



Georgia Southern University  
Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate Studies, Jack N. Averitt College of

---

Spring 2007

## Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists

Melissa Ann Allen

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Early Childhood Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Allen, Melissa Ann, "Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists" (2007). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 462.  
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/462>

This dissertation (open access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies, Jack N. Averitt College of at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

**A STUDY ANALYZING THE PERSPECTIVES OF NATIONAL BOARD  
CERTIFIED MEDIA SPECIALISTS**

by

MELISSA ANN ALLEN

(Under the direction of Judith Repman)

**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs (Expert School Library Media Specialists) as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the SLMS's (School Library Media Specialist) purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context and the culture of the SLMS's school. The hypothesis was that ESLMSs' role and development as experts in their field was directly related to their purpose and motivations, their view of themselves as persons including their beliefs and values, and the culture and organizational context of the specific school in which they work. Three SLMSs currently employed in Georgia public high schools whom have earned National Board Certification in Library Media were selected for this study. Qualitative research methodology, including questionnaires and interviews, analysis of state and federal reports, an examination of collected artifacts, and an analysis of an online discussion forum, was utilized to create case studies of these three ESLMSs.

This research indicated that in order to excel in the media field all four aspects of the total educator must be addressed. The overall results indicate that 1) SLMSs must understand their purpose and goals and those purposes and goals must align with those of the schools in which they work in order to excel in their profession; 2) SLMSs must be aware of themselves as persons in order to grow and develop as professionals and

educators; 3) The organizational context of the SLMSs' school must allow them control of aspects of their media program in order to implement an exemplary media program; and 4) The culture in which the SLMSs works must provide administrative and staff support for the media program in order for them to implement an exemplary media program. Recommendations include the need to further the leadership roles of SLMSs within their schools; the call for SLMSs to augment their leadership role within their field; the need to increase the understanding and support of administrators for SLMSs; the obligation that SLMSs have to link their role within a school to student achievement; and the necessity to enhance the incentives for accomplishing National Board Certification.

**INDEX WORDS:** National Board Certification; Expert School Library Media Specialists; Media Centers; Total Educator Concept; Education, Secondary; Library Science; High Schools

A STUDY ANALYZING THE PERSPECTIVES OF NATIONAL BOARD  
CERTIFIED MEDIA SPECIALISTS

by

MELISSA ANN ALLEN

B.S., University of Georgia, 1996

M.Ed., University of Georgia, 1998

Ed.S., University of Georgia, 2003

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

2007

© 2007

Melissa Ann Allen

All Rights Reserved

A STUDY ANALYZING THE PERSPECTIVES OF NATIONAL BOARD  
CERTIFIED MEDIA SPECIALISTS

by

MELISSA ANN ALLEN

Major Professor: Judith Repman  
Committee: Linda Arthur  
Grigory Dmitriyev  
Mary Ann Fitzgerald

Electronic Version Approved:

May 2007

## **DEDICATION**

To my family—my parents Dr. Bill and Peggy Allen; my brother Jake Allen; my sister Amanda Lane; my brother-in-law Jamie Lane; and my nieces Alyssa and Ella Lane—for their love, support, and encouragement. My family’s belief in my ability to succeed ensured that I would never fail.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank the participants in this study who took the time and effort to participate. All three participants truly exemplify that they are ESLMSs in every sense of the term. To my colleagues who provided encouragement and support throughout the entire process, I offer my gratitude. Their input and assistance were priceless. I would especially like to thank my mother, Peggy Allen, for her effort in the review of my work. She spent countless hours reading my work and did not even charge me an editing fee!

I could not have accomplished this research study without the support and assistance of many individuals. I would like to express my appreciation to my dissertation chair, Dr. Judith Repman, for her countless reviews of my work, her patience throughout the writing process, her dedication to the pursuit of knowledge, her willingness to work long hours to help me meet my goals, and her friendship. I would like to thank all my professors at Georgia Southern University, especially my two committee members Dr. Linda Arthur and Dr. Grigory Dmitriyev, who dedicated their time and support through my entire degree program. Dr. Mary Ann Fitzgerald and Dr. Julie Tallman, as well as the other staff members in the Instructional Technology Department at the University of Georgia, provided me with the foundation needed to become an ESLMS by successfully completing the National Board Certification process. Dr. Fitzgerald is the person responsible for me starting a doctorate program. Her guidance and encouragement throughout my classes and action research project for my Specialist in Education program gave me the confidence and desire to undertake this endeavor.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....                             | 7  |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....                               | 11 |
| <b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....                              | 12 |
| <b>CHAPTER</b>  |    |
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND</b> .....               | 13 |
| Introduction.....   | 13 |
| Researcher’s Perspective and Biases .....                 | 18 |
| Context of Study .....                                    | 20 |
| Conceptual Framework of the Study .....                   | 24 |
| Research Questions.....                                   | 27 |
| Procedure .....   | 27 |
| Limitations of the Study.....                             | 29 |
| Significance of the Study .....                           | 30 |
| Definition of Terms.....                                  | 33 |
| Organization of the Study .....                           | 37 |
| <b>2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</b> .....                  | 38 |
| Introduction.....   | 38 |
| The Role of SLMSs and Media Programs within Schools ..... | 39 |
| Previous Research.....                                    | 52 |
| The Total Educator .....                                  | 74 |
| Summary .....   | 91 |
| <b>3. METHODOLOGY</b> .....                               | 95 |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Introduction.....   | 95         |
| Statement of the Problem.....                                     | 95         |
| Research Questions.....   | 97         |
| Design of the Study.....  | 97         |
| Rationale for Case Study Methodology .....                        | 108        |
| Population and Sample .....                                       | 115        |
| Summary .....   | 117        |
| <b>4. RESULTS .....</b>   | <b>118</b> |
| Introduction.....   | 118        |
| Significance of Reports Analyzed and Artifacts Collected .....    | 120        |
| Case Study of Participant One .....                               | 123        |
| Case Study of Participant Two .....                               | 130        |
| Case Study of Participant Three .....                             | 137        |
| Summary of Three Case Studies.....                                | 149        |
| Findings Related to the Research Questions.....                   | 150        |
| Summary: Overall Findings for the ESLMSs as Total Educators ..... | 200        |
| <b>5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS .....</b>                        | <b>201</b> |
| Introduction.....   | 201        |
| Summary of the Study .....  | 201        |
| Summary of Findings.....  | 203        |
| Recommendations for Action .....                                  | 215        |
| SLMSs' Role.....  | 215        |
| National Board Certification.....                                 | 216        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| School Administration .....                                    | 217        |
| Accountability Systems .....                                   | 220        |
| The School Library Media Profession .....                      | 223        |
| Recommendations for Future Research .....                      | 223        |
| Concluding Thoughts.....                                       | 226        |
| <b>REFERENCES.....</b>   | <b>233</b> |
| <b>APPENDICES.....</b>   | <b>249</b> |
| <b>A. IRB APPROVAL LETTER .....</b>                            | <b>250</b> |
| <b>B. IRB APPLICATION .....</b>                                | <b>252</b> |
| <b>C. INFORMED CONSENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT .....</b>    | <b>261</b> |
| <b>D. SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE.....</b>                            | <b>266</b> |
| <b>E. SAMPLE INTERVIEW .....</b>                               | <b>271</b> |
| <b>F. ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM INVESTIGATOR RESPONSES .....</b> | <b>275</b> |

## **LIST OF TABLES**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 1: Supporting Literature for the Total Educator Concept .....         | 26  |
| Table 2: Comparison of the Three ESLMSs Who Participated in this Study..... | 144 |
| Table 3: Comparison of the Three Schools Where the ESLMSs Work .....        | 146 |
| Table 4: Comparison of the Three Communities Where the ESLMSs Work.....     | 148 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Four roles of SLMSs as outlined in <i>Information Power</i> (1998)..... | 51 |
|---|----|

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### Introduction

The objective of this study was to further the understanding of the role and development of expert school library media specialists (ESLMSs). This study spotlights the role ESLMSs implement within a school. This research examined ESLMSs' perspectives of their roles and development. Organizational context, school culture, personal motivations, and beliefs were examined to investigate effects on development and role. The ESLMSs' perspectives were used to examine their perception of their role in their school and their ability to influence the school culture and the practices in their schools.

The school library media center is the hub of the school and the library staff is the core of that hub. If school library media specialists (SLMSs) are doing their job well, they are making a difference in the ways teachers teach and the ways in which students learn. One of the main goals of an effective school library media program is to improve “teaching and learning so that students use information literacy skills to produce work that meets standards of high quality” (Hughes-Hassell & Wheelock, 2001, p. 27). On any given day, a media specialist performs a wide variety of roles that serve to strengthen the entire school community. The word ‘roles’ refers to the ESLMS's job encompassing a large spectrum of duties and tasks that must be completed in order to meet the needs of their entire learning community. By meeting these needs a SLMSs implements an exemplary media program that impacts learning outcomes within the school.

Many administrators and school leaders do not fully understand the function and

responsibilities of a media specialist and because of this are not giving media specialists the support they need to successfully perform their jobs. “Principals often leave library potential untapped despite 50 years of research evidence that effective library programs—when led by active, involved teacher-librarians—can have a discernible positive impact on student achievement regardless of student, school and community demographics” (Hartzell, 2003, p. 21). Stripling (1995) indicated that in order for SLMSs to impact student learning they must emphasize research-based learning, not clerical duties such as cataloging and processing materials. Many people have the idea that “librarians” just sit and read all day while occasionally checking out books. It is important for all members of the learning community to understand that the tasks the media specialists perform and the roles they fulfill are crucial to a school’s success through their ability to promote learning within a school. To achieve support it is important that the media program is fully integrated into the curriculum and is viewed as an essential component to student achievement. Professional and personal development is vital because media specialists must not only know what tasks they must perform but also how to perform those tasks to the best of their ability.

If members of the learning community do not understand the function of the media specialist then they will not utilize this integral school element. Media specialists are an indispensable part of the student learning experience and their role must be promoted if this essential position is to be secure in this time of library budget cuts. Isaac Asimov said, "When I read about the way in which library funds are being cut and cut, I can only think that American society has found one more way to destroy itself" (Asimov Quotes, 2004, para. 1). Presently media specialists are often considered as supplementary

resources. The researcher has personally experienced this as a media specialist and has heard similar situations from other media specialists. Media centers are often used to allow planning time for teachers or as a quick fix when a teacher did not have time to make a lesson plan. Teachers often bring their classes to the media center to “kill time” or have “free time.” If teachers present the message that the media center is unimportant, the students will pick up on this and believe the same thing. Many classroom teachers do not have the time, interest, or support to be able to collaboratively plan and teach with the media specialist and strategies must be put in place to change this.

Many media specialists find it hard to juggle all of the demands placed on them by administrators, parents, students, and staff members. “A multifaceted program, operating at optimum effectiveness, requires a qualified media specialist for every 250 pupils” (Martin & Sargent, 1980, p. 28). In reality, this ratio almost never occurs in our public school systems. Many media specialists split their time between more than one school or are the only media specialist at schools with more than 1,000 students. Lack of time and the number of responsibilities often overwhelm even the most accomplished media specialists. “As library media centers have evolved from mere warehouses for materials and equipment to dynamic information and resource programs, the need for increased professional staffing has grown significantly” (AASL & AECT, 1988, p. 1). An adequate number of trained media professionals are needed in every school in order to fulfill the roles needed by every teacher and student.

Given all of these responsibilities and challenges, role clarification is needed for SLMSs. *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* is useful in defining the importance of the library media center and the role of the library media specialist. In



1998, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) published *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. This revision of the 1988 edition embodies the goals for school library media programs while helping to define the roles of the media specialist. Identification of these roles may help clarify the responsibilities media specialist have to their administrators and staff. This acclaimed “authority” for library media programs defines the role of the library media specialist as teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator.

Although SLMSs fulfill many roles in their daily activities they are often considered teachers by students and staff, unlike other support staff such as administrators and guidance counselors. The media center is the largest classroom in the school and the media specialist is the teacher in that classroom, thus the media specialist has the capability to teach every student in the school. Successful media specialists teach lessons as well as collaboratively plan lessons with teachers. The role of instructional partner allows the media specialists to collaborate with school staff to provide the best learning environment for the student, which is richly integrated with information literacy skills. According to *Information Power*, information literacy is “the ability to find and use information” and “is the keystone to lifelong learning” (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 1). Since research links the importance of the SLMS to academic achievement (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004), it is important for school administrators, teachers, and school district personnel to understand the role and

development of the ESLMS.

The development and role of SLMSs is at the heart of school reform as these professionals can affect the learning that takes place in the entire school. The popular publication *The Information-Powered School* indicated that

Bringing a school library media specialist's perspective to other school reform programs adds value to overall program implementation. Because SLMSs are familiar with the overall curriculum at each grade level, they bring a valuable school-wide perspective to teachers' discussions about student learning. (Hughes-Hassell & Wheelock, 2001, p. 27)

Research has indicated that ESLMSs are needed to positively impact student achievement and school reform. Haycock (1999) found that ESLMSs act as change agents, innovators, and leaders within the school.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) provides a set of standards that SLMSs can measure their own performance by. The standards give a basis to reflect on personal practices and activities while also providing ideas and goals for future professional growth. The NBPTS certification process represents an effort to try to professionalize education, bring effective educational practices to the classroom, and ultimately enhance student learning. National Board Certification is considered by most to be the highest credential in the education profession. The National Board Certification process is expected to add to the human capital of educators by emphasizing effective educational practices and encouraging reflection on all practices. "The National Board process provides an excellent vehicle for differentiated professional development that moves teachers along the professional growth continuum from novice to

accomplished teacher” (Vallone & Mack-Kirschner, 2003, para. 4). Thus, National Board Certified SLMSs are expected to be more effective after they have successfully completed the assessment process. To ensure an exemplary media program was studied only SLMSs that had been recognized as being experts, by having achieved National Board Certification, were selected to participate.

