive regarding National Board Certification. During the year Eileen went through National Board Candidacy, her principal “was supportive.” Eileen explained, “She sent memos saying ‘What can I give you? What kind of support do you need?’” When Eileen received notification that she was a National Board Certified Teacher, the principal “sent flowers and offered her congratulations.”

Tammy Ellis

Tammy has worked for two principals since starting the National Board Certification process. The second principal “has on occasion mentioned that he has National Board Certified Teachers on staff.” The principal has nominated Tammy for

“some system level curriculum work and textbook adoption committees and been totally supportive of the Reach to Teach activities even though these activities cause me to miss many days of school.” Tammy commented, “My principal thinks that what I am doing and what I am learning can benefit the school. We do not talk about specifics.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany worked for five principals since starting the National Board Certification process. Tiffany noted that the principal she worked for when going through the process “didn’t understand the concept but thought it was a good thing.” While this principal “did not hinder” Tiffany, “no support was offered.”

Tiffany’s third principal “understood what National Board Certification was about and was very knowledgeable about the process.” This principal would ask Tiffany “questions about the process” and how Tiffany “interpreted things as a result of going through the process.” When Tiffany participated in National Board Certification candidate mentoring sessions, Tiffany had “opportunities to talk with the principal about ideas learned from mentoring.” Tiffany stated, “She seemed interested in hearing what I had to say and in adapting some of the ideas I brought to her.” Tiffany elaborated, “She [the principal] even said that if they came out with something like that [National Board Certification] for principals, she would be interested in going through it.”

Tiffany moved to another school to take a literacy coach position. The principal who hired Tiffany for the literacy coach position “was proud that he had two teachers on his staff that were NBCTs, and he encouraged others to go through the process, citing us [the two NBCTs] as examples of what NBCTs are.”

Prior to Tiffany's second year as a literacy coach, the principal who had hired her left the system, and the learning support teacher became the principal. This principal was a National Board Certified Teacher who had been mentored through the National Board Certification process by Tiffany. Tiffany commented, "As a National Board Certified Teacher, this principal certainly does get it. She and I have the same high expectations and we think alike. Going through the same process has helped us to work easily together."

Sara Davis

Sara Davis has worked for three principals since beginning the National Board Certification process. The first principal gave Sara "information about serving as an assessor for National Board Certification," an activity Sara participated in prior to going through the National Board Certification process. This principal "encouraged Sara to become National Board Certified." During the year that Sara went through the National Board Certification process, Sara indicated that this principal "asked about how my portfolio was coming and what she could do for me."

The next school year, Sara moved to a school in a different school system. When Sara was announced as a National Board Certified Teacher, Sara's "former principal called with congratulations and sent flowers." Sara's new principal "announced the certification at a faculty meeting and informed parents through a newsletter." When two other faculty members attempted certification, Sara noted, "Those teachers knew that they had the full support of the principal. He made sure that they had help with videotaping and would periodically ask if there was anything they needed."

Finding 2-2: Some principals were negative about National Board Certification.

Two of the participants in this study worked with principals that in the perspective of the participants were negative about National Board Certification. Discussion of their perspectives follows.

Renee Isley

When discussing if Renee's fourth principal ever referred to her National Board Certification, Renee stated, "She uses it as a weapon." Renee explained a situation where she was late for school because of weather and traffic, and even though she called to let the secretaries know, the principal said, "A National Board Certified Teacher would have gotten someone to cover their space." Renee further elaborated, "It is as if being a National Board Certified Teacher requires that 100% of the day I do exactly what she expects me to do. So it is almost a reprimand, saying 'You're a National Board Certified Teacher.'" Renee's voice and demeanor indicated displeasure with the principal's attitude.

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany worked for five principals, but found two of them to be negative about National Board Certification. The principal Tiffany worked for when Tiffany was going through the National Board Certification process asked Tiffany if she could "handle both the certification process and her job." Once Tiffany "finished the process and began speaking with other teachers about reflective practices in teaching and what is right for kids," Tiffany "felt that the principal was upset for some reason." Tiffany explained, "She seemed to resent the fact that teachers came to me for advice rather than going to the

office. When I would speak up at a faculty meeting, she would cut me off. Others noticed her change towards me.”

Tiffany was at another school during the year her achievement of National Board Certification was announced. Tiffany stated, “This principal did not have a clue about National Board Certification, but she did know it was a good thing.” However, Tiffany also noted:

I felt like the administration as a whole and that the teachers at the grade level I was working saw me as a threat. They were happy with the way things had been. They saw me as a new person coming in with a title and rocking the boat by offering new ways and ideas on how to do things.

Tammy moved to another school at the beginning of the next school year.

Finding 2-3: Some principals do not understand National Board Certification.

The five participants in this study all worked for principals who did not understand National Board Certification. A discussion of the perspectives of the participants in this study on principals who do not understand National Board Certification follows.

Renee Isley

Although Renee’s principal celebrated her achievement of National Board Certification, Renee “was never sure the principal understood National Board Certification.” According to Renee, the principal “had not informed the faculty of school district workshops or information sessions about National Board Certification.” Renee elaborated, “even when I told her [about National Board Certification], I am not sure she understood the significance of the accomplishment.”

Eileen Reynolds

When Eileen discussed the announcement at her school about her achievement of National Board Certification, her eyes flashed. The principal announced that Eileen “had passed the National Teacher Exam.” Eileen elaborated, “She had no clue what I had done. She put it in the school newsletter, but she had to ask me twice what I had done. She has never talked to me about the process.” According to Eileen, this principal “has not discussed National Board Certification with any of the teachers, has not suggested that any teacher consider candidacy, and has not demonstrated any interest.” Five teachers at the school achieved National Board Certification since 1999, although one has left.

A new principal came to Eileen’s school in 2005. Eileen stated, “This principal has not had any conversations with me about National Board Certification.” However, the new principal “asked the four National Board Certified Teachers to take on leadership responsibilities, but three of the four have leadership certificates also.” Eileen also noted, “The new principal also urges us to participate on county committees and forwards opportunities often. For that reason, I am serving on the county assessment committee.”

Eileen commented that a purpose of her action research study “was so that I could go to the administration and tell them about National Board Certification.” She also stated, “I think that our administrators do not have a lot of knowledge about the National Board Certification process, and when you don’t know about something, you don’t value it.”

Eileen noted that she had conversations with her superintendent about National Board Certification. She felt that that the superintendent “may not be convinced the

certification itself makes a difference.” According to Eileen, the superintendent feels that “people who attempt certification are the better teachers anyway.” Eileen suggested, “If the superintendent of your system doesn’t value National Board Certification any more than that, it probably trickles down to other administrators.”

Tammy Ellis

Tammy indicated that the principal she worked under when going through the National Board Certification process “basically showed no interest.” Tammy and her colleague who was also going through the certification process “saw no point in discussing National Board Certification” with their principal. When the principal was informed that Tammy had achieved National Board Certification, he “made no announcement to the staff about the certification.” When an article about Tammy earning National Board Certification appeared in the local newspaper, the “principal did not ever refer to it or discuss National Board Certification” with Tammy. Tammy commented, “Later during that school my principal introduced me to a visiting business partner as ‘The National Teacher of the Year.’” Tammy grinned when she said she “made no attempt to correct him.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany indicated that two of the five principals she worked for did not understand National Board Certification. When discussing the principal who Tiffany worked for during the year she was in the National Board Certification process, Tiffany commented that the principal “did not understand the concept [of National Board Certification].”