#### Researcher’s Perspective and Biases

I have always been a devoted reader and rarely does a day go by that I do not read for pleasure. My senior year of high school I had a 110 average in my Advanced Placement (AP) English class because I read every book on the extra credit reading list as well as every book that was required for the class assignments. My senior English teacher encouraged me to consider majoring in English in college, but I had dreams of changing the world. I did not see how someone who loved to read could make the world a better place using this skill. So I chose to follow my logical brain not my passionate heart and majored in biology. I believed I was fulfilling my dream of changing the world for the common good of society when I accepted a laboratory research position studying the spirochete that causes Lyme disease. The research was being conducted in hopes of finding a cure for this disabling disease. Regrettably the monotonous, solitary lab work was disheartening. There were days I never talked to another person and the work was slow and tedious. After careful deliberation, I realized I could make a difference as a teacher. I felt I had missed my true calling by not going into the education profession so I returned to school to earn a Masters of Education in science education. That is where my story as an educator began.

I am a native Georgian, who grew up in southeast Georgia. I am currently

working at the high school I attended. I have worked in five different counties during my career as an educator. These counties have been in different parts of the state (i.e. southeast, northeast, middle, and metro-Atlanta). Through the nine years of my career in education as a teacher and as a fellow media specialist, I have worked with very effective SLMSs and those who were less effective. Of course, I learned from each of the SLMSs I worked with. I have worked at all levels of education—elementary school, middle school, high school, and college level. Although the media specialist certificate enables me to work in elementary, middle, or high schools I feel I was not a good fit for elementary school. I chose to situate this study in high schools, as I am currently working in the high school setting.

Being a media specialist allows me to provide a positive learning environment to all students in my school. I enjoy being able to work with every student in the school because as a classroom teacher I was limited to working with only those students assigned to my classes. I feel I am able to maximize my teaching ability to influence the learning that takes place in the entire school. I try to create a learning environment that enables students to develop their potential as unique individuals. Being a secondary school media specialist also gives me the opportunity to cooperatively plan with all the teachers in the school to enhance student learning in the classroom.

This is my sixth year as a media specialist and my ninth year in education and I could not be happier. I love my job. I know that everyday that I go to work I make a difference in the lives of young people by opening new doors to learning for them. I feel I am able to implement all four of the ideal roles in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* and have the flexibility to set aside time to work in each role

as needed.

Having been an assessor for NBPTS and having completed the process myself, I know that these experiences have improved my professional performance through reflection and analysis of my current practices as well as by my increased involvement in the learning community. I believe National Board Certification is an important issue to study because it is a valuable process that leads to better educational practices, it is good for public relations for a school to have National Board Certified teachers (announcements always appear in the local newspapers), and it is good for morale (certified educators feel appreciated and their hard work is often recognized with a pay supplement) but it does carry a large time commitment and some financial cost along with its benefits. Georgia's ten percent pay supplement had a huge influence on recruiting educators to complete the rigorous National Board Certification process. Now that the legislation has changed many educators are not willing to commit to the 500 plus hours of work required to become certified if they are not guaranteed a pay raise. The new legislation limits the schools that educators can work at if they want to receive the pay increase, which can cause stress for an educator who may have to drive long distances or transfer schools to work in a qualifying school. As the only National Board Certified educator in my school, I have been offering my assistance and mentorship for anyone interested in undertaking this rigorous process yet no one has applied since I have been at my current school.

#### Context of Study

One goal of this study was to give SLMSs a voice. In education, SLMSs' stories are not frequently heard because they are often considered the 'invisible' educator. Gary

Hartzell, a former professor of education at the University of Nebraska, was adamant that SLMSs should be participants in the decisions affecting technology, curriculum, and resources at the school and at the district level but this is not the reality in most school systems. He publicized the widespread trend of cutting library budgets and, in some cases, library media positions to ease school financial problems. Library media specialists need to do a better job of clearly articulating their roles in preparing students for the information and technology rich workplace of the future. Hartzell (1997b) argued,

A person may have the most wonderful library media center in the country, but if others do not perceive it as integral to their own success and to the success of the school, the librarian will not have influence with them. (p. 26)

Hartzell pointed out that there are very few courses in any major school of education in this country that focus on the use of information literacy skills in learning and teaching. Few teacher training programs mention the roles of the library media program, the library media center or information professionals at all. Hartzell (1997a) reported that school administration textbooks are almost universally silent on the operation of the school library media center. In 2002, Gary Hartzell reviewed the education of school principals in regard to the school library. He found that usually the one area where school libraries are mentioned is in school law curricula where libraries are discussed as potential areas of legal dispute when copyright and censorship issues arise. “This leaves many administrative students with the impression that school libraries are legal time bombs instead of with the impression that school librarians can make significant contributions to a new principal’s success” (Hartzell, 2002, p. 82). Some library media specialists are reluctant to promote themselves to fellow educators and the

school administration because they are not able to clearly communicate the nature and role of the library media program and information literacy skills within the school.

“Unless the library is forcibly brought to the attention of teachers and administrators, it’s likely to go unnoticed and undervalued” (Hartzell, 1997a, p. 25).

Media specialists’ voices are often not heard yet they fill a valuable role in the school. The power of voice is needed by SLMSs in order to be an effective educator and leader in the school as well as to help bring about change in education and society. The media specialists identified as experts in this study have this voice. This study allows others, whom may never meet these three ESLMSs personally, to hear that voice. By reading this study, other education professionals will have an opportunity to understand the roles and development of expert media specialists through furthering the understanding of why some media specialists have excelled in their profession to an expert level either in spite of or because of the organizational context and culture of the school in which they work. Understanding the development and role of ESLMSs encourages other educators within a school to utilize their services. Thus, this study was not solely aimed at media specialists, but at all educators whom can benefit from the data that was gathered. The aim of this research was not to test a hypothesis regarding the phenomenon but to understand, describe, and interpret the phenomenon—the perspectives of three National Board Certified SLMSs of their role and development as current expert educators in Georgia public high schools.

By studying National Board Certified SLMSs, this study also sought to increase the understanding of why SLMSs put forth the enormous amount of effort and work needed to achieve such a distinction. By achieving National Board Certification these

SLMSs have already met or exceeded the NBPTS' standards for impacting students' learning. National Board candidates seeking certification in Library Media must submit student work samples that demonstrate how their collaboration with classroom teachers affects student achievement. SLMSs do not perform their jobs in isolation. School culture and context is critical to the development of SLMSs.

ESLMSs were used in order to establish that a quality media program was being studied. Most media specialists are constantly looking for ways to provide better service and to improve their media programs. By using expert media specialists in this study other media specialists will have a glimpse into a quality media program and the role that an expert in the field fulfills within a school. Other media specialists should be able to obtain ideas for improving their own media programs by reading this study. This research provides other media specialists with a glimpse into exemplary media programs due to the fact that they are being run by identified ESLMSs. The results of this study should contribute to a better understanding of how an exemplary media program is implemented and its place within a school.

Exemplary media programs' effects reach far beyond the four walls that enclose the media center to touch all students and staff by being totally involved in the teaching and learning process. To identify expert media specialists for this study, participants were selected from all public Georgia high school media specialists who have earned National Board Certification in Library Media. National Board Certification is voluntary and open to all educators who have a baccalaureate degree and three years of experience in either a public or private school. The National Board Certification process implements a variety of means to assess whether an educator is exemplary. The process consists of four



extensive portfolio entries as well as a series of six concentrated assessment prompts. The portfolio entries include student work samples, videotapes and documents that all show instructional collaboration, fostering an appreciation of literature, integration of instructional technologies, and documented accomplishments that show contributions to student learning. National Board Certification is valid for a period of ten years, after which an educator may choose to seek renewal.

For the purposes of this study, the term “National Board Certified SLMS” is used interchangeably with “ESLMS.” National Board Certified SLMSs represent an ideal in the field of education since, presumably, they are committed to continued growth in their profession. This study provides a holistic viewpoint of ESLMSs. This research investigated how ESLMSs balance the development of themselves as people against the overwhelming demands of their jobs. This study can provide school leaders with insights into the professional development and role of ESLMSs in order provide support for their SLMSs and media programs.

#### Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework that guided this study emerged from Fullan and Hargreaves’ (1996) review and examination of pertinent issues in educator development. This study of ESLMSs was structured around the four dimensions of the total educator: the SLMS’s purpose, the SLMS as a person, the organizational context of the school in which the SLMS works, and the culture of the school in which the SLMS works. Concepts of SLMS development that ignore the SLMS as a person disallow an essential dimension for understanding the ESLMS. Hence, this study sought to describe in-depth the ESLMS as a person through the examination of motivations, pathways for

development, and personal comfort levels.

As an organization the school contributes to the development of the total educator (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Hence, this study sought to describe in-depth the SLMS's real world context by identifying roles performed and barriers for fully implementing roles and functions within the school. The word 'development' describes the pathways the ESLMSs have taken to reach their current level of expertise, including professional development, which have contributed to growth, motivations and influences that have encouraged progress, and purposes behind their actions. Current research and literature are used to support and expand the concepts of the total educator (see Table 1 for supporting literature for the total educator concept as a theoretical framework).

Table 1: Supporting Literature for the Total Educator Concept

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>The SLMS's Purpose</b></p>   | <p>Ashton &amp; Webb (1986); Atkinson (2000); Czubaj (1996); Deemer (2004); Firestone &amp; Pennel (1993); Freire (1983); Fullan (1999); Fullan &amp; Hargreaves (1996); Garrison (1997); Hargreaves &amp; Fullan (1998); Liston (2001); Lunenburg &amp; Ornstein (1991); Pajares (1996); Sergiovanni (1992); Spence (2002); Tobin &amp; LaMaster (1995); Varella (2000).</p> |
| <p><b>The SLMS as a Person</b></p>   | <p>Briskin (1998); Fullan (1999); Fullan &amp; Hargreaves (1996); Garrison (1997); Hargreaves (1993); Maslow (1943, 1954); Palmer (1998); Schraw &amp; Olafson (2002).</p>  |
| <p><b>The Organizational Context of the School in which the SLMS works</b></p> | <p>Bolman &amp; Deal (1991); Dewey (1915); Freire (1983); Fullan (1997); Fullan &amp; Hargreaves (1996); Garrison (1997); Greene (1989); Hargreaves (1982); Hargreaves, Earl, &amp; Ryan (1996); Hargreaves &amp; Fullan (1998); McNergney &amp; Carrier (1981); Noddings (1992); Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, &amp; Taubman (2002); Senge (1990); Winkler (2002).</p>          |
| <p><b>The Culture of the School in which the SLMS works</b></p>                | <p>Blase &amp; Blase (1994); Bolman &amp; Deal (1991); Fullan &amp; Hargreaves (1996); Hargreaves &amp; Fullan (1998); Matthews &amp; Holmes (1992); Peterson &amp; Deal (1998); Sidorkin (2002); Steinberg &amp; Kincheloe (2004); Rogers &amp; Renard (1999).</p>   |

## Research Questions

The center of this study was an exploration of the total educator concept in the development of National Board Certified SLMSs. The intention of this research was to answer four research questions:

- How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?
- How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

## Procedure

This qualitative study was conducted through the use of questionnaires and interviews, an analysis of state and federal school reports, an analysis of the three participants' online discussion forum responses, and an examination of artifacts collected from the three ESLMS's schools. Three high school media specialists, currently employed in Georgia public schools whom were deemed expert by having earned National Board Certification in Library Media in the past four years, were selected as participants. Before the day of the interview, a questionnaire was given to each participant to determine the diversity and backgrounds of the participants of the study (see Appendix D for copy of questionnaire).

The thirty-five questionnaire responses and analysis of state and federal data reports were used to identify relationships between the participants' background and their specific school setting. The questionnaire was also used to establish areas of expertise in regards to subject areas, grade levels, and mentoring. The state and federal data records included school characteristics, teacher salary scale, and community data. Numerous

school characteristics were obtained from the state and federal records: AYP status, school enrollment, grade range for school, number of staff members, performance on the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) and on the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT), average American College Test (ACT) and Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores, graduation rate, attendance rate, enrollment in compensatory programs, percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, and racial/ethnic make-up of the school. The teacher salary scale was used to determine the ESLMS's salary level according to years of experience and degrees obtained. The community characteristics gathered included demographic location of the school in the state, classification of the community where the school is located (i.e. rural, urban, suburban); population of the area that the school serves; racial/ethnic make-up of the community the school serves; and education and poverty rates of the community. Artifacts collected provided insight into the phenomenon of ESLMSs' role and development. All of these artifacts were collected from each of the three schools that the expert school library specialist works in, if they were available. The questionnaire, analysis of state and federal reports, and analysis of artifacts were used to create rich, detailed school portraits of the three schools in which the ESLMSs work.

“Interviewing is a powerful way to gain insight into educational issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives constitute education” (Seidman, 1991, p.7) and is for that reason one of the main tools for this investigation. The interview was used to analyze the SLMS's purpose, the SLMS as a person, the organizational context of the school in which the SLMS works, and the culture of the school in which the SLMS works. The interview provided data for all four components of

the total educator concept.

### Limitations of the Study

With any research study there are limitations. In this study, several limitations were identified:

- Sampling was small. Only three individual SLMSs were included in the study so it was not possible to generalize results to the larger population of all SLMSs.
- Only high school level schools were included in this study. Thus, results were not generalized to elementary and middle school levels even when the media specialists at these schools share the other same selection criteria (i.e. National Board Certification in Library Media and currently work as a SLMS in a public school in Georgia) of the media specialists used in this study.
- Only having achieved National Board Certification was used to identify expert media specialists. While there are numerous SLMSs with expertise in the field, only National Board Certification was used as an indicator of expert practices to select participants. Prior to December 2006, there were only ninety-four certified SLMSs in the state of Georgia, so this limited the participants that could have been selected.
- Participants may not have been fully honest during the interview or on the questionnaire. One limitation of interviews and questionnaires is that the researcher must assume honesty on the part of the participants. Also having received the questions prior to the actual interview may have led to filtering of answers.

In spite of the limitations of the study, the data was valuable because it shows

how ESLMSs perceive their roles and their own development. Whereas, generalization was not claimed, the findings have implications for other sites where context and dispositions match those of the described schools and/or the described ESLMSs. According to McMillan and Shumacher (1993), in most qualitative studies, the researcher does not aim at generalization of results, but “the extension of understandings, detailed descriptions that enable others to understand similar situations and extend these understandings in subsequent research” (p. 394).

### Significance of the Study

It was important to study SLMSs and the programs they run because SLMSs can influence learning outcomes and student achievement within a school. The value of my research rests, in part, on the contribution this study makes to understand the beliefs, values, motivations, and perceptions of ESLMSs as they work to excel in their profession. Although there are numerous studies found in the literature concerning effective school library media centers (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004), there was little or no mention of the roles or development of ESLMSs. Thus, a gap in the literature exists between the theoretical role of SLMSs in an effective school library media program and the actual practices and beliefs of ESLMSs. There was little known about the authentic role of the ESLMS within a school or the development of their expertise. One benefit of participating in this study was that participants gained a better understanding of their beliefs, values, motivations, and perceptions of their role and development as well as a deeper understanding of the

organizational context and culture of their school.

One aim of this study was to encourage other media specialists to strive to become ESLMSs themselves. Other media specialists can use the data gathered in this study to compare the roles and development of ESLMSs to their own situations in order to better themselves as professionals and to have a greater impact on student achievement. As a media specialist, the researcher is interested in the influences and perceptions of other media specialists who are recognized as experts in the field. In addition, the information derived from this study can be used by higher education institutions that prepare SLMSs for their field in order to enhance the services and classes they offer. Higher education institutions that specialize in administration and teacher preparation can also use the data from this study to supplement their current courses with information about the role and development of ESLMSs as well as their impact on student achievement in order to encourage school staff to fully utilize this valuable educational partner in their schools.

Media specialists often feel bogged down with clerical work (e.g. printing due date slips), putting out fires (e.g. a student cannot remember where they saved their project that is due next period), trouble shooting technology problems (e.g. a teacher's VCR will not work and she needs to use it this period), and other onerous tasks. With the huge demands placed upon them SLMSs often wonder how they can possibly accomplish all the tasks set forth for them in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. This study should give all media specialists the encouragement they need to improve themselves as professionals. Analysis of ESLMSs can help other media specialists establish techniques and strategies for ensuring they have time for their main priority—



student learning. “Students and their learning remain at the core of library media programs and services, shaping the functions of school library media specialists” (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. v). This study can furthermore be used to advocate for properly funded, staffed, and scheduled school library media centers to ensure the maximum potential to positively impact student achievement.

Accomplished media specialists engage in reflective practice to increase their effectiveness. This study encouraged the media specialists involved to reflect upon their daily work activities and identify barriers that may need to be overcome in order to fully implement their roles in the media center. After reading this study SLMSs may be able to rearrange their work in order to spend more time on tasks of greater importance. To close the gap between the ideal roles they want to perform and the actual roles they practice, media specialists must reflect on the roles they perform and identify or emphasize the roles they perceive to be the most valuable to their media program. Each media specialist should evaluate the needs of his or her own school when deciding how to spend their day, in order for their school to benefit the most from the media center.

Media specialists must be exposed to expert programs to gain the experience and confidence that changes can be made. Like Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*, media specialists must be encouraged to extend their goals to lengths that seem impossible before they set them.

Alice laughed. “There’s no use trying,” she said: “one *can’t* believe impossible things.”

“I daresay you haven’t had much practice,” said the Queen. “When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many

as six impossible things before breakfast.” (Carroll, 1960, p. 176)

Although some people may be set in their ways and try to impede changes from taking place in ‘their’ media program, most will embrace changes and see that an exemplary media program is not an “impossible thing” in any school.

### Definition of Terms

This section contains definitions of numerous terms used throughout this dissertation for clarification purposes.

**Collaboration**—the SLMS works with all members of the learning community to create a shared vision for the school library media program. SLMSs not only recommend resources for classroom lessons but they also share responsibility for planning, teaching, and assessing student learning.

**Culture of the school**—includes dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMS form within the school between staff and students. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs and their development.

**Development of the media specialist**—the pathways the ESLMSs have taken to reach their current level of expertise—including professional development that has contributed to growth, motivations and influences that have encouraged progress, and purposes behind their actions.

**Exemplary media program**—An effective school library media program that successfully integrates the school library media center into learning and teaching within the school by promoting reading for learning and pleasure; by providing resources to

meet all patrons' informational and recreational needs; by providing instruction for development of information literacy skills; and by providing technology education and services among other services.

**Expert School Library Media Specialist (ESLMS)**—term used interchangeably with National Board Certified SLMS.

**ESLMS as a person** —includes attitude, comfort levels, personal goals and motivations, connections between organizational goals and personal goals, emotional intelligence, recognition of strengths and skills, and identification of areas for improvement and needs.

**ESLMS's purpose**—includes professional goals, beliefs and values including moral purpose, motivations, connections between organizational goals and professional goals, and reasons for seeking growth opportunities such as National Board Certification.

**Flexible scheduling**—an open schedule that allows students to use the school library media center according to their learning needs, rather than according to a predetermined timetable or rotation.

**Information literacy**—the ability to recognize a need for information then the ability to identify appropriate sources, locate resources, and effectively use information.

**Information specialist role of the library media specialist**—tasks may include providing assistance selecting and locating materials appropriate to an individual's needs; providing guidance in the use of materials and information technologies in the school; evaluating the library collection on a given topic; demonstrating leadership and expertise in use of technology and resources; and exploring resources available outside the library walls such as Internet resources and other libraries' materials.

**Instructional partner role of the media specialist**—tasks may include collaboration

with school staff to provide the best learning environment for the student, which is richly integrated with information literacy skills. The collaborative role may be as simple as recommending multiple resources to supplement a planned lesson to as significant as actively planning and co-teaching an entire unit.

**National Board Certification**—a voluntary certification process open to all educators who have a baccalaureate degree and three years of experience in either a public or private school. There are twenty-four certification fields, including the Library Media/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood certification field. The certification is valid for ten years after which an educator may choose to seek renewal.

**National Board Certification process**—consists of four extensive portfolio entries as well as a series of six concentrated assessment prompts. The portfolio entries include student work samples, videotapes, written entries, and documented accomplishments that show contributions to student learning.

**The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards**—created in 1987 as a result of the report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. Perceiving that educators were not properly prepared for their jobs, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching created the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Today the NBPTS is leading the way in making education a profession dedicated to student learning and to upholding high standards for professional performance by awarding educators with National Board Certification if they meet a set of rigorous standards.

**Organizational context of a school**—includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of

the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work and organizational goals. Schools are complex environments which influence a SLMS's purpose as well as who they are as a person.

**Program administrator role of the library media specialist**—tasks may include developing and enforcing library and school policies; supervising volunteers and other media center staff; participating in public relation activities; maintaining accurate material inventory; overseeing the circulation and automation systems; attending staff and committee meetings; reviewing and understanding yearly budgets; selecting and ordering materials; and processing materials for circulation.

**Roles of the ESLMS**—their job encompassing a large spectrum of duties and tasks that must be performed in order to meet the needs of their entire learning community in order to execute an exemplary media program that impacts learning outcomes within the school.

**School library media center**—the largest classroom in the school that houses the school's centralized resources including print materials, non-print resources, and audiovisual equipment for educational purposes and recreation.

**School library media program**—a central program within a school that serves all teachers, administrators, students, and community members.

**School Library Media Specialist (SLMS)**—a certified professional working in a school library media center. SLMSs fulfill the four roles of information specialist, instructional partner, teacher, and program administrator.

**Teacher role of the media specialist**—tasks may include providing individual or group instruction in information literacy skills; conducting media plan activities; participating in

programs to motivate reading; providing orientation for staff and students to instruct patrons in the use of the media center; and supporting in-service for school staff.

**Total educator development**—concept of teacher development conceptualized by Fullan and Hargreaves (1996). This concept includes the educator’s purpose, the educator as a person, the organizational context in which the educator works, and the culture of the school.

### Organization of the Study

Chapter One includes the researcher’s perspective and biases, context of the study, conceptual framework of the study, supporting literature for the conceptual framework, research questions, an overview of research procedures, limitations and significance of the study, and definitions of terms. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature in the areas of the role of the SLMS and the media program within schools, barriers that keep SLMSs from fully implementing their role within a school, the National Board Certification process as an indicator of expertise, and the total educator concept as it applies to ESLMSs and their role and development. Chapter Three includes the methodology that was utilized for the research. The findings and analysis of data are included in Chapter Four. Chapter Five discusses the results of the study and implications are offered.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to define and review the literature related to SLMSs' role and their development. This chapter helps to articulate the problem under investigation and connects this study to the current body of related literature. This study addressed the gaps in the literature of previous studies. There was no literature found in which researchers applied the total educator (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996) conceptual framework to SLMSs. A holistic viewpoint of SLMSs' role and development as people, or the concept of the total educator, suggests an alternative point of departure for examining how SLMSs become experts in their field. By failing to consider the person behind the ESLMSs and the school in which they work, the essence of their role and development may have been sorely overlooked in other research studies. Although there are several studies that analyzed the impact National Board Certified Teachers have on students, there are no such studies that focused on National Board Certified SLMSs. The investigation of motivations for pursuing National Board Certification was an unexplored topic for SLMSs. While numerous studies investigated the impact of SLMSs and media programs on student achievement, there was a gap in the literature about the daily activities and role that SLMSs fulfill in a school that contribute to that impact. Even though several studies indicate the barriers that keep SLMSs from fully implementing their role within a school, there was a gap in the literature about the development of expertise of SLMSs who have overcome or excelled in spite of those barriers.

The fundamental premises of this study emanate from three bodies of literature.

First, SLMSs are the center of this study. Therefore, the role of the SLMS and the media program within schools are discussed in this study. Previous research and present theory on the roles of the SLMS and the media program are important to my research. Second, National Board Certified SLMSs are under examination in this study. Therefore, the characteristics of expert educators and exemplary media programs are examined. Third, SLMSs develop as professionals within and outside the organizational context and culture of the school as well as a person with purpose. Thus, ESLMSs' development, including the total educator concept, composes the foundation for this study. Hence, the chapter is organized by three major sections: understanding the role of the SLMS and media program within a school, characteristics of National Board Certified SLMSs as expert educators, and trends in research in SLMS development including a discussion of the total educator.

#### The Role of SLMSs and Media Programs within Schools

Aimed at administrators, teachers, school boards, and community members as well as library media professionals, *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* is a vital resource for all. It is useful for improving the educational communities' understanding of the library media center as a resource and the library media specialist as an involved member in curriculum development. *Information Power* is "a powerful tool that library media specialists can use to foster the active, authentic learning that today's researchers and practitioners recognize as vital to helping students become independent, information-literate, lifelong learners" (AECT and AASL, 1998, p. ix). This invaluable book proposes guidelines to direct and support SLMSs in the key areas of learning, teaching, information access, and program administration. *Information*



*Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* defines the roles of the library media specialist as teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator.

### *The Role of the Media Center*

Today media centers are an integral part of all schools. Martin and Sargent (1980) indicated

The library media center contributes to the educational growth of students through the learning experiences offered in its central facility and through the broad range of services that enhance and expand these experiences by carrying them beyond the physical boundaries of the center itself into other areas of the school and community. (p. 15)

Media centers provide students the opportunity to learn and explore subjects of their interest in-depth. The American Library Association asserts that there are several responsibilities of all libraries:

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

(American Library Association, 1996, p. 1)

The media center is the largest classroom in the school, providing service to students and teachers in all curricular areas. The library should be a place to encourage students' interests and a place to broaden their horizons by introducing them to new perspectives and concepts. The school library media staff should work hard to create a welcoming, safe environment that entices even the most reluctant readers and students. The goal of all school library media programs should be to create a community of lifelong learners. Media specialists should create educational experiences that prepare children to respond to the questions asked in real life if they are to become lifelong learners. "Only when students leave our schools as persons who engage in question-raising as well as answer-seeking will they indeed be lifelong learners" (Donham, Bishop, Kuhlthau, & Oberg, 2001, p. 67).