Tiffany was at another school when she was notified that she had earned National Board Certification. The principal at that school announced at a PTA meeting that

Tiffany “could now go anywhere in the United States and teach.” Tiffany left that school at the end of the school year.

Sara Davis

Sara indicated that with the third principal she worked under since going through the National Board Certification process “National Board Certification is never mentioned and does not seem valued.” Sara also stated, “There have been no new candidates. No one talks about going through the process. Without administrative encouragement, it appears to be a dead issue at my school.” When asked if she had talked to her latest principal about the certification process, Sara replied, “She knows I am National Board Certified. She was assistant principal at this school when there were three NBCTs, actually when two of them were going through the process. I just don’t think she is interested.”

Sara commented, “It would help if central office administrative staff knew more about National Board Certification. Perhaps a knowledgeable superintendent who showed respect for NBCTs would influence principals to do the same.”

Research Question 3: How has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

The third research question sought to examine how the teacher leadership of the participants in this study contributed to their job satisfaction. The five participants in this study all increased their teacher leadership activities after achieving National Board Certification from an average of 11 to an average of 19 categories of activities. They participated in these activities at the school, school district, and state level.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) indicated that a result of National Board Certification would be greater satisfaction in teaching as a

career and motivation for accomplished teachers to remain in teaching. James Kelly, the executive director of NBPTS, wrote, “The National Board Certification process itself is designed to encourage professional collegiality and qualities of leadership” (p. 309).

Interviews with participants indicated that job satisfaction was important to them and that teacher leadership was an aspect of that satisfaction. Overall findings from the data indicated that:

1. Collegiality/collaboration contributed to job satisfaction.
2. Autonomy contributed to job satisfaction.
3. Decision-making contributed to job satisfaction.

As illustrated in Table 9.6, all of the findings were present in all five cases. Codes that were used in data analysis are paired with findings.

Table 9.6

Findings from Research Question 3

Findings	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
COL Collegiality/ collaboration contribute to job satisfaction	X	X	X	X	X
AUT Autonomy contributes to job satisfaction		X	X	X	X
DEC Decision-making contributes to job satisfaction	X	X	X	X	X

Finding 3-1: Collegiality/collaboration contributed to job satisfaction.

All of the participants in this study reported collegiality and collaboration as aspects of their job satisfaction. A discussion of their perspectives on collegiality and collaboration as a factor in job satisfaction follows.

Renee Isley

Renee reported that working with adults is “important to job satisfaction” and that working with other teachers is “very satisfying.” As a special education teacher, Renee collaborates with classroom teachers. She stated, “Collaboration with other teachers to help meet the needs of my students is very satisfying.” Mentoring is important because “Communication with my mentee builds that collegiality that is very important to me.”

Renee has taught staff development courses. She commented, “I learn from the teachers I work with. I value the connection with other teachers.” In addition, Renee has worked with two universities to help develop programs and says she “enjoys the collaboration with higher education.”

Renee commented that she “embraces teacher leadership because as a teacher leader it is an opportunity to be a catalyst to help teachers to help students.” Renee also noted, “It is the students who make the difference.”

Eileen Reynolds

Eileen has spent most of her career teaching kindergarten and has served as team leader for kindergarten “several times.” Eileen stated, “There is collaboration on the kindergarten team and that is satisfying to me.” Eileen saw chairing her school’s SACS committee and work on various committees as “collaborative situations,” which made Eileen “more satisfied as a teacher.”

In discussing what would make her more satisfied, Eileen discussed the type of school to which she would be willing to move. That school would be “more collaborative” and there would be a “real professional learning community.” Eileen also talked about a school where “the conversation would include talk about best practices.” Eileen indicated that she “would love to be part of that conversation.”

Tammy Ellis

As a Teacher Support Specialist, Tammy “served as a mentor for new teachers.” She commented, “I share materials, lesson plans, and ideas. I enjoy collaborating with others. I feel that if I am working with other teachers, then there is a multiplier effect on my impact on student learning.” Through the Reach to Teach program, Tammy has had “an opportunity to travel and work with teachers in several school systems.” Tammy pointed out that she “has been fortunate to have professional conversations with a variety of people in a variety of settings.”

Tammy’s ideal teaching situation would have “more collegiality.” She commented that the title of NBCT “seems to create a wedge and inhibit collegiality” with her peers. However, Tammy explained, “Collaboration is valued in National Board Certification and teacher leaders must collaborate with colleagues. It all goes together. I really love working with other teachers.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany’s position as a literacy coach requires that she “work with teachers to improve student learning.” Tammy commented, “I love to work with teachers.” The leadership that comes with the literacy coach position gives Tiffany what she describes as “the feeling that I can make even more of a difference in children’s lives in that I work

with many teachers and students rather than just my own class of students.” Tammy noted that when she works as a TSS mentor, she “helps teachers help children,” and she “learns from the teachers she works with.”

Tiffany stated that her “satisfaction as an educator” was enhanced by “the ability to have greater impact on what happens at school and the opportunities to have collegial relationships with staff members.” Tiffany also pointed to having “comfort” regarding conversations with her administrator “about collegiality.”

Sara Davis

Sara described teacher leadership as “what gets teachers out of their little boxes to share with others.” A teacher leadership experience that she found “exciting and invigorating” was working as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolio entries. During that experience, Sara said, “I was working with dynamic, talented educators. The conversations during lunch and breaks were the conversations that should happen at school. I learned from everybody.”

When working with candidates for National Board Certification and when working as a Teacher Support Specialist, mentoring was a “satisfying” experience for Sara. Sara commented, “I found I learned as much from mentoring, maybe more, than the teacher I was mentoring.” Sara also stated, “When teachers pool ideas, we can have an impact on a whole school. In discussing her experiences as chair of her school’s SACS committee, Sara noted that the development of a school improvement plan fostered “a dialogue that contributed to collegiality.” Sara added, “Any time I can be part of a collaborative process that makes a difference, my satisfaction with my career is enhanced.”

Finding 3 2: Autonomy contributed to job satisfaction.

The four of the five participants in this study reported that autonomy was a factor in their job satisfaction. A discussion of their perspectives on autonomy follows.

Eileen Reynolds

Eileen reported that she is “very satisfied” with teaching because she can “get in her classroom and do her own thing.” Although Eileen does not specifically address autonomy in her comments on teacher leadership, she related a conversation among teachers that led to writing a grant to provide materials that would provide “consistency between grade levels.” For Eileen, the process “made so much sense.” In addition, Eileen took it upon herself “to enlist the kindergarten teachers to draft a pacing guide for the language arts program.” Development of the guide was part of the “school improvement plan,” although the administration did not ask teachers to work on or complete the guides. When asked if other grade level teams developed pacing guides, Eileen replied in the negative and explained, “I do what I am supposed to do.”

Tammy Ellis

Tammy was given the “freedom” to have an active professional life by her school administrator. Tammy participated in Reach to Teach, a teacher leadership activity that required her to be away from school. Tammy “appreciates the autonomy” of simply submitting the leave form, explaining, “The principal signs the form and I have the day.”