New technology developments and advancements occurring on a daily basis have created an atmosphere of unrelenting change. Once stocked mainly with books and other print materials, today's media centers include a wide range of multimedia resources. With the integration of technology into schools, the view of traditional education is changing.

Research indicates that in order to accommodate these changes, the role of the SLMS is crucial to overall student success. “While no group is better positioned than librarians to bring order to information chaos and teach others the fundamentals of critical evaluation of resources, the Internet remains a triple-edged sword for school librarians” (Fuller, 2005, p. 25). The first edge is to make the Internet not just available to students but meaningful to them. “Just because the bits are flowing doesn’t mean that there’s value flowing or that there’s learning flowing” (Ferdinand Serim as cited by Glick, 2005, p. 53). The second edge is the widening gap between the information-rich and the information-poor in our country. The media center can serve as an equalizer by providing equal access to all resources to every student in the school. In the words of Galeano (2000), “this world, which puts on a banquet for all, then slams the door in the noses of so many, is simultaneously equalizing and unequal: *equalizing* in the ideas and habits it imposes and *unequal* in the opportunities it offers” (p. 25). The third edge is that many students bypass the school library collection and the services of the SLMS altogether in their sole reliance on the Internet.

Anderson (1998) summed up the SLMS profession: “the service we provide teachers influences the success of our information literacy programs and ultimately student learning as teachers integrate new information technologies into their curriculum” (p. 26). If a media program is to fulfill its mission the teachers, media specialists, and administration must work side by side. A fundamental responsibility of the library media specialist is to provide the leadership and expertise necessary to ensure that the library media program is an integral part of the instructional program of the school.

The library media specialist is an essential part of the learning community that

includes students, teachers, school board members, administrators, parents, and community members. Teachers, principals, and library media specialists must form a partnership and work “together to design and implement the program that best matches the instructional needs of the school” (AASL & AECT, 1988, p. 50). The partnership approach, in addition to making the program more responsive to user needs, creates shared commitment to library media program goals and an enhanced image for the overall program. Consistent attention must be given to assessing changing needs of the curriculum and individual users. Successful schools with exemplary media programs use

Collaborative models in which a variety of participants, each acting responsibly in their own roles, assume shared leadership for promoting an agenda that aims to realize the common vision for student learning that *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* represents. (Hughes-Hassell & Wheelock, 2001, p.15)

#### *The Roles of the Media Specialist*

Over 100 years ago William Osler stated,

The librarian of today, and it will be more of the librarians of tomorrow, are not fiery dragons interposed between the people and the books. They are useful public servants, who manage libraries in the interest of the public . . . Many still think that a great reader, or a writer of books, will make an excellent librarian. This is pure fallacy. (Osler Quotes, 2004, para. 1)

The terms media, library media center, media specialist, and media clerk came into use during the 1970s in order to emphasize non-print materials and the instructional and collaborative roles of the staff as well as the expanding role that technology plays in the location of information (Pond, 1998). Media specialists are no longer the uptight

librarians who are only responsible for keeping everyone quiet and directing patrons to the books they want. SLMSs are needed to assist teachers and students in functioning in an increasingly complex world.

Media specialists' roles are constantly changing and they must be able to accept new tasks in order to perform their duties successfully. *Information Power* reiterated,

Just as the school library media center has moved far beyond a room with books to become an active, technology-rich learning environment with an array of information resources, the school library media specialist today focuses on the process of learning rather than dissemination of information. (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 1)

The abundance of information and technological advances demands that SLMSs engage in continuing professional development to adapt to the changing needs of the learning communities they serve. SLMSs' often concur with The Queen's concept of progress in *Through the Looking Glass*. "Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast" (Carroll, 1960, p. 147).

#### *Teacher*

In the role of teacher, the media specialist integrates information literacy into the curriculum. "Information literacy—the ability to find and use information—is the keystone of lifelong learning" (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. vii). Library media specialists should be knowledgeable about effective teaching techniques and strategies and how to apply those skills to a variety of learning environments and with a variety of learners.

Many SLMSs began as classroom teachers and therefore probably feel

comfortable in the teaching role. Students need direct instruction on information literacy skills and opportunities to practice and apply those skills. One of the ongoing responsibilities of SLMSs is to teach information and technology literacy skills not only to students but also to classroom teachers. Unfortunately many teachers do not have the knowledge or confidence to teach many of the information literacy skills needed by students because college students enrolled in education programs are not required to take any information literacy courses. The SLMS often does not have the opportunity to teach information and technology literacy skills to every student in the school on a consistent basis. Thus, SLMSs must constantly instruct teachers on the best strategies for teaching students how to use information and technology in the classroom. As a teacher, the media specialist may provide individual or group instruction in information literacy skills; teaching reading skills; provide orientation for staff and students to instruct patrons in the use of the media center; and conduct in-services for school staff. The fact that the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has developed a certification for SLMSs validates that this essential school position affects student learning outcomes.

#### *Instructional Partner*

The role of instructional partner allows media specialists to collaborate with school staff to provide the best learning environment for the student, which is richly integrated with information literacy skills. As noted in *Information Power* (1998), “. . .the significance of collaboration throughout the learning process is increasingly important. Collaboration is essential as library media specialists work with teachers to plan, conduct and evaluate learning activities that incorporate information literacy” (p. 50). The collaborative role may be as simple as recommending multiple resources to supplement a

planned lesson to as significant as actively planning and co-teaching an entire unit. As a hub of the learning community the library media specialist is able to work collaboratively with teachers, administrators, support staff, community members, and families to facilitate students' learning and educational growth. "Professional collaboration brings teachers and school library media specialists together to design learning activities that teach students the steps and criteria for effective and efficient inquiry, thus setting the stage for lifelong learning" (Hughes-Hassell & Wheelock, 2001, p. 36). SLMSs should work with teachers to systematically make connections with resources within subject areas in order to ensure student mastery of all curriculum objectives.

With respect to the library media specialist as an instructional partner, *Information Power* (1998) lists four responsibilities: participating in curriculum design and assessment, helping teachers develop instructional activities, providing expertise in materials and technology, and translating curricular needs into library media program goals and objectives (p. 4-5). As an instructional partner, the media specialist should spend time conferring and planning with teachers and administrators. Media specialists should plan with staff to incorporate resources into instruction, should cooperate with staff to include information access skills instruction for all students, and should assemble and/or provide resources and materials linked to curriculum content for classroom topics. SLMSs are a vital element needed for vertical integration (i.e. between grade levels) of curriculum as well as horizontal integration (i.e. between subjects) of learning experiences. The media specialist's knowledge of school wide curriculum and individual classroom projects and assignments allows teachers to have an expert available to help provide students with opportunities to build upon prior knowledge and form relationships

to increase relevancy.

### *Information Specialist*

The media specialist's position is often assumed to fill the information specialist role of finding information in print resources and using non-print resources. As an information specialist the library media specialist assists administrators, teachers, parents, students, and others to acquire and evaluate information resources in all formats. SLMSs can assist with the integration of higher order thinking skills into school curricula. For example, SLMSs can work to ensure that library assignments are not 'cut and paste' but that they are assignments that require students to locate information, analyze and process the information, then synthesis a way to share the information with the teacher and/or the class as well as how to correctly apply the information to everyday situations. Research projects should be a learning experience where information literacy skills are integrated into the curriculum in such a way that students are able "to take part in the process of knowledge-getting" because "knowing is a process not a product" (Bruner, 1968, p. 72).

Students need to develop the ability to learn from the abundant information available without becoming discouraged, distracted, or uninterested and to go beyond finding facts to create their own understanding at a deeper level. "The wide availability of information does not create more informed students. It creates a need to teach students how to evaluate and apply information from all sources" (Baxter & Smalley, 2003, p. 17). The goal for every media program should be to ensure that all their students are information literate. An information literate person has

The ability to recognize any information need and know how to use specific strategies to answer a question or solve a problem. An information literate person



will understand the information-seeking process and use it to locate, evaluate, synthesize, use and produce information, using a variety of resources and media. (Misakian, 2004, p. 45)

Library media specialists have always been considered ‘information experts.’ A role of information specialists is to promote resources and access to information as well as encourage patrons to use information. The SLMS serves as an expert in accessing, synthesizing, organizing, analyzing, and communicating information. Tasks that may be included in the information specialist role are to provide assistance selecting and locating materials appropriate to an individual’s needs; to provide guidance in the use of materials and information technologies in the school; to evaluate the library collection on a given topic; to demonstrate leadership and expertise in the use of technology and resources; and to explore resources available outside the library walls such as Internet resources and other libraries’ materials.

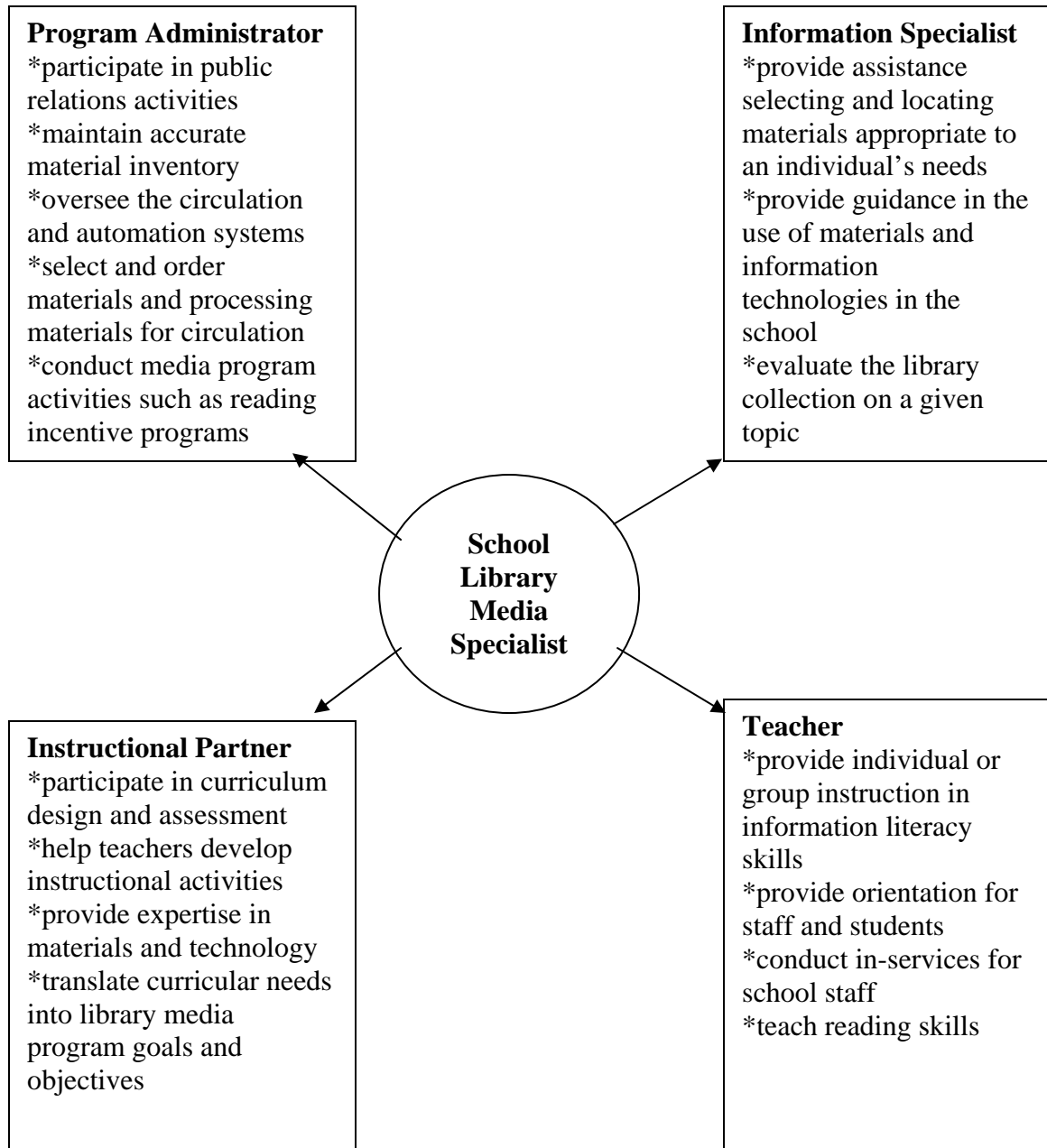
#### *Program Administrator*

As a program administrator, the SLMS manages all the activities related to the library media program. The SLMS is the key component for ensuring the library program functions smoothly within a school. As the program administrator, the SLMS carries out library procedures and processes on a daily basis. SLMSs are responsible for the acquisition, organization, storage, distribution, retrieval, maintenance, administration, and evaluation of a large quantity of materials and equipment as well as the program of utilization. “The library media specialist is an advocate for the library media program and provides the knowledge, vision and leadership to steer it creatively and energetically in the twenty-first century” (AASL & AECT, 1998, p. 5).

SLMSs have the huge responsibility of being knowledgeable about all members of their learning community in order to provide resources and services to meet all of their needs. In the program administrator role, the media specialist must promote the media program to ensure all patrons are utilizing the valuable resources available. One of the most challenging groups library media specialists work with in schools are nonreaders. Nonreaders can be broken into two categories—illiterate and alliterate. The illiterate group consists of those learners who have not mastered the mechanics of reading. The alliterate group consists of those who have mastered the skill of reading but do not read due to many possible factors such as lack of interest, lack of opportunity (i.e. time to read), lack of reading resources (i.e. books, magazines, reading glasses, etc.), and/or the reader finds reading an unpleasant experience. “We live, work, and play in a world that is saturated with print, words, books, and ideas” (Mackey & White, 2004, p. 30). “In today’s changing global society, all students need to be literate; and this includes building an appreciation of literature that enriches life and fosters understanding” (In support of credentialed library media professionals in school library media centers, 2000, para. 1). Although many factors cannot be changed by educational staff, many can be alleviated. For example, SLMSs can ensure that a variety of reading materials (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) are available covering a wide variety of topics in order to pique interests and extended hours can be implemented to allow readers time and access to reading resources. “Credentialed school library media professionals promote, inspire, and guide students toward a love of reading, a quest for knowledge, and a thirst for lifelong learning” (In support of credentialed library media professionals in school library media centers, 2000, para. 3).

In the role of program administrator, the media specialist performs many tasks which may include but are not limited to developing and enforcing library and school policies; conduct media program activities such as sponsoring programs to motivate reading; supervising volunteers and other media center staff; participating in public relations activities; maintaining accurate material inventory; overseeing the circulation and automation systems; attending staff and committee meetings; reviewing and understanding yearly budgets; and selecting and ordering materials and processing materials for circulation. The media specialist should work with members of the staff, administration, and the building level media committee in assessing the needs and making interpretations for their particular school.

Figure 1: Four roles of SLMSs as outlined in *Information Power* (1998)



The SLMS functions like the hub of a wheel balancing all four roles to fill a vital position in the school.

## Previous Research

Many research studies have been conducted that examine the roles of SLMSs and the role of media programs in schools. Media centers have been transformed from mere warehouses for books and equipment into being the hub of the learning community. Media specialists are the core that keeps the hub functioning properly. Media specialists' roles have also evolved with the changing times.

### *Media Programs' Relevance to Student Academic Achievement*

Numerous research studies have been conducted across the United States in order to assign value to school library media centers. A significant body of current research shows a positive relationship between school library media programs and student academic achievement. Like it or not, "the bottom line in K-12 education today is student achievement" and "increasingly that achievement is defined by standardized testing and the 'No Child Left Behind' act" (Eisenberg, 2004, p. 22). Todd (2003) summarized the importance of school library media centers:

The hallmark of a school library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not its collections, its systems, its technology, its staffing, its building, but its actions and evidences that show that it makes a real difference to student learning, that it contributes in tangible and significant ways to the development of human understanding, meaning making and constructing knowledge. (p. 13)

The positive effect school library media programs can have on achievement was officially recognized by the U.S. Department of Education with their Improving Literacy through School Libraries program. This program worked to improve student reading achievement by improving school library services and resources. (Improving literacy

through school libraries, n.d.)

Research has shown that an effective school library media program must be in place to positively impact the learning that takes place in that school. Roscello and Webster (2002) used numerous research study findings to conclude that effective school library media programs have numerous characteristics in common:

- Provide flexible scheduling and extended access to the collection beyond the school day.
- Address a broad range of reading levels and interests.
- Offer a broad range of materials including fiction, nonfiction, reference, print, non-print, audiovisual, and more.
- Are accessible to the entire learning community.
- Are cost effective by providing resources to be utilized by multiple patrons and by employing an automation system which minimizes lost resources and requires less staffing.
- Maintain an up to date collection through weeding and new collection development.
- Provide a sense of ownership that is shared by the entire learning community.

In 1992, Haycock indicated that school library media centers affect student academic achievement in his study, *What Works: Research about Teaching and Learning through the School's Library Resource Center*. Haycock (1992) found that students in schools with well-equipped library media centers and trained library media specialists performed better on achievement tests for reading comprehension and basic research skills. Haycock (2001) indicated that improvement to student self-esteem can be linked to

a strong school library media center. Students in Haycock's pioneering study showed increased "confidence, independence, and sense of responsibility in regards to their own learning" (2001, p. 34). Media centers can be equalizers for many students who may not have any resources at home.

To a great extent, the quality of a school depends on the quality of that school's media program. According to a study conducted in Colorado entitled *The Impact of School Library Media Centers on Academic Achievement* (Lance, Wellborn, & Hamilton-Pennell, 1993), the size of the library media center's staff and collection was the best school predictor of academic achievement. Students at schools with better funded library media centers tended to achieve higher average reading scores, whether their schools and communities were rich or poor and whether adults in the community were well or poorly educated. Lance, Wellborn, and Hamilton-Pennell (1993) also found that in schools where the media specialist performed an instructional role the students tended to achieve higher average test scores.

In 1999, Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell conducted a study in 211 of Alaska's 461 public schools and included students in grades four, eight, and eleven. This study indicated that not only did the level of school library media center staffing predict academic achievement but so did the amount of time the SLMS spent delivering information literacy instruction to students; cooperatively planning with teachers; and providing in-service to teachers. A significant result of the study was that the more library/information literacy instruction the SLMS provided, the higher the students scored on the California Achievement Tests. In 2000 Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell again worked together to conduct a study in Pennsylvania public schools to determine the

value of staffing school libraries with individuals with specific certification qualifications. Surveys were completed by 522 students in grades five, eight, and eleven from 435 public schools. The results indicated that for all three grade levels, the relationship between Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) reading scores and the presence of adequate staffing of a full-time certified SLMS and a full-time support staff member is both positive and statistically significant.

Ester Smith (2001) collected data from a random sample of 600 Texas school libraries in her study titled, *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance*. The study data was supplemented with state and federal records on school characteristics, community economic data, and Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test results. The study incorporated all the data to analyze more than 200 variables in examining the relationship between libraries and academic performance. The results of this study indicated that school library media center staffing, collection sizes, technology availability, and the amount of interaction between the SLMS and the teachers and students all have a positive impact on academic performance at all grade levels. Over ten percent more students met minimum TAAS expectations in reading if they had a certified SLMS in their school.

In 2001, Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell again teamed up to conduct a study to analyze the relationship between school library media program development and reading/language test scores in the state of Oregon. The researchers found that Oregon schools with the best reading scores tended to have strong library media programs while taking into account other factors such as school differences, per pupil expenditures, teacher to pupil ratio, experience level of teachers, teacher salary scale, community



differences, adult educational attainment, poverty level, and racial/ethnic demographics. The results showed that the relationship between school library media program development and test scores cannot be explained away by these other factors. This study indicated that incremental improvements in the school library media program will yield incremental increases in test scores. The results indicated that reading/language test scores rise with increases in total staff hours, print volumes per student, periodical subscriptions, and school library media expenditures per student.

In 2002, Lance and his colleagues again explored the question—how does the school library media program impact student academic achievement? They analyzed data collected in statewide studies in Alaska, Pennsylvania, Colorado, and Oregon. In addition to the data collected in these studies, in each state a survey was given out at the school building level. The survey results provided information about the media programs in the school—staffing levels, staff activities, collection size, usage statistics, and available technology. These surveys were used to address the weaknesses of the previous studies, by Lance and his colleagues. To overcome the previous studies' weaknesses, the researchers attempted to define the instructional role, to define the support given to the SLMSs by the principal and teachers, and to analyze the relationship of information technology to the library media program. The 2002 study was also used to show that the results held up over time, the results were consistent from state to state, and that the results were consistent whether state-standards based test or norm-reference tests were used.

In addition to the survey data, the 2002 study acquired substantial amounts of information on the schools participating in the study. The school information included

test scores, teacher-pupil ratio, per pupil expenditures, percentage of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program (i.e. poverty), percentage of the community's adults who graduated from high school, racial/ethnic distribution of students and teacher characteristics (percentage with advanced degrees, average years of experience and average salary). Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-Pennell (2002) claimed that strong school media specialists and integrated media programs can help ensure that America's schools "leave no child behind." The research suggested that academic achievement tends to be higher in schools where the school library media center is staffed with trained professionals (media specialists and support staff), better funded, and better stocked. The library media programs must have the support of teachers and principals, state-of-the-art technology must be a part of the school library media program, the library media specialist must teach information literacy skills (one-to-one for students and as large groups), and the library media specialist must provide in-service training to teachers (to keep them abreast of the latest information resources and technology) for there to be a documented increase in student achievement. The school media program predictors almost always outperformed other school characteristics, such as teacher-pupil ration and per pupil expenditures.

In her study, *Making the Grade: The Status of School Library Media Centers in the Sunshine State and How They Contribute to Student Achievement*, Donna Baumbach (2002) used survey results from public schools in Florida to analyze how school library media centers contribute to student achievement. The results of Baumbach's study indicated that high performing schools are more likely to have a certified SLMS, an existing information literacy curriculum, a significantly larger book collection, a school

Web site, and more magazine subscriptions than low performing schools. This groundbreaking study in Florida also showed that SLMSs in top performing schools spent more time collaborating with teachers and were more involved in reading activities.

In 2002, Baughman used the 519 responses he received from the questionnaire he mailed to Massachusetts public schools to analyze the relationship between school library media centers and student achievement. The results showed that at each grade level students scored higher on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) when there was a school library media program that provided instruction within the school. Higher scores on the MCAS occurred in schools with full-time SLMSs.

Baxter and Smalley's (2003) report titled *Check It Out! The Results of the School Library Media Program Census* included 1,172 SLMSs who responded to a survey to determine the correlation between the school library media center and achievement. The researchers also visited 131 schools to confirm the data collected. The survey data showed that student reading achievement was related to increases in school library media program spending—the larger the library expenditures for books and electronic materials, the higher students' reading achievement. The census data also showed that as a state Minnesota lags behind the averages for other states in expenditures for books for its school library media centers. The site visits confirmed the study's findings that the more hours a licensed SLMS worked in the media program, the more effective the program.

Burgin and Bracy's (2003) study of school library programs relationship with student achievement in North Carolina were consistent with the earlier studies in Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas. The researchers found that school library media programs have a significant impact on

student achievement. Scores on standardized reading and English tests in the North Carolina public schools tended to increase when school libraries had newer books, spent more on print and electronic resources, subscribed to more online and CD ROM services, and were open and staffed more hours during the school week.

Todd and Kuhlthau (2004) surveyed 13,123 students in grades three through twelve and 879 staff members in thirty-nine schools across Ohio with effective school library media programs to determine how students benefit from those effective programs. The thirty-nine schools were selected based on the Ohio Guidelines for Effective School Library Media Programs and validated by an International Advisory Panel. The Ohio research study revealed that 99.4% of the students surveyed believed that the school library media center and the services offered within the center enhanced their learning. The study showed that an effective school library media center, led by a credentialed library media specialist, served a critical role in facilitating student learning. “When effective school libraries are in place, students do learn. 13,000 students can’t be wrong” (Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004, p. 8). As a result of the Ohio research study it is recommended that all school libraries be staffed with a credentialed media specialist; the school library program should actively promote the development of information literacy skills for inquiry learning; the school library media center should have a strong technology infrastructure and current, quality resources; and the school library program should encourage collaborative instruction between the media specialists and teachers to use technology and teach information literacy skills.

The most recent study to be published studying the impact of school library media programs on student achievement is another study by Lance, Rodney, and Hamilton-

Pennell (2005) titled *Powerful Libraries Make Powerful Learners*. In this study 657 Illinois schools, from all grade levels and from all regions of the state, participated in a voluntary survey. The survey gathered data on hours of operation, staffing, role of staff, media center collection and technology availability, expenditures, and patron usage of the media center. The research study indicated that the test scores were higher in schools with flexible scheduling; with more staff; where media specialists spent more time collaborating with teachers; with larger collections; where students used the media center both individually and with their class; with better funding and higher expenditures; and where educational technology was more widely available. “In short, the findings of this study and its predecessors support the belief that powerful libraries—and librarians—do, indeed, make powerful learners” (Lance, Rodney, & Hamilton-Pennell, 2005, p. xiii).

The importance of reading across the curriculum is reflected by Georgia’s new Performance Standards (GPS). Students in Georgia are now expected to read a minimum of twenty-five grade-level appropriate books each school year (Georgia Standards, 2006). Stephen Krashen (1993) reviewed and analyzed hundreds of voluntary reading studies in his report *The Power of Reading*. This report indicated that more voluntary reading resulted in better reading comprehension, a more fluent writing style, improved vocabulary, better spelling, and grammatical development. Although everyone would acknowledge the numerous benefits of voluntary reading, Krashen specifically analyzed the SLMSs’ role in reading. He found that access to school media centers as well as to professional media specialists resulted in more voluntary reading by students. Krashen also concluded that larger school library media center collections and extended hours resulted in larger circulation rates and amounts read. Ramos and Krashen’s (1998) later

study concluded that one of the most powerful incentives for reading is to simply make interesting books readily available to children, such as in a school library media center.