Tiffany Allen

The literacy coach position affords Tiffany “a great deal of autonomy.” Tiffany noted, “For me to work effectively with teachers, I must have autonomy.” Tiffany felt that both principals she has worked with since assuming the position of literacy coach

have given her “autonomy.” That autonomy “contributes to the satisfaction” Tiffany finds with her job.

Sara Davis

When asked if she has autonomy in her job, Sara answered, “I do feel that I have enough autonomy to positively affect my job situation.” Most of that autonomy comes from teaching her students in her classroom. Sara pointed out that her autonomy is sometimes affected “by the climate of today’s schools.”

Finding 3-3: Decision-making contributed to job satisfaction.

The five participants in this study indicated that decision-making was a factor in the satisfaction they had with their jobs. The following reflects the perspectives of the participants on how decision-making affected their job satisfaction.

Renee Isley

Renee found “satisfaction from the collaborative efforts of developing teacher evaluation instruments for her school system and from being on textbook adoption committees.” Renee commented, “Important decisions had to be made for the school district. I felt that my expertise was valued because I was allowed to participate in making those decisions.” Renee indicated, “I am proud of the decisions that were made and my part in the process.”

Eileen Reynolds

Eileen pointed to teacher leadership activities that have “proven satisfying.” “Service on a statewide committee to develop a kindergarten assessment” made Eileen feel like “she was on the cutting edge of influencing kindergarten teaching across the state.” Eileen also “valued the time spent on curriculum and textbook committees

because of the opportunity to provide input into system decisions on those matters.” Even the time Eileen spent “chairing the SACS committee allowed for having an influence on what went on in school.”

Tammy Ellis

In reviewing her teacher leadership activities, Tammy pointed to the “satisfaction” she received from opportunities which allowed her “to make an impact on teaching and learning.” Appointments to her school and school district staff development committees allowed Tammy “to participate in decisions on effective staff development programs.” Participation on the review panel for the science CRCT questions allowed Tammy “to have input into judgments on appropriate test questions. By serving on committees involved with aligning the curriculum with the Georgia Performance Standards, Tammy “has the opportunity to impact how the curriculum will be delivered.”

Service on the SACS leadership team gave Tammy “input on the school improvement plan which would govern school planning.” Grade level chair responsibilities allowed Tammy “leadership in determining the focus for grade level meetings.” Textbook committee membership allowed Tammy “to have an active role in selecting appropriate textbooks.”

Tammy has spent time and energy advocating for National Board Certification. Tammy “enjoys being on the frontline in supporting National Board Certification.” Tammy also has “satisfaction from working on the Georgia Leadership Advancement Panel.” In this endeavor, Tammy enjoys “making contributions to the effort of aligning National Board Standards and Georgia Performance Standards for Students.”

Tiffany Allen

Tiffany found “teacher leadership opportunities to be satisfying.” When she was hired to implement an EIP program, Tiffany “enjoyed setting the program up and helping make decisions about how the reading program would be delivered and what materials would be needed.” Tiffany also “liked the decision-making that was required in the literacy coach position: setting schedules; buying materials; helping teachers make reading groups.” As Tiffany has grown “more comfortable with the literacy coach position,” she has learned to “trust her “intuition when it comes to making leadership decisions.” Tiffany elaborated, “I find that my superiors are asking for my opinions and/or agreeing with my assessments of situations which makes me feel more confident in my leadership abilities.”

Sara Davis

Teacher leadership roles that “have been satisfying” for Sara include “serving on the Superintendent’s Teacher Advisory Council, the committee to select the curriculum director, committees to select principals, and the school district elementary instruction committee.” Sara explained, “Being part of those committees gave me insight on how decisions were made and allowed me to participate in decision-making.” Sara also enjoyed the “decision-making that was part of being staff development director for her school.” Sara commented that “it was especially satisfying to participate on the statewide committee for Georgia Performance Standards testing and item analysis review for language arts. The decisions made by that committee will affect all of Georgia’s students.”

Summary of the Findings

It was evident from the findings that the five National Board Certified Teachers who participated in this study were active teacher leaders before and after achieving National Board Certification. The participants were involved in a variety of teacher leadership activities including team leader, teacher support specialist, and member of school and district committees. Since the National Board Certification portfolio requires that candidates present information about and document teacher leadership activities, it is not surprising that these teachers were teacher leaders.

Each of the participants increased the number of teacher leadership activities they participated in after achieving National Board Certification. Prior to certification they participated in an average of 11.4 teacher leadership activities. Sara was the most active as she indicated that she participated in 15 categories of teacher leadership. The least active was Renee, who indicated that she participated in 8 categories of teacher leadership. After becoming National Board Certified Teachers, the participants in this study reported taking part in an average of 19.6 categories teacher leadership. Renee was the most active with participation in 23 categories of activities, an increase of 15. The least active was Tiffany with 16 categories of teacher leadership activities after certification, an increase of 6. Sara indicated that she “expected National Board Certification to open more doors than it has.”

After achieving certification, all of the participants were teacher leaders in areas involving National Board Certification. All five served as mentors for National Board Certification candidates, and all five indicated that they advocated for National Board Certification. Three of the five underwent training to teach *The Knowledgeable Teacher*,

a course for pre-candidates, and they taught the course. Sara was involved in National Board Certification activities before she went through the certification process as she worked as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolios.

All of the study participants indicated interest in leadership positions in their school districts. Eileen and Tammy have completed work for add-on Certificates in Leadership. Renee indicated that she will go to graduate school to pursue a leadership degree, while Tiffany will do so if necessary. While Sara would like a teacher leadership position, she will not be working on additional certification

In discussing the 17 principals that the participants collectively worked under since starting the National Board Certification process, the participants provided a mixed view of the attitudes towards and knowledge about National Board Certification. All five worked for at least one principal who was characterized as positive about National Board Certification. Two of the participants worked under principals they felt were negative about National Board Certification, and all five worked for principals who the study participants felt were not knowledgeable about National Board Certification. Eileen and Sara indicated that lack of understanding and support for National Board Certification at the school district level may contribute to attitudes of principals. Eileen also stated, “I don’t think I had an expectation that becoming an NBCT would affect my relationship with administrators.”

All of the participants reported finding job satisfaction from their teacher leadership positions. Collegiality and collaboration were factors in job satisfaction cited by all five of the teachers participating in the study. Tammy pointed out that

“collaboration is valued in National Board Certification and teacher leaders must collaborate with colleagues.”

Autonomy was cited by all of the participants except Renee as a component of job satisfaction. In Tiffany’s position as a literacy coach, she “must have autonomy.” Eileen and Sara discussed the autonomy of being a classroom teacher. Tammy has been given “freedom” to have an active professional life.

All five teachers indicated that they relished the opportunities for decision-making in their teacher leadership activities. Renee commented that that her “expertise was valued because of being allowed to participate in making decisions.” Eileen noted that she had been on a committee “that influenced kindergarten teaching across the state.” Tammy noted the “satisfaction” she received from opportunities which allowed her “to make an impact on teaching and learning.” Tiffany “liked the decision-making that was required in the literacy coach position.” Sara noted that serving on committees “allowed me to participate in decision-making.”

From the cross-case analysis of the five teachers, themes were revealed through the comparative method of data analysis. The themes are derived from the data from this specific study; therefore the reader is cautioned against generalizing beyond the data presented in this study.