*Information Power* (1988) affirmed that the mission of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. The SLMS is an important partner in providing an integrated curriculum that prepares students to be lifelong learners. The previous research provided valuable information on media programs' relevance to student academic achievement:

- Improvement to student self-esteem and sense of responsibility has been linked to a strong school library media center.
- Access to school media centers as well as to professional media specialists resulted in more voluntary reading by students.
- Larger collections and extended hours resulted in increases in voluntary reading in a school.
- More voluntary reading resulted in better reading comprehension, a more fluent writing style, improved vocabulary, better spelling, and grammatical development.
- Students at schools with better funded library media centers tended to achieve higher average test scores, whether their schools and communities were rich or poor and whether adults in the community were well or poorly educated.
- In schools where the media specialist performed an instructional role, the students tended to achieve higher average test scores. The more library/information literacy instruction the SLMS provided the higher the students scored on achievement tests.

- SLMSs in top performing schools spent more time collaborating with teachers and were more involved in reading activities.
- Academic achievement on tests for reading comprehension and basic research skills tended to be higher in schools where the school library media center was staffed with trained professionals (media specialists and support staff), better funded, and better stocked.
- The library media programs must have the support of teachers and principals, state-of-the-art technology must be a part of the school library media program, the library media specialist must teach information literacy skills (one-to-one for students and as large groups), and the library media specialist must provide in-service training to teachers (to keep them abreast of the latest information resources and technology) for there to be a significant documented increase in student achievement.
- Research revealed that students believed that the school library media center and the services offered within the center enhanced their learning.

*Barriers to Fully Implementing the Roles of a SLMS*

Research also indicated that, despite the positive impact of the media center on a school's success, many education professionals do not have a clear understanding of the media specialist's role. Giorgis and Peterson conducted a study in 1996 that found the majority of elementary school teachers perceived the SLMS as a resource person and only a small number of teachers viewed the SLMS as a collaborator. This false perception would hinder teachers from seeking SLMSs as instructional partners for collaboration on lessons. This fallacious perception must be overcome because as Bell

and Totten (1992), found teachers employed in academically successful elementary schools had a tendency to collaborate with the SLMS more than teachers serving in academically unsuccessful schools. *Information Power* (1998) identifies collaboration as an essential responsibility of SLMSs that can contribute to improving learning outcomes. Donham's (1999) defined what true collaboration means for SLMSs and teachers. She declared,

When teachers and library media specialists work together to identify what students need to know about accessing, evaluating, interpreting, and applying information; when they plan how and where these skills will be taught and how they relate to content area learning; when they co-teach so students learn the skills at a time when they need them; and when they assess the students' process as they work with information as well as the end product, they have truly collaborated. (p. 21)

In 2001, McCracken developed a survey to determine if practicing SLMSs perceive the tasks that they perform on a daily basis fulfill the roles described for them in *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* (1988) and *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (1998). The first edition of *Information Power* (1988) defines the roles of the library media specialist as teacher, information specialist, and instructional consultant. The second edition (1998) defines the roles as teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator. The survey was distributed to a random sample of 1,000 SLMSs in the United States with 505 surveys being returned. Analysis of the returned surveys indicated that SLMSs perceive they are unable to fully implement their roles in practice. The most reported



barriers were lack of time; lack of funding and resources; lack of support from administration and staff; lack of clerical staff; use of a fixed schedule; and too many schools or students to provide for.

Differing perceptions among librarians, principals and teachers about the role of the school librarian can be a significant barrier to implementing change. McCracken (2001) found one of the primary barriers for SLMS taking a more active role in instruction was lack of understanding on the part of school administrators about their role (p. 3). People often assume the media specialist's job is whatever they see them doing, so if people see the media specialist constantly re-shelving books or doing clerical tasks that is what they assume their job is. Successful media specialists are able to effectively delegate tasks to clerks, volunteers, and student assistants. "Adequate professional and clerical staffing is essential if the library media specialist is to perform all the roles described in *Information Power*" (McCracken, 2001, p. 12). Media specialists must be able to prioritize their tasks in order to run the best media program possible.

Another barrier to implementing the four roles of their position includes whether flexible or fixed scheduling is found in the school. In 1994, Van Deusen and Tallman sent out questionnaires to 1500 U.S. elementary schools which had at least three grade levels and included third or fourth grades. Three hundred ninety-seven media specialists returned the questionnaires. They found that the consultative role was generally practiced at a higher level when flexible scheduling was used in the school media center as opposed to a fixed schedule. Flexible scheduling refers to an open schedule that allows students to use the school library media center according to their learning needs, rather than according to a predetermined timetable or rotation. Van Deusen and Tallman also

found that more co-operative planning and teaching with classroom teachers occurred in the flexible scheduled media centers. Among the many benefits of flexible scheduling is that students become independent users of resources while developing a sense of responsibility for their own learning. Flexible scheduling allows teachers “to use the library media center in response to student’s questions—at the teachable moment” (Donham, Bishop, Kuhlthau, & Oberg, 2001, p. 41).

In 2001, Gwatney analyzed the roles elementary school media specialists perform on a daily basis as compared to the four roles stated in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*. Gwatney conducted a time study by observing three elementary school media specialists in Georgia for one day. Gwatney found that what the media specialists in her study thought they were spending their time doing was not necessarily what they were actually doing. As a group, the media specialists spent the most time in the program administrator role. The teaching role consumed the second largest amount of their time. Next the media specialists spent their time in the information specialist role. The media specialists spent the least amount of their time and a very minimal part of their day in the instructional partner role.

Barriers to SLMSs fully implementing their roles within a school include the perceptions of other education professionals in that school, as well as program limitations such as fixed scheduling and lack of funding. Previous research provided important information regarding the barriers to fully implementing the roles of a SLMS:

- SLMSs perceive they are unable to fully implement their roles in practice. The most reported barriers were lack of time; lack of funding and resources; lack of support from administration and staff; lack of clerical staff; use of a fixed

schedule; and too many schools or students to provide for.

- One of the primary barriers for SLMS taking a more active role in instruction was lack of understanding on the part of school administrators about their role.
- The consultative roles were generally practiced at a higher level when flexible scheduling was used in the school media center as opposed to a fixed schedule.
- More co-operative planning and teaching with classroom teachers occurred in flexible scheduled media centers.
- Many media specialists have a distorted perception of how they spend their time.

*National Board Certification as an Indicator of Expert Practices*

This study goes beyond effective school library media programs to study the truly exemplary programs, which have ESLMSs running them. Creativity can be defined in two ways. One definition describes creativity as having the ability to originate or create a product, process, or activity. The second definition is “characterized by originality, expressiveness and imagination” (Creativity, 2002, para. 1). Expert educators need to be creative and innovative to overcome the many obstacles to achieve superior performance in education today. Students also need these two character traits, the ability to be creative and innovative, in order to become critical thinkers and life-long learners. An exemplary media program can encourage both kinds of creativity. An exemplary media program can encourage creativity in students and teachers. A SLMS can provide teachers with innovative teaching strategies, a variety of resources in multiple formats, expertise teaching information literacy skills and much more. We are in the middle of a technology and information explosion. Students today must know how to access and use the technology and information available as well as use strategies to adapt to changing times.

Education is not totally school-based. Students must learn how to learn and how to find information for themselves.

The educational reform movement accelerated in 1983 with the publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. The first five years following the report forty-three states raised their standards for high school graduation, thirty-seven states enacted statewide student testing programs, twenty-nine states implemented required educator competency tests and twenty-eight states changed educator certification requirements (Orlich, 1989). Between 1983 and 1985 alone, over 700 pieces of educational reform legislation were enacted by the states in order to reform the current educational system. In response to *A Nation at Risk* the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession released *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* on May 16, 1986. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was created in 1987 as a result of the report. Perceiving that educators were not properly prepared for their jobs, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching created the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The first certificates were awarded in 1995 after years of planning and research. In 2002, library media specialists were invited to apply for National Board Certification in Library Media/Early Childhood Through Young Adulthood. Today the NBPTS is leading the way in making education a profession dedicated to student learning and to upholding high standards for professional performance. The foundation behind NBPTS's endeavors makes "perfect pedagogic sense: the better the educator, the better the chance to spike student learning" (Margolis, 2002, para. 3). They have raised the standards for all educators, strengthened their educational preparation through the

standards, and created performance-based assessments that demonstrate accomplished application of the standards.

National Board Certification is considered by most to be the highest credential in the education profession. National Board Certification is voluntary and open to all educators who have a baccalaureate degree and three years of experience in either a public or private school. The process consists of four extensive portfolio entries as well as a series of six concentrated assessment prompts and takes between one and three years to complete. The portfolio entries include student work samples, videotapes, and documents. The portfolio is used to show instructional collaboration, techniques for fostering an appreciation of literature, integration of instructional technologies, and documented accomplishments that show contributions to student learning. Candidates submit student work samples that demonstrate how their collaboration with classroom teachers affects student learning. Candidates are also required to create a fifteen minute videotaped lesson on literature appreciation; a two minute video scan of the media center, including narration; and two ten minute videos that demonstrate integration of technology into teaching. Each videotaped submission will include a written commentary. In order to achieve National Board Certification, candidates must show clear, consistent, convincing evidence of meeting five core propositions:

- Are committed to students and their learning.
- Know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Are members of learning communities. (What teachers should know and be able

to do, 2003, para. 1)

NBPTS offers twenty-four certificate fields. National Board Certification is valid for a period of ten years, after which an educator may choose to seek renewal.

Education research has failed to reach a consensus over which, if any, educator characteristics are associated with students' learning gains. A growing body of research indicated that the quality of the educator in the classroom is an important factor for predicting student achievement (Hanushek, 1992; Goldhaber, 2002). Hanushek's (1992) research indicated that quality teachers can make the difference of a full year's learning growth. He found that all else equal, a student with a very high quality teacher will achieve a learning gain of 1.5 grade level equivalents while a student with a low quality teacher achieves a gain of only 0.5 grade level equivalent (Hanushek, 1992). Thus, it is hard for supervisors and policymakers to make informed decisions about educator licensure, educator hiring and placement, as well as certain compensations without direct observation of teaching and analysis of all his/her students' test scores for all educators in their district or under their supervision. National Board Certification assists with this by identifying educators who have already been recognized for their knowledge and teaching skills by successfully undergoing the rigorous National Board Certification process and their certificate area identifies their area(s) of expertise.

National Board Certification is the most thoroughly grounded, in research terms, of any assessment program in the teaching profession. Although there have been more than 150 studies, reports, and papers commissioned on the value of the National Board Certification process, standards, and assessments they have all been small scale studies. In 2004, Goldhaber and Anthony conducted the first large-scale study assessing the

relationship between student achievement and the certification of educators by the NBPTS. The research was based on third, fourth, and fifth grade students' end-of-the-year math and reading test scores in North Carolina for three academic years (1996-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99). The data showed that test scores improved an average of seven percent (five percent in reading and nine percent in math) more for students whose educators had earned National Board Certification when compared with students whose educators had applied for the credential but did not receive it as well as non-applicant educators (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004, p. 14). The data also showed that the performance differential was most pronounced for younger and lower-income students whose gains were as high as fifteen percent. The research, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, indicated that NBPTS is successfully identifying the more effective educators among the applicants and that National Board Certified educators were more effective than their non-certified colleagues at increasing student achievement even before becoming certified.

Through the examination of over 610,000 student test scores, Goldhaber and Anthony's research offered evidence that educators who undergo the National Board Certification process make a difference in the classroom. This research provided some indication of a positive return on the investment in the National Board Certification process and recognizes NBPTS assessments as a way to identify educator effectiveness. Keeping in mind that test performance is just one of many ways the National Board Certified educators influence student outcomes there may be various indirect benefits such as they may model effective teaching techniques for other educators or bring about other positive changes in the school. Goldhaber and Anthony's study was spurred by the

intense focus on educator quality as set by the goals of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). This legislation requires that there be a “highly qualified” educator in every classroom. NBPTS credential is cited in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* as a prime example of the ways in which educators can meet its “highly qualified” requirement (The alignment of National Board Certification and ESEA definition of a "highly qualified" teacher, 2002). A major intention of NCLB is to ensure high quality teachers for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income. The premise of identifying highly qualified educators is based on research that demonstrates the connection between student academic achievement and educator quality (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Whitehurst, 2002).

Due to the numerous research studies indicating the positive effects of undergoing the National Board Certification process on student learning, the number of nationally certified educators is rapidly growing. States and districts across the nation have implemented policies and regulations to recruit, reward, and retain National Board Certified educators as a result of the excellent reputation and national acclaim the NBPTS has received for its work professionalizing the education field. The National Board began by certifying less than 100 teachers in 1994-95 and by November 2005 had certified over 40,000 educators (NBCTs by Year, 2005) including SLMSs, guidance counselors, and administrators. North Carolina has the most National Board Certified educators with 8,280 and Georgia is seventh with 1,780 (Top Ten States by Total NBCTs, 2005). This dramatic increase is largely attributed to the incentives that many states and districts have adopted for candidates who successfully achieve National Board Certification. These states recognize the benefits of the National Board Certification process and regard the



financial cost as an investment in their students. Many states pay at least a portion of the \$2,300 application fee and expenses for candidates who successfully achieve certification as well as offer state and local salary supplements. With over 40,000 educators having already earned National Board Certification, at a cost of \$2,300 per applicant, NBPTS has taken in over \$92 million in application fees. This estimate does not take into account the \$300 retake fee a candidate has to pay for each of the ten sections of the portfolio if they did not pass the first and/or second time. In 2005, the application fee increased from \$2,300 to \$2,600 so future costs will be higher.

Currently all 50 states and approximately 544 local school districts, including the District of Columbia, offer at least one type of financial incentive and/or some type of formalized support for educators to obtain National Board Certification (About NBPTS, 2005). Two of the more generous direct financial incentives are in North Carolina, which has a twelve percent increase in their base pay and in Florida, which offers a 10% pay increase as well as an opportunity to earn an extra 10% increase for mentoring educators who do not hold National Board Certification for an equivalent of an additional twelve workdays.

Many districts also provide other costly incentives to candidates undergoing the process such as release time and preparation assistance. In Georgia, National Board Certification provides all the Professional Learning Units (PLUs) for renewal for the state certificate. Another added incentive in Georgia is that gaining the certification prior to taking InTech exempts an educator from taking that required course. Georgia provides two release days during the school year that the candidate is undergoing the process. Georgia also provides free assistance during the process by such means as paying

facilitators to offer The Knowledgeable Teacher course for free to any candidates who want to participate. This course provides guidance for meeting all the standards required by NBPTS as well as technical support for the video production and entry writing process.

Using the average teacher salary in Georgia for 2004-2005 of approximately \$45,848 (Average Teacher Salary 2004-2005, 2005), each educator with National Board Certification received an average of \$4,500 plus the cost of the application fees and preparation expenses which are estimated at about \$5,000 per individual. Thus, over the ten year life of the certificate Georgia pays on average approximately \$50,000 for each educator with the certification. Critics have questioned the expenditure of state and district money for educators to undergo the process as well as the additional incentives the certified educators receive. Due to the high retention rates of National Board Certified educators, the costly issue of educator turnover is lowered thus offsetting the financial investment associated with certification

Expert educators were studied during this research to ensure quality programs are analyzed. Research on National Board Certified educators provided valuable information on expert educators:

- The quality of the educator in the classroom is an important factor for predicting student achievement.
- Quality educators can make the difference of a full year's learning growth in students.
- The National Board Certification process is successful in identifying the more effective educators among applicants to the program.

- National Board Certified educators' students showed more improvement on standardized end of the year tests than educators who were not certified. Thus, educators who undergo the National Board Certification process make a difference in the classroom.

### The Total Educator

Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) define the four aspects of the total educator as

- 1) The educator's purpose
- 2) The educator as a person
- 3) The organizational context in which the educator works
- 4) The culture of the school. (p. 18)

Fullan and Hargreaves argue that these four important aspects have been overlooked in education research. Fullan and Hargreaves are noted experts and leaders in educator development and school change. While some aspects of the total educator concept may overlap, each of the four parts is discussed separately for purposes of examination and understanding.

### *The SLMS's Purpose*

The first concept of the conceptual framework of the total educator is the SLMS's purpose. The notion of purpose includes professional goals, beliefs, and values including moral purpose, motivations, connections between organizational goals and professional goals, and reasons for seeking growth opportunities such as National Board Certification. Sergiovanni (1992) defined purpose as

What a person believes, values, dreams about and is committed to—the person's personal vision, to use the popular term. But it is more than vision. It is the

person's interior world, which becomes the foundation of her or his reality. (p. 7)

A synthesis of related literature allowed this researcher to identify key indicators of ESLMSs' purpose.

Throughout his works Fullan has built upon his concept of moral purpose of educators. He defined moral purpose as the "emotion and hope that is at the heart of good teaching" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998, p. vi). Fullan (1993) described four moral purposes that he believed all educators should have: facilitating critical enculturation, providing access to knowledge, building an effective educator-student connection, and practicing good stewardship. SLMSs with moral purpose work to make a difference in the "life-chances of all students" (Fullan, 1999, p. 1). Educators must go beyond the day-to-day classroom teaching and go deeper into the students' lives in order to make a difference. Moral purpose can only be achieved by making "a difference in the lives of students regardless of background, and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies" (p. 4).

The literature reviewed supports the idea that a SLMS's beliefs influence the practices that occur in their school. Pajares (1996) indicated that educators' beliefs should be a focus of educational research because the results and conclusions can form educational practice. SLMSs make daily choices about learning and instruction that take place in their school. Choosing to lecture, discuss, facilitate, construct, direct, or use a method to allow for learning to take place is grounded in the beliefs, knowledge, and experiences of each SLMS. Tobin and LaMaster (1995) argued that educator beliefs are the driving force behind educational practice and can be interpreted as what, why, and how an educator goes about accomplishing a goal.

“Beliefs about teaching and learning influence instructional practices and student’ goals in the classroom and are important for understanding how to create learning environments focused on mastery” (Deemer, 2004, p.88). Although all educators have personal values and beliefs that affect their educational practices, it is generally considered bad practice to intentionally express and impress values and beliefs on students. Curricular concerns over teaching values and beliefs in schools probably date from the beginning of formal education. As can be noted from Aristotle’s (c. 384-322 B.C.) statements,

Not everyone conceives that the young should learn the same things either with a view to virtue or with a view to the best way of life, nor is it evident whether it is more appropriate that it be with a view to the mind or with a view to the character of the soul. Investigation on the basis of the education that is current yields confusion and it is not at all clear whether one should have training in things useful for life, things contributing to virtue, or extraordinary things; for all of these have obtained some judges. Concerning the things relating to virtue, nothing is agreed. Indeed, to start with, not everyone honors the same virtues, so it is reasonable to expect them to differ as well in regard to the training in it. (1981, p. 229-230)

Motivation, derived from the Latin word “movere” which means ‘to move,’ refers to “those processes within an individual that stimulate behavior and channel it in ways that should benefit the organization as a whole” (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991, p. 89). In addition, a motivated person may be defined as hard working or a person who “keeps at his or her work; and the person directs his or her behavior toward appropriate goals”

(Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991, p. 89). Motivated SLMSs are educators who love their profession and this motivation, in turn, motivates student learning (Czubaj, 1996).

According to Firestone and Pennel (1993), committed and motivated educators maximize their contributions to their students and schools. “The committed person believes strongly in the object’s goals and values, complies with orders and expectations voluntarily, exerts considerable effort beyond minimal expectations for the good of the object and strongly desires to remain affiliated with the object” (Firestone & Pennell, 1993, p. 491). Firestone and Pennell further argued that committed educators who believe they are doing meaningful work are intrinsically motivated.

Research indicates that educators committed to their students are described as those who have high efficacy, high expectation, and organizational commitment. There is methodical evidence that educators who have a strong sense of their own efficacy, who believe they can make a real difference in their students’ lives, truly do make a difference in their lives (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Garrison (1997) insisted that education is first and foremost a caring profession and motivation for most educators is making their students’ lives better. Garrison (1997) defined the education profession as “a call to respond to the needs, desires and interests of children” (p. 73). Spence (2002) indicated that deciding to go into the education profession “must come from a moral imperative to ensure the success of all children and from a commitment to social justice. To be an effective educator today requires far more dedication, talent, and commitment than ever before” (p. 142). Atkinson’s (2000) research showed that motivated SLMSs encourage their students and believe they can produce positive outcomes with their position by setting high expectations.

Numerous pieces of scholarly literature exist that further the understanding of the purpose of education and details about educator's personal purposes. Liston (2001) advocated that the purpose of education is to make meaning out of our world and she insisted that 'joy' is needed to accomplish this. The research showed that learning takes place through experience and that SLMSs can facilitate learning by building knowledge on student's prior knowledge and experiences. Expert media specialists strongly support the idea that students build/construct new learning through active participation in learning activities that build on prior knowledge and experience. Learning something new or attempting to understand something already known in greater depth is not a linear process. When trying to make sense of things people have to use their prior experience and the first-hand knowledge gained from new explorations. The SLMSs facilitates the learning process by co-teaching and collaborating with teachers as well as working with individual students on their journey to become life-long learners. The structure of the learning environment of the media centers should promote opportunities and events that encourage and support the building of understanding.

#### *The SLMS as a Person*

The second concept of this total educator conceptual framework addresses the SLMS as a person. The notion of a SLMS as a person includes attitude, comfort levels, personal goals and motivations, connections between organizational goals and personal goals, emotional intelligence, recognition of strengths and skills, and identification of areas for improvement and needs. In recent research the quest has been to define and quantify the impact SLMSs have on student achievement, thus the SLMSs' growth and personal development have been overlooked due to its qualitative nature.

Maslow (1943; 1954) has outlined levels of needs of every human, including physical, psychological, and social needs. The basis of Maslow's theory is that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs and that certain lower needs will have to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied. According to Maslow, there are general types of needs (physiological, safety, love, and esteem) that must be satisfied before a person can act unselfishly. He called these needs "deficiency needs." As long as we are motivated to satisfy these cravings, we are moving towards growth, toward self-actualization. Satisfying needs is healthy, while preventing gratification makes us sick or leads us to act evilly.

Educators do not work in a vacuum. Educators have lives and personal needs outside of their eight hour work day in their school. Hargreaves (1993) indicated that educators need self-awareness:

Putting an emphasis on the teacher as a person, assists the teachers in processes of self-understanding which are grounded in their life and work. It helps others to work with teachers more effectively. And it gives much needed credibility and dignity to teachers' own personal and practical knowledge of their work in relation to the pronouncements of policy makers and the theoretical claims of the academy. (p. 9)

Current research and literature has indicated self-knowledge and self-awareness are needed in order to become an expert educator, such as an ESLMS. Palmer (1998) maintained that educators must know themselves in order to know their students and lack of self-knowledge may impede personal growth and influence on students. The relationship between educators' epistemological world views and educational practices



were investigated by Schraw and Olafson. They found that educators “endorse a variety of individual epistemological beliefs yet seem far less aware of their overarching philosophy” (Schraw & Olafson, 2002, p. 25). Schraw and Olafson found that there are “important discrepancies between what teachers say and do” (p.26). They concluded that teachers often want to teach one way but in practice teach another way due to lack of experience, limited instructional time, and mandated curriculum and testing.

Garrison (1997) concluded that educators must reflect upon their practices in order to grow as professionals and to increase their effectiveness. ESLMSs look for evidence and feedback about how well they are performing their job and honestly examine how they can do things better. Garrison (1997) claimed “the most important thing to know is ourselves” (p. 84). Reflection allows SLMSs to identify strengths and weaknesses in their daily work and individual media programs in order to overcome any weaknesses that keep them from fully implementing their roles. Palmer (1998) reflected,

. . . knowing my students and my subject depends heavily on self-knowledge.

When I do not know myself, I cannot know who my students are. I will see them through a glass darkly in the shadows of my unexamined life—and when I cannot see them clearly, I cannot teach them well. When I do not know myself, I cannot know my subject—not at the deepest levels of embodied personal meaning. I will know it only abstractly, from a distance, a congeries of concepts as far removed from the world as I am from personal truth. (p. 2)

Palmer suggested that the quality of selfhood impacts the way educators relate to their students and colleagues. Palmer advocated educators need to connect with themselves through emotional and spiritual development in order to become expert educators.

SLMSs must be aware of their emotions and understand how those emotions can impact their students and colleagues. Emotional intelligence allows people to discern how to handle emotions in order to relate to others effectively. Fullan (1999) specified that emotional intelligence is needed in order to become an expert educator, including an ESLMS. Fullan (1999) discussed the characteristics of emotionally intelligent people:

Better able to find solitude when necessary, seek support from and give help to others, persist in the face of challenges, identify with and are sustained by a higher goal (moral purpose) and so on. Emotional intelligence at work is absolutely crucial for effectiveness in complex environments. (p. 25)

In addition, Briskin (1998) advocated a need to bring soul into the workplace indicating the gap that exists between the two worlds of work and soul. He described soul as the multiplicity of selves within one person. Briskin (1998) stated “the soul represents the mysterious, multifaceted dimension of our personality, never fully known, yet a source of vital influence” (p. 5).

### *The Organizational Context of the School*

The third notion of this conceptual framework of the total educator is the real world context in which the ESLMS works. This study furthers understanding in order to answer the critical questions—“What kind of context is most likely to be supportive of growth and improvement? What kind of context is most likely to acknowledge, respect and build upon their [educators’] purposes?” (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 36). The organizational context of a school includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work, and

organizational goals. Schools are complex environments which influence a SLMS's purpose as well as who they are as a person. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) proposed "we need an ecological understanding of teaching—of how teaching develops to suit the environment and in what ways we can and should change that environment if we want to change what goes on there" (p. 32). The school context is central to a SLMS's development, as can be seen from multiple studies and articles on this topic. In a study of educator development, McNergney and Carrier (1981) set forth the premise that education should be guided by the Behavior-Person-Environment (B-P-E) conceptual method. They concluded that behavior was determined neither by the environment alone nor solely by the characteristics of the educator but was dependent upon the person in combination with the environment. Senge (1990) indicated that organizational structure influences people and people influence organization. According to Bolman and Deal (1991), "organizations are created almost exclusively to accomplish goals. Goals are the conceptions of desired end states. They are projections of what the organization wants to produce or reach" (p. 73).