1. The National Board Certified Teachers in this study assumed more teacher leadership responsibility after achieving National Board Certification
2. National Board Certification has not consistently impacted the relationship of the National Board Certified Teachers in this study with the principals in their schools.

3. Job satisfaction of the National Board Certified Teachers in this study has been positively impacted by the collaboration, autonomy, and decision-making that come from teacher leadership responsibilities.

Chapter 10 provides a summary of the study in relation to the literature as well as discussions of the five themes that emerged from the analysis of the five case studies. Implications for further study are also discussed.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This study was designed to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their teacher leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. This study was significant because National Board Certification is relatively recent and the number of National Board Certified Teachers nationally exceeds 47,000.

A summary of the study is present in this chapter. The summary is followed by a discussion of the research findings and implications and directions for future research.

Summary of the Study

A qualitative case study approach was used to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers working in elementary schools in five school districts in Georgia. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. How has National Board Certification impacted their work as teacher leaders?
2. How has National Board Certification impacted their relationships with the principals in their schools?
3. Has the leadership work contributed to job satisfaction?

Semi-structured interviews with National Board Certified Teachers provided insights into their perspectives on their leadership activities. Teachers were presented with a list of teacher leadership activities that was used in a study of National Board Certified

Teachers (Kennelly, 2001). Leadership activities identified from the list provided a focal point for discussion of the teachers' perspectives on their teacher leadership.

Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969, Snow, 2001) was the theoretical framework that guided the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data in the study.

Blumer developed three premises of symbolic interactionism:

The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by a person in dealing with the things he encounters. (p. 2)

The actions of human beings with and to things is based on the meaning those things have for them. The things or objects referred to by Blumer included physical objects (e.g., a tree), social objects (e.g., a friend), and abstract objects (e.g., a doctrine or idea). Meanings of the same object may vary according to the individual. Blumer suggested: "a tree would be a different object to a botanist, a lumberman, a poet, and a home gardener" (p. 11).

Similarly, National Board Certification and teacher leadership have different meanings to teachers who have achieved the certification and to their principals. This research focused on the meanings that National Board Certification had for the National Board Certified Teachers who were the participants in this study, especially those meanings they associated with teacher leadership and National Board Certification. What expectations did those teachers have on their potential teacher leadership activities as a result of having earned National Board Certification? A second focus of this research was on the meanings that National Board Certification has for the participants as derived from the social interactions with others, specifically their school administrators. Did the

interactions with administrators have impact on the meanings of National Board Certification and teacher leadership held by the National Board Certified Teachers? And last, how were these meanings of National Board Certification interpreted by the National Board Certified teachers in terms of their job satisfaction?

Discussion of Themes and Related Literature

Referring to the review of the related literature, the three themes that emerged from the cross case analysis of the five teachers are discussed in relation to the teachers perspectives on how their teacher leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. The following themes emerged from the findings of this study. The researcher is not attempting to make sweeping generalities about National Board Certified Teachers.

Theme 1: The National Board Certified Teachers in this study assumed more teacher leadership responsibility after achieving National Board Certification

All of the participants in this study were actively involved in teacher leadership activities prior to certification. This corresponds to the findings of Kennelly (1991) that National Board Certified Teachers were active in teacher leadership activities prior to certification. Teachers participating in this study were given a list of categories of teacher leadership that were used in the Kennelly (2001) study. They were asked to indicate which of the activities they had participated in prior to receiving National Board Certification. Participants in this study were involved in 8 to 15 categories of teacher leadership activities prior to certification.

Prior to achieving National Board Certification, Renee, Eileen, and Tiffany had leadership roles in education associations, while Tammy reported being active in her education association. Renee, Tiffany, and Sara were nominated by their principals to

become Teacher Support Specialists, and after receiving training, mentored at least one teacher per year. All five of the participants reported serving as team leaders or department chairs. Both Sara and Eileen served as chairs for their schools' Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) review preparation team. Tammy was a fellow at Georgia Tech, and she spent her fellowship time at Zoo Atlanta "working with the Georgia Department of Education and the zookeepers."

All of the participants increased their level of involvement in teacher leadership activities after becoming National Board Certified Teachers. In a study of National Board Certified Teachers in Mississippi, Swogert (2002) reported that 88% of the teachers surveyed reported holding one to eight teacher leadership positions. The increase in teacher leadership activities was also found by Kennelly (2001). In a qualitative study of National Board Certified Teachers in California, Sato, Hyler, and Monte-Sano (2002) found that the National Board Certified Teachers assumed new leadership activities after certification, often because of opportunities presented to them because they were certified.

Teachers participating in this study were given a list of categories of teacher leadership that were used in the Kennelly (2001) study and asked to indicate which activities that they had participated in after achieving National Board Certification. Participants indicated an increase in the number of categories of teacher leadership in which they participated from an average of 11.4 prior to achieving National Board Certification to 19.6 after becoming National Board Certified Teachers.

O'Conner (2003) reported that 81% of the National Board Certified Teachers that she surveyed indicated a need for teacher leadership responsibilities. Comments from

participants in this study reflected the need for teacher leadership opportunities. Eileen commented, “After National Board Certification you can never go into that isolated classroom again.” When Eileen discussed how she became involved in leadership activities, Eileen stated, “I seek it out and a lot comes to me.” Tammy pointed out that she “volunteers for everything possible.” Sara indicated that “teachers must take advantage of the opportunities” for teacher leadership. Renee noted, “I look for opportunities for leadership.” Renee also pointed out that she had to “sell” herself to convince administrators to use her leadership skills. Tiffany found herself “in a leadership position” when she “tried to spread the word” about National Board Certification.

Participants in this study continued or repeated many of the activities in which they were involved in prior to certification. Eileen and Sara repeated as chairs of the SACS visit preparation team at their school. Renee, Tiffany, and Sara continued to mentor teachers as Teacher Support Specialists. Renee sustained her work as a “trainer of trainers” for the Teacher Support Specialist program, although in a new school district. Tammy continued her work with Zoo Atlanta and “helped plan workshops for teachers at the Zoo.”

New opportunities for leadership were also presented. Tammy was nominated by her principal for training as a Teacher Support Specialist. Because she was a National Board Certified Teacher and Teacher Support Specialist, Tammy was invited to be part of Reach to Teach, a teacher leadership activity that includes mentoring “teachers going through alternative certification programs.”

As the Georgia Performance Standards replaced the Quality Core Curriculum in Georgia, Sara, Eileen, Tammy, and Tiffany had responsibilities “unpacking the standards.” Both Sara and Tammy were asked to serve on “item analysis review teams” to align the Criterion Referenced Curriculum Test with Georgia Performance Standards.

Sara was the only participant in the study who worked with National Board Certification prior to being certified. Sara worked “as an assessor of National Board Certification portfolios” and then “a trainer of assessors” for several years.

Each of the five participants reported mentoring candidates for National Board Certification. Mentoring of National Board Certification candidates was mentioned most frequently as a teacher leadership position by National Board Certified Teachers in Mississippi (Swogert, 2002). Kennelly (2001) found that 90% of National Board Certified Teachers worked with candidates for National Board Certification. All five of the study participants indicated that they participated in the same four categories of teacher leadership that involved mentoring candidates and promoting National Board Certification. Those categories include the following:

1. Participating in a network of National Board Certified Teachers
2. Helping NBPTS offer National Board Certification
3. Mentoring, coaching, or encouraging Certification candidates
4. Speaking publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification

Each of the participants in this study mentored candidates for National Board Certification in a program sponsored by an education association. Renee, Eileen, Tammy, and Tiffany were involved in “weekend workshops for candidates” sponsored by the Georgia Teacher Center. Renee, Eileen, and Tammy have “taught The Knowledgeable

Teacher, a course for pre-candidates.” Renee “worked with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission developing the outline for The Knowledgeable Teacher Course,” saying that “was my strongest contribution.” Renee, Eileen, Tammy, and Tiffany have completed coursework and taken a test to become Georgia Professional Standards Commission approved mentors.

Renee “helped develop a program for mentoring special education teachers who wished to pursue National Board certification” and consulted with the education department of a university “in embedding National Board Certification into a degree program.” Eileen wrote an action research grant to “disseminate information about National Board Certification” to administrators in her school district. Sara continued working as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolios for a short time after achieving the certification herself.

In addition to mentoring candidates and teaching The Knowledgeable Teacher Course, Tammy is a member of the Executive Board for Georgia’s National Board Certified Teachers and in that capacity “helps to plan conferences for Georgia’s National Board Certified Teachers and works to advocate for National Board Certification.”

When discussing her post certification leadership activities, Eileen commented, “I kept up with most of the activities I had done before, but then added the next layer which was mentoring other candidates.” Eileen’s experience was similar to that of the other participants in this study.

Theme 2: National Board Certification has not consistently impacted the relationship of the National Board Certified Teachers in this study with the principals in their schools.

Participants in this study worked with a total of 17 principals since beginning the certification process. Analysis of the perspectives of the study participants revealed that

all of the participants felt that they worked with at least one principal who was positive about National Board Certification, and all participants felt that they worked with at least one principal who did not understand National Board Certification. In addition, two of the study participants felt that they had worked for at least one principal who was negative about National Board Certification.

Swogert's (2002) study of Mississippi Teachers found that 58% of the NBCTs indicated that administrators treated them as professionals. Cain (2002) researched the perceptions of principals regarding National Board Certified Teachers, and they reported that 77.1% of the principals rated NBCTs better or much better than other teachers as members of learning communities.

Sara was "encouraged" to go through the National Board Certification process by her principal, the same principal who gave Sara "information about serving as an assessor for National Board Certification." This principal offered help and asked how the "portfolio was coming." While going through the certification process, Renee found that National Board Certification "opened the relationship" with her principal. Renee felt "that there was a more open consideration of how I could be a leader at my school." The principal that Eileen worked for while going through the certification process "was supportive" and "sent memos" offering help. The experiences of Sara and Renee correspond to the finding of Blase and Blase (2001) that talking with teachers is one of three instructional leadership behaviors that is empowering to teachers.

Both Tiffany and Renee were recruited for teaching positions by other National Board Certified Teachers. Renee explained that "the principal was willing to hire me partly because I was another National Board Certified Teacher." Tiffany was hired as a

literacy coach, and the principal “was proud that he had two National Board Certified Teachers on his staff.”

Tammy found that the second principal she worked for since receiving certification “has on occasion mentioned that he had National Board Teachers on staff.” This principal has “nominated” Tammy for system level committee work and “has been totally supportive of the Reach to Teach activities” although those activities caused Tammy “to miss many days of school.” Tammy commented, “My principal thinks that I know what I am doing and what I am learning can benefit the school.”

The third principal that Tiffany worked under since starting the National Board Certification process “understood what National Board Certification was about and was very knowledgeable about the process.” This principal “questioned Tiffany about the process” and would ask how Tiffany “interpreted things as a result of going through the process.” In addition, Tammy was “asked to share ideas learned from mentoring.” This principal indicated that “she would be interested” in a National Board process for principals.

The principal that Sara was working for when it was announced that she had earned National Board Certification “announced her certification at a faculty meeting and informed parents through a newsletter.” When two other faculty members attempted certification, those teachers “had the full support of the principal” who “periodically asked if there was anything they needed.” Danielson (2005) noted that the public recognition of teacher leadership by an administrator is an indication of support.

The fifth principal Tiffany worked under since achieving National Board Certification is a National Board Certified Teacher whom Tiffany “mentored through the

certification process.” This principal was a Learning Support Specialist who “recruited” Tiffany for the literacy coach position. With regard to National Board Certification, Tiffany stated, “This principal certainly does get it.” Tiffany feels that “going through the same process” has made it possible for the principal and Tiffany “to work easily together.”

Swogert (2002) found that 42% of the NBCTs studied indicated a lack of understanding of their achievement by administrators and many felt their skills were underused. That finding is echoed in the perspectives of the participants in this study.

Two of the study participants reported from their perspectives, they had worked for principals who were negative about National Board Certification. Renee felt that the fourth principal that she worked under used “National Board Certification as a weapon.” Renee related a situation where she was five minutes late for a morning duty because of traffic problems and the principal told her that “a National Board Certified Teacher would have gotten someone to cover their space.” Renee noted that other than that instance, her “National Board Certification is never mentioned.”

Tiffany had two principals who appeared to be positive about National Board Certification. Those principals thought “it was a good thing” because they knew about good teachers who had gone through the process. However, Tiffany found that the principal she worked under when she was going through the National Board Certification process “seemed to be upset” when Tiffany began to “speak with other teachers about reflective practices in teaching and what is right for kids.” Tiffany felt that when she “would speak up at a faculty meeting,” the principal “cut her off.” The next principal that Tiffany worked for seemed to want Tiffany on the staff for “bragging rights.” Tiffany

became “miserable” at the school when she felt that “the administration and the teachers at her grade level saw her as a threat.” Tiffany felt that it was the “title” of National Board Certified Teacher as well the fact that she “offered new ideas” made others feel threatened.” The perspectives of Tiffany and Renee that they worked for principals who were negative support the contention of Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) that administrators often demonstrate resistance to teacher leadership. Barth (2001) explained that some principals create barriers to teacher leadership because they are unwilling to share power or uncertain of how to share power.

The five participants in this study worked for principals that they felt were not knowledgeable about National Board Certification. While some gave lip service to National Board Certification, some ignored it completely.

The principal that Renee worked under during the years she went through the certification process and received notification that she was a National Board Certified Teacher “had not informed the faculty of school district workshops or information sessions about National Board Certification.” Renee “was never sure the principal understood National Board Certification” or “the significance of the accomplishment.”

When Eileen became a National Board Certified Teacher, her principal made an announcement to the faculty that Eileen “had passed the National Teacher Exam.” This principal never talked to Eileen about the process. Although five teachers at the school achieved National Board Certification, the principal “has not discussed National Board Certification with any of the teachers, has not suggested that any teacher consider candidacy, and has not demonstrated any interest.” Eileen’s third principal at the school “has not had any conversations” with Eileen about National Board Certification.

However this principal has asked the National Board Certified Teachers at the school “to take on leadership responsibilities.” Eileen added, “Three of the four have leadership certificates also.”

Tammy reported that the principal she worked under when going through the National Board Certification process “basically showed no interest.” When Tammy achieved the certification, “no announcement was made to the staff.” The principal “did not refer to or discuss” National Board Certification or an article that appeared in a local newspaper about Tammy’s achievement. On one occasion, the principal did introduce Tammy as “The National Teacher of the Year.” Tammy grinned when she said, “I made no attempt to correct him.” Similarly, when Tiffany received notification that she was a National Board Certified Teacher, the principal announced at a PTA meeting that Tiffany “could go anywhere in the United States and teach.”

Sara indicated that the third principal she worked for since attaining National Board Certification does not seem to have any interest.” Sara commented, “National Board Certification is never mentioned and does not seem valued.” This principal was an assistant principal at the same school “when there were three NBCTs, actually when two of them were going through the process.” Sara noted. “Without administrative encouragement, it [National Board Certification] appears to be a dead issue at my school.” Participants in this study reported lack of recognition by some of the principals for whom they worked. Dagenhart et al. (2005) found that recognition for their accomplishments was desired by North Carolina National Board Certified Teachers.

Both Eileen and Sara pointed to lack of interest by central office staff as a reason for lack of interest or knowledge by principals. Eileen indicated her superintendent “may

not be convinced that the certification itself makes a difference.” Eileen suggested, “If the superintendent of your system does not value National Board Certification any more than that, it probably trickles down to other administrators.” Similarly, Sara stated, “Perhaps a knowledgeable superintendent who showed respect for NBCTs would influence principals to do the same.”

Theme 3: Job satisfaction of National Board Certified Teachers in this study has been positively impacted by the collaboration, autonomy, and decision-making that come from teacher leadership responsibilities.

The five participants in this study reported that teacher leadership activities contributed to job satisfaction. The satisfaction was derived from the collaboration, autonomy, and decision-making which came from teacher leadership activities. These three factors in job satisfaction are discussed below.

LeBlanc and Shelton (1997) reported that job satisfaction was related to teacher leadership activities. Teacher leaders reported enjoying the opportunities to work with their peers. The leadership of classroom teachers is fostered by collaboration (Snell & Swanson, 2000). Collaboration, an area assessed in National Board Certification portfolios, is an element of the fifth core proposition, “teachers are members of learning communities” (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1989, p. 15).

Four of the five participants in this study are Teacher Support Specialists who “mentor beginning or struggling teachers.” Renee “enjoys being a catalyst to help teachers help students.” Renee also stated, “Communication with my mentee builds that collegiality that is very important to me.” Tammy “enjoys having a multiplier effect” on her “impact on student learning.” Tammy commented, “I share materials, lesson plans, and ideas. I enjoy collaborating with others.” Tiffany “learns from the teachers” she

mentors and enjoys “helping teachers help children.” Sara found mentoring to be “satisfying,” saying that she “learned as much from mentoring, maybe more, as the teacher I was mentoring.” In a study of teacher leaders, Wasley (1992b) reported that “teachers are interested in learning opportunities that allow them to collaborate with peers” (p. 21).

Sara and Eileen served as chairs for their schools’ “SACS committee.” Eileen found the “collaborative situations” of working with the SACS committee and chairing various committees” made her “more satisfied as a teacher.” Sara noted that the development of a school improvement plan fostered a dialogue “that contributed to collegiality.” Sara also stated, “Anytime I can be part of a collaborative process that makes a difference, my satisfaction with my career is enhanced.”

Renee mentioned that the collaboration she experiences as a special education teacher working with regular education teachers, saying “Collaboration with other teachers to help meet the needs of my students is very satisfying.” When Renee discussed teaching staff development courses, she reported that working with adults “is important to job satisfaction.” Renee noted, “I learn from the teachers I work with. I value the connection with other teachers.” Similarly, Ovado (1994) found that teacher leaders who led in-service activities felt they benefited and learned from professional interactions with the participants in the classes.

Sara described teacher leadership as “what gets teachers out of their little boxes to share with others.” Sara found it “exciting and invigorating” to work as an assessor and trainer of assessors for National Board Certification portfolio entries. Sara pointed out that “the conversations during lunch and breaks were the conversations that should

happen at school. I learned from everybody.” Sara’s comments give credence to the explanation of Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001) that teacher leadership is a natural outgrowth of professional sharing, learning together, and addressing problems together.

Three of the study participants indicated that they would like “more collaborative situations.” Tiffany and Tammy both commented that the “title of NBCT” was a problem with colleagues. Tiffany said that teachers saw her as a “threat,” and “a person rocking the boat with new ideas.” Tammy commented that the title of NBCT “seems to create a wedge and inhibit collegiality.” Tammy indicated that she would like to be in a teaching situation with “more collegiality.” Similarly, Eileen talked about the conversation about “best practices” and “how to meet the needs of every child” that “is taking place in some building.” Eileen added, “I would love to be part of that conversation.”

Four of the five participants in this study discussed autonomy as a factor in job satisfaction. Herzberg (1966) and Rosenholtz (1989) point to autonomy as a factor in job satisfaction. Rosenholtz (1991) also reported that autonomy increases motivation, responsibility, and commitment. Professional autonomy was also found to be an important factor in job satisfaction by Perie and Baker (1997), Ingersoll (2001), and Davis and Wilson (2000). Studies of teacher leaders found satisfaction in the autonomy that they had (Smylie & Denny, 1990). A study of retention of Georgia teachers showed that Georgia teachers also reported that professional autonomy was an important element in job satisfaction (Georgia Division for Educator Research and Development, 2001).

Both Eileen and Sara pointed to the autonomy that comes from teaching. Eileen spoke of “being able to shut my door and do my own thing.” While Sara said that she

“has enough autonomy to positively affect my job situations,” most of that autonomy comes from “teaching children.”

Tammy has been “given” the freedom” to have an active professional life by her school administrator. When attendance is required for Reach to Teach activities, Tammy “appreciates the autonomy” of simply submitting the leave form, explaining, “The principal signs the form, and I have the day.”

As a literacy coach, Tiffany has “a great deal of autonomy” to make decisions when working with teachers, materials, and children. Tiffany stated, “For me to work effectively with teachers, I must have autonomy.” Dagenhart et al. (2005) found that National Board Certified Teachers in North Carolina wanted autonomy in decision – making.

The five teachers in this study reported that decision-making contributed to their job satisfaction. Among the factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction are “teacher participation over school decision-making and influences over school policy” (Perie & Baker, 1997, p. 25). Herzberg (1966) identified responsibility as a factor in job satisfaction, while both Herzberg (1966) and Rosenholtz (1989) recognize decision-making opportunities as factors in job satisfaction

Four of the participants indicated that they found job satisfaction in the decision-making that was part of serving on school district committees. Renee worked on committees to develop teacher evaluation instruments for her school system and to select textbooks. Renee commented, “Important decisions had to be made for the school district. I felt my expertise was valued because I was allowed to participate in making these decisions.” Renee also noted that she was “proud of the decisions” and of her “part

in the process.” Eileen and Tammy also indicated that the decision-making work on textbook and curriculum committees gave them “satisfaction.” Tammy commented on having “an active role in selecting appropriate textbooks” and having “the opportunity to impact how curriculum will be delivered,” while Eileen noted that she “valued the time spent on curriculum and textbook committees because of the opportunity to provide input into system decisions.” Sara served on the “Superintendent’s Advisory Council, the committee to select a curriculum director, committees to select principals, and the school district elementary instruction committee.” Sara explained, “Being part of those committees gave me insight on how decisions were made and allowed me to participate in decision-making.”

Eileen, Tammy, and Sara all served on statewide committees. Eileen served on a “committee to develop a kindergarten assessment.” Eileen commented that she felt like she “was on the cutting edge of influencing kindergarten teaching across the state.” Tammy’s work on the review panel for science CRCT questions allowed her “to have input into judgments on appropriate test questions.” Sara was appointed to a state committee for Georgia Performance Standards testing and item analysis review for language arts.” Sara found it “especially satisfying” to serve on a committee that made “decisions that will affect all of Georgia’s students.”

Tammy and Sara served on staff development committees. Tammy received “satisfaction” from participating “in decisions on effective staff development programs” because those decisions allowed her “to make an impact on teaching and learning.” Sara noted that she “enjoyed the decision-making that was part of being staff development director.”

Implications

National Board Certification for Teachers is a relatively new reform movement. Although the framework for National Board Certification was articulated in 1989 by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the first year that teachers were able to earn National Board Certification was 1994. There were 4 teachers in Georgia and 177 in the nation who received National Board Certification in 1994. By 2005, the number of National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia had risen to 2,123, while there were 47,513 NBCTs in the Nation. In Georgia, approximately 2% of the teaching force has earned National Board Certification. In the United States a little more than 1% of the public school teachers are National Board Certified.

As the number of National Board Certified Teachers grows, there are implications for further research, for National Board Certified Teachers, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, for Administrator Education Departments, for Principals, and for policy-makers.

Implications for further study

The leadership of National Board Certified Teachers has been explored in the research. Kennelly (2001) studied the leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers and provided a descriptive analysis of the survey responses of approximately 2000 NBCTs. Studies of teachers in Mississippi (Swogert, 2002) and California (Belden, 2002) provided some data about leadership activities of National Board Certified Teachers. The findings from a review of the literature supports that this study is the first qualitative study of the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia on how their leadership activities impacted their relationships with their principals and their

job satisfaction. The present study was fashioned after Kennelly's (2001) study which provide descriptive analysis of survey data on the teacher leadership of National Board Certified Teachers. This study attempted to get deeper perspectives through cross case analysis of in-depth interviews of five National Board Certified Teachers. Perhaps, a future study could use mixed methods with a survey and follow-up interviews.

This study focused on National Board Certified Teachers who received their National Board Certification in 1999 or 2000. The participants in this study all worked in elementary schools. It would be appropriate to study the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers who worked in middle schools and the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers who worked in high schools. It would also be appropriate to study teachers who had received their certification after 2000 since the financial incentives for teachers to earn National Board Certification in Georgia changed dramatically in 2000.

While this study examined the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities impacted their relationships with their principals, it would be interesting to examine the perspectives of the principals of National Board Certified Teachers on the leadership of those teachers. And perhaps even more interesting would be a study that included both National Board Certified Teachers and their principals.

Implications for National Board Certified Teachers

Teacher leadership is valued in the National Board Certification process and is promoted by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. All of the participants in the study were involved in teacher leadership activities prior to earning National Board Certification. After earning National Board Certification, there was an

increase in the number of teacher leadership activities in which the participants in this study were involved. Many of the new activities centered on mentoring candidates for National Board Certification.

All of the teachers in this study indicated that one or more of the principals they worked for was not knowledgeable about National Board Certification or was negative about National Board Certification. One of the teachers noted that National Board Certification was not a factor in being chosen for leadership positions.

If National Board Certified Teachers wish to participate in more teacher leadership activities at their school and if they wish to have administrators who are better informed about National Board Certification, the NBCTs may have to provide information to their school or school district administrators about the teacher leadership value of National Board Certified Teachers.

Implications for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

While the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards does provide literature for school administrators on the value of National Board Certification, the results of this study indicate that some principals are not aware of that value. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards may wish to examine the effectiveness of their efforts to educate administrators about National Board Certification.

One of the goals of National Board Certification is to keep accomplished teachers in the classroom. Of the five participants in this study, three are definitely looking for positions outside the classroom. A fourth teacher is working as a literacy coach and may look for an administrative or supervisory job when the grant funding her position ends. The fifth teacher would prepare for a leadership position if she had more years before

retirement. This would indicate that, at least for these five teachers, the goal of keeping accomplished teachers in the classroom is not being met. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards may wish to study why National Board Certified Teachers are choosing to move out of the classroom and into administrative and supervisory positions. One of the participants worked for a principal who was a National Board Certified Teacher. If the number of National Board Certified Teachers who become school administrators increases, NBPTS may wish to study the impact of the teaching certification on administrative behavior.

Implications for Educational Leadership Programs

As the number of National Board Certified Teachers continues to grow, school administrators will be more likely to have one or more National Board Certified Teachers as a member of the faculty of their school. Preparation programs for school administrators may wish to include information about teacher leadership and specifically the leadership of National Board Certified Teachers.

Implications for Principals

The findings of this study suggest that National Board Certified Teachers are interested in teacher leadership opportunities. Two of the National Board Certified Teachers who participated in this study left the schools where they were working because in their perspective the principal they worked for was negative regarding National Board Certification. Two other participants indicated their desire for principals to be knowledgeable about National Board Certification. Principals may wish to become acquainted with National Board Certification and learn about the teacher leadership potential of National Board Certified Teachers.

Implications for Policy Makers

Much of the attention on National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia has centered on the impact of National Board Certified Teachers on student learning. Policy makers should become aware of the teacher leadership potential of National Board Certified Teachers. Informed decisions regarding the funding of National Board Certification fees and salary supplements could be made with the knowledge of the teacher leadership contributions of National Board Certified Teachers as well as the impact of the NBCTs on student learning.

Concluding Thoughts

This study was designed to study the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacted their relationships with their principals and their job satisfaction. A case study design was used to present the stories of five National Board Certified Teachers who worked in elementary schools. Since National Board Certification is a relatively new phenomenon with the first teachers earning the certification in 1994 and since there are no studies related specifically to the perspectives of National Board Certified teachers regarding their leadership activities, this study is timely with implications for future research.

When the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1989) developed the framework for National Board Certification for Teachers, among its goals were “creating more professionally rewarding relationships between teachers and between teachers and administrators” and “expanding the flow of first rate people into teaching and stemming the outbound tide of professionals” (pp 2-3). The perspectives of the participants in this study indicate that while professionally rewarding relationships have

developed with some principals, other principals do not understand National Board Certification or are negative about National Board Certification. All of the participants in this study expressed an interest in leaving the classroom for administrative or supervisory positions. This is contrary to the goals of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

The 5 participants of this study were among the first National Board Certified Teachers in Georgia as there were a total 117 NBCT in the state in 2000, compared to 2123 in 2005. All of the participants added mentoring of National Board Certification candidates to their list of teacher leadership activities after achieving certification. The need for mentors for an ever growing number of certification candidates was cited as a reason for participation in the mentoring activity. The number of Georgia candidates for National Board Certification in the 2005-2006 school year numbered approximately 500, less than one-fourth the number of NBCTs in the state. It would appear that the need for National Board Certified Teachers to mentor candidates has diminished. If as O'Conner (2003) suggests, National Board Certified Teachers have a need to participate in teacher leadership activities, one wonders if the more recent NBCTs have increased their teacher leadership activities and in what areas those increases have occurred.

National Board Certified Teachers now represent 2% of the teaching force in Georgia and just over 1% of the national teaching force with growing numbers each year. If the trend to more National Board Certified Teachers continues, it may become necessary for administrators to learn about the National Board Certification process and the qualities of accomplished teaching that are assessed. Knowing what accomplished teaching means in terms of National Board Certification may give administrators insight

in how best to use the ever increasing number of National Board Certified Teachers who are working in schools.

While the study participants are active teacher leaders and have increased the number of teacher leadership activities since achieving certification, many of their teacher leadership activities are performed outside of their schools. Some participants have expressed the desire to have more input in school level decisions. Research indicates that each school and its students can benefit from teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Vazquez-Levy & Timmerman, 2000; Zepeda, Mayers & Benson, 2003). It would appear that the schools where the study participants' work may not be getting the full benefit of the leadership abilities of these teachers.

In education, reform movements come and go (Tyack and Cuban, 1997). National Board Certification of Teachers is a relatively new reform movement. Only time will tell if this movement will stand the test of time and have a major effect on teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to take part in a research study titled " Perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on How Their Leadership Activities after Gaining Certification Impacted their Relationships with Their Principals and their Career Satisfaction," which is being conducted by Irene Goetze from the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia (706 542 4146) under the direction of Dr. Sally Zepeda, Department of Educational Administration and Policy (706 542 0408). I do not have to take part in this study. I can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of the study is to examine the perspectives of National Board Certified Teachers on how their leadership activities after gaining certification impacts their relationships with their principals and their career satisfaction.

If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to do the following things:

1. Complete a demographic questionnaire to provide a profile of my educational experiences. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
2. Participate in three interviews with the researcher during the course of the study. These interviews may last up to two hours each.
3. Upon receipt of written transcripts of the interviews, read the transcripts, and respond with corrections, clarifications, and deletions.

I will receive no compensation for participating in this study. Benefits for me include having an opportunity to reflect on my teacher leadership activities and how those activities impact my relationship with my principal and my career satisfaction.

No risks are expected from participation in this study.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at:.

My signature below indicates that the researchers have answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I consent to volunteer for this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Irene Goetze

Name of Researcher
Telephone: _____
Email: _____

Signature

Date

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D. Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX B

Please check the leadership activities in which you participated (prior to/after)earning certification as a National Board Certified Teacher

Participation in a network of NBCTs

Help the NBPTS to offer National Board Certification

Advocate for National Board Certification and quality teaching to policymakers.

Mentor, coach, or encourage certification candidates

Speak publicly about quality teaching or National Board Certification

Consulted as a policy expert on issues that touch teaching and learning

Other leadership activity

Serve on a committee or work for the U.S. or state Department of Education

Involved with licensure, evaluation, and/or accreditation of teachers and/or schools

Highlighted as an expert on teaching and learning by press, school, or community/civic organizations

Advocate for change in your school—general school improvement

Advocate for change in your school—teaching and learning activities

Service on any other education related committee or as an education advisor/consultant

Advocate for change in your school—technology

Expanded responsibility for teacher training or hiring

Author of articles for local, state, or national publications

Advocate for change in your school—school policies

Conduct research examining issues related to the improvement of teaching and learning

Leadership roles within your union or disciplinary association

Work with teacher prep programs at colleges and universities

Advocate for change in your school—other

Develop or produce teaching professional development programs or activities

Mentor or coach new/struggling teachers; develop peer review programs/teacher evaluation models

Involvement in school or district leadership

Seeks grants to support teaching and learning grants in your classroom or school district

Develop instructional strategies or curricula

Develop or select programs or materials to support or increase student learning.

APPENDIX C
THE RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVES

THE RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVES

I have been an educator since completion of college in 1965. While I started my career teaching college preparatory English and remedial math, I have held a variety of positions including remedial reading teacher in a K-12 Title I program, school system reading specialist, K-12 curriculum director, teacher of the gifted in grades three through eight, and assistant principal at an elementary school. I have worked in seven school districts in two states.

In 1996, while working as a teaching of the gifted in both an elementary school and middle school, I read a newspaper article about National Board Certification. The article indicated that Georgia teachers who would achieve the certification would receive a 5% salary supplement. The article also indicated that attainment of the certification involved a rigorous process of developing a portfolio of teaching artifacts and discussion and sitting for a written assessment.

The process of achieving National Board Certification appeared to be challenging and that piqued my interest. I spent a week trying to find out more information.

Administrators in my school and my school district did not know anything about the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) or the certification that it offered. Calls to the Georgia Department of Education did not provide the information I was seeking. I finally found a website for NBPTS and requested information.

The pamphlet that I received suggested that the Georgia Association of Educators (GAE) and the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) could provide

more information on certification in Georgia. A call to GAE resulted in a busy signal. The call to PAGE provided me with information on a mentoring program and a loan for the \$1800 fee that was needed to begin the certification process.

In November 1996, I received the loan from PAGE, signed up to be a candidate for National Board Certification, and started a process that has changed my life. When I read the standards for Early Adolescence English/Language Arts, I was excited to see that those standards embodied many of my beliefs about teaching. When I read the portfolio instructions, I knew that the process would be demanding, but that the information needed could be gleaned from my practice as a teacher. It would just be a matter of putting it down on paper in the three months before the deadline.

The National Board Certification process requires written description, analysis, and reflection on teaching practice. While I always thought I was a reflective individual, writing reflective essays as part of each of six portfolio entries forced the issue. I found that I became more reflective as an educator and as a person. Reflection became a habit of my mind and began to impact all of my decisions at school and home. I felt that I became a better teacher, and sometimes I felt that I had become “a born-again teacher.”

As soon as I certified in 1997, I started mentoring candidates for National Board Certification. I was nominated for and became a member of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards committee to revise standards for Early Adolescence English/Language Arts. I was asked by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to serve on the Board of Evaluators which examines teacher certification programs to determine whether the programs meet certification standards. These were exciting opportunities for a middle school English teacher.

I attended conferences of National Board Certified Teachers and read information that a goal of National Board Certification was to offer leadership opportunities with the purpose of keeping those teachers in the classroom. I was hoping that those teacher leadership opportunities would come my way in my school. While I did have leadership opportunities outside of my school, opportunities in my school were not what I expected. While I considered National Board Certification as a new beginning for my career as a teacher, my principal saw it as a nice opportunity for positive publicity for the school. She made no effort to tap the expertise I felt I had demonstrated by becoming a National Board Certified Teacher.

The crowning blow for my love for teaching and desire to stay in the classroom was when my principal told me that I would no longer be teaching English, the subject I loved to teach, but would be moved to math. While I have credentials in math, I do not have a passion for teaching that subject. I told my principal that I would not be happy in that position, she said, "Children first, programs second, teachers last." I tried teaching math for two years, did not enjoy my job, and found a position as an elementary assistant principal.

As I was looking for a research area for my dissertation, the teacher leadership opportunities for National Board Certified Teachers appeared interesting. I wondered what opportunities they had and if those opportunities contributed to their job satisfaction. I also wondered if the certification had an impact on their professional relationships with their principals. Perhaps this research project will provide some insights into the perspectives of National Board Certified teachers.