Most United States schools today promote curriculum and agendas that encourage their staff to 'teach to the test' in order to obtain Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Students must know how to problem solve which often involves imagination and creativity, in order to survive in our ever changing world that constantly presents us with new problems and challenges. Students need to know more than just standard, memorized facts. A SLMS can provide teachers with innovative teaching strategies, a variety of resources in multiple formats, expertise teaching information literacy skills, and much more.

Garrison (1997) declared, “Need, desire and selective interest are part of the background of any inquiry; so, too, is creative imagination” (p. xv). Yet today’s era of accountability immobilizes educators from encouraging the very thinking skills needed to problem solve by prescribing ‘teacher-proof’ curriculum. Today’s educational system stifles students’ imagination, creativity, and individuality by implementing standardized curriculum that does not allow the reflective time needed for the educator to encourage these valuable elements in their students. SLMSs have more freedom than classroom teachers in regards to lesson plans and instruction because there is not a set curriculum for information literacy skills and technology skills. There are state standards for these areas but no set curriculum has been developed, yet.

Amber Winkler (2002) investigated standardized testing and the practices of the veteran and novice educators. Her investigation indicated that the belief of the ability of the educator to positively affect learning was negatively influenced by testing. She concluded that “when educators like what they are doing, that enthusiasm often leads to higher student achievement and increased time-on-task” (Winkler, 2002, p. 8). Classroom teachers are currently under tremendous pressure for all their students to meet or exceed standards on all standardized tests. SLMSs are not held to the same accountability levels as the classroom teachers for individual student’s performances but they are affected by the school’s status in regards to AYP. SLMSs know that their jobs are at risk if their school does not meet AYP. All SLMSs want to increase the student achievement at their schools. Thus, they need to implement the most effective library media program possible that influences all students’ learning in the media center as well as in each classroom within the school.

The idea of a student-centered curriculum allows students to pursue their own interests and needs. “The expansiveness of a teacher’s selfhood may be ‘measured’ not by teacher evaluation instruments but by the interests he [or she] takes in his [or her] students” (Garrison, 1997, p. 41). The emphasis should be on what students need to do in order to learn rather than on what educators need to do in order to teach. Education in a democratic society should provide students with active participation in learning, social relationships, and freedom and choice to pursue their own interests. Effective school library media programs can serve as an equalizer for students without access to technology and resources at home, by providing equitable opportunities during the school day and outside of it to use resources and pursue their own interests.

As indicated in the principles of *Information Power*, education should not be isolated in schools but should be part of the community. Just as teachers do not teach in isolation, student learning is not totally school-based. Schools are a social institution and education is a process of living. Socialization is as important as the subject matter taught. Students today must know how to access and use the technology and information available as well as how to use strategies to adapt to changing times. Students must learn how to learn and find information for themselves. Since SLMSs work with every staff member and student in a school they are in the unique position to influence curriculum and student learning within the school. Curriculum should be approached from the proposition for “*currere*” (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002, p. 515). *Currere* implies curriculum is fueled by the desire that students can “sketch the relations among school knowledge, life history and intellectual development in ways that might function self-transformatively” (Pinar et. al., 2002, p. 515).

Curriculum and student learning should be viewed as a process not an end product. Emphasis should be placed on the interactions among educators, students, parents, and knowledge rather than on a syllabus and test score. As Freire (1983) stated,

The problem-posing educator constantly re-forms his reflections in the reflection of the students. The students—no longer docile listeners—are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. . . .Whereas banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the submersion of consciousness; the latter strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality. (p. 68)

Critical thinking, listening, and dialogue are important components of what should be happening in classrooms and media programs. Effective school library media programs should promote these vital components within their media centers and schools.

Noddings (1992) advanced the notion that our lives and environment are interdependent and it is crucial that schools teach children about caring for animals, plants, and the earth. In *The Challenge to Care in Schools*, Noddings (1992) specified that educators must be empowered if they are to in turn empower students. “The challenge is to improve education in the only way it can be—through the day-to-day actions of empowered students” (Fullan, 1997, p. 46). SLMSs should be willing to discuss students’ problems and be willing to help them learn methods of investigation even if they have no personal expertise in the specific area that students need help. “Library media specialists who understand the importance of the whole child recognize that today’s youth need strong and supportive school library media centers and public

libraries” (Jones, 2006, p. 24). Questions that should be of concern to SLMSs include

How can my subject serve the needs of each of these students? How can I teach so as to capitalize on their intelligences and affiliations? How can I complete the caring connection with as many as possible? How can I help them to care for themselves, other humans, animals, the natural environment, the human-made environment and the wonderful world of ideas? (Noddings, 1992, p. 179)

SLMSs must have patience and should take time out of their busy schedules to listen to their students to show they care about them and their learning. SLMSs should “complete the caring connection with as many as possible” (Noddings, 1992, p. 179).

Dropout students report that the one factor which might have prevented them leaving school early was the feeling that there was one adult in the school who knew them well and cared for them (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996). “For many students establishing relationships of respect and care is a necessary foundation for intellectual as well as social development” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998, p. 31). Noddings (1992) observed,

The single greatest complaint of students in schools is, “they don’t care.” . . . They feel alienated from their school work, separated from the adults who try to teach them and adrift in a world perceived as baffling and hostile. At the same time, most teachers work very hard and express deep concern for their students. In an important sense, teachers do care, but they are unable to make the connections that would complete caring relationships with their students. (p. 2)

David Hargreaves (1982) likened schools to overcrowded airports where students have to rush between classes like dashing between flights with no true place to belong.

“With the children of many of today’s postmodern families—families that often

are fractured, poor, single-parented—this burden of caring is becoming even greater” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 53). Library media centers can become a refuge for troubled, alienated, or academically unsuccessful students. Jami Jones (2005, 2006) argued that SLMSs can strengthen children by promoting resilience. Resilient people are able to be successful despite any challenges or hardships they face. “Resiliency research supports what library media specialists have known all along: the media center is not only the heart, but also the soul of the school” (Jones, 2005, p.27).

Dewey believed schools should serve as a “means for bringing people and their ideas and beliefs together, in such ways as will lessen friction and instability and introduce deeper sympathy and wider understanding” (Dewey as cited in Spring, 2000, p. 230). Communication and dialogue are essential components of any school. Thinking is often done singularly but the content of the thought should be social (Greene, 1989). Dialogue must be open-ended and sincere as Freire (1983) encouraged in all educators. He thought of schools as a miniature community that encourages individuals to work toward an ideal democratic society.

### *The Culture of the School*

The last concept of this conceptual framework of the total educator is the culture of the school including dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMS form within the school between staff and students. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs and their development. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) defined the culture of a school as “the way we do things and relate to each other” (p. 37). Peterson and Deal



(1998) elaborate on the concept of culture with their definition of culture:

Culture is the underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions and rituals that build up over time as people work together, solve problems and confront challenges. This set of informal expectations and values shapes how people think, feel and act in schools. (p. 28)

School culture and organizational context are closely related and thus have concepts that overlap. Bolman and Deal (1991) articulated “organizations are inhabited by individuals who have needs, feelings and prejudices. They have both skills and limitations” (p. 15). Peterson and Deal (1998) identified that many toxic cultures exist in schools. These cultures are pervaded with negative values, hopelessness, and unproductiveness. They also described the characteristics of positive cultures:

- Staff has a sense of shared purpose, where they pour their hearts into education.
- A social network of information, support, and community history exist.
- Rituals and traditions celebrate student accomplishment, parental commitment, and staff initiative.
- Norms of collegiality, improvement, and hard work exist.
- Joy and humor are present. (Peterson & Deal, 1998, p. 2)

During this study, the SLMS’s perception of the culture of their school was analyzed. Their perceptions of their power to make key decisions within their school were examined. Literature shows that empowerment within a school is vital for ESLMSs development. Blase and Blase (1994) cited Melenyzer’s definition of empowerment,

The opportunity and confidence to act upon one’s ideas and to influence the way one performs in one’s profession. True empowerment leads to increased

professionalism as teachers assume responsibility for an involvement in the decision making process. (p. 16)

A major component of school culture involves power and authority relationships.

Education reform within a school involves empowerment or transformative hope.

Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) indicated that as educators, SLMSs need to empower students:

- SLMSs can empower students to teach themselves to become rigorous scholars
- SLMSs can empower students to make sense of the mass of information with which they are confronted in hyper reality
- SLMSs can empower students to understand regardless of their social location questions of power and justice
- SLMSs can empower students to gain social mobility from marginalized and disempowered locales
- SLMSs can empower students to become good citizens, agents of democracy in an antidemocratic era
- SLMSs can empower students to make sense of complex real-life situations from which advocates of childhood innocence might try to protect them
- and SLMSs can empower students to communicate their insights as children unabashedly to a variety of audiences. (p. 42)

School success depends on quality of relations not on teaching strategies, methods, or test scores. Sidorkin (2002) argued that relationships with students and colleagues are as important as any information taught. Educational and societal changes

are needed that emphasize relationships in the classroom and out. Sidorkin (2002) stated,

Once we can perceive relations as a text and actions as a context, we can see a very different picture of education. What we do with students is not that important; what sort of relations we build with and among them becomes very important. (p. 85)

Most SLMSs care about their students or they would not be able to overlook the daily obstacles (i.e. workload, time constraints, NCLB legislation, and so forth) facing them. It is not enough to care but SLMSs must take the time to relate to students on a personal level to **show** they care. Positive relationships between SLMSs and students are vital in order for SLMSs to be successful in motivating students to become lifelong learners. Sidorkin deemed the lack of motivation in learning today is due to the lack of economic value of school work. Sidorkin discussed how much of students' work in school is simply thrown away because it has no economic value. Because there is no value placed on learning there is often little incentive to learn. Students must see a need for information in their lives.

Relationships can be positive incentives to learn for many students. The literature indicated that positive educator-student relationships is a means by which educators can increase the likelihood students will work harder to reach higher levels of academic performance (Matthews & Holmes, 1992). To develop educator-student relationships, the most effective means are frequent interactions that ultimately result in the creation of positive feelings of the participants (Matthews & Holmes, 1992). According to Rogers and Renard (1999), the educator-student relationship parallels the principal-staff relationship. Just as educators must develop positive relationships with students to

promote student motivation, the principal must build positive relationships with the school staff to encourage successful staff motivation. Media specialists who demonstrate they have something to learn as well as something to contribute can establish better learning relationships with students, teachers, and parents. “It is impossible to accomplish the deep purposes of student learning unless teachers are continuous learners themselves” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998, p. 48).

Sidorkin (2002) argued that learning and “the continuity of human relations does not stop at school walls” (p. 116). As indicated by the Library Bill of Rights, democracy and social relationships should be vital issues for SLMSs and all members of our society. All educators as well as all members of society should work to promote the ideals of democracy if we ever hope to bring about a more humane and equal school system and society. Education should be tailored to the student in order to produce students that are self-actualized as well as productive citizens. Students should not all receive the same education if they are to reach their full capacities.

#### Summary

No longer called “librarians,” media specialists are expected to be program administrators, instructional partners, information specialists, and teachers. In the role of program administrator, the media specialist among other tasks develops and enforces library and school policies; conducts media program activities such as sponsoring programs to motivate reading; supervises volunteers and other media center staff; participates in public relation activities; maintains accurate material inventory; attends staff and committee meetings; selects and orders materials; reviews and manages yearly budgets; processes materials for circulation; and oversees the circulation and automation

systems. As an instructional partner, the media specialist performs various tasks including participation in curriculum design and assessment; helping teachers to develop instructional activities; providing expertise in materials and technology; and translating curricular needs into library media program goals and objectives. In the role of information specialist, the media specialist provides assistance in selecting and locating materials appropriate to an individual's needs; provides guidance in the use of materials and information technologies in the school; evaluates the library collection on a given topic; demonstrates leadership and expertise in use of technology and resources; and explores resources available outside the library walls, such as Internet resources and other libraries' materials. As a teacher, the media specialist performs many tasks that may include instructing patrons in the use of the media center; supporting in-service training for school staff; teaching reading skills; and providing individual or group instruction in information literacy skills.

The research has shown that school library media centers are powerful forces in the lives of children. Effective school library media centers have been shown to make a measurable difference on student achievement and learning; to positively impact students' self-esteem; and to increase students' desire to read voluntarily. None of these benefits are noted in schools without highly, qualified library media specialists. Despite all the research performed suggesting the positive effects of the media center on the learning community, several barriers exist that hinder media specialists from fully implementing their roles. Research shows that the most commonly reported barriers were lack of time, lack of funding and resources, lack of support from administration and staff, lack of clerical staff, use of a fixed schedule, and too many schools or students to provide

for.

Research on the roles and development of ESLMSs requires more than a brief look at their qualification and training. In order to obtain a detailed analysis of SLMSs who excel in their field, a holistic examination of the total educator is required. The four aspects of the total educator development are the SLMS's purpose, the SLMS as a person, the organizational context in which the SLMS works, and the culture of the school. The notion of purpose includes professional goals, beliefs, and values including moral purpose, motivations, connections between organizational goals and professional goals, and reasons for seeking growth opportunities such as National Board Certification. The notion of a SLMS as a person includes attitude, comfort levels, personal goals and motivations, connections between organizational goals and personal goals, emotional intelligence, recognition of strengths and skills, and identification of areas for improvement and needs. In the quest to define and quantify the role of SLMSs' in student achievement, the SLMSs' growth and personal development have been overlooked due to its qualitative nature. The organizational context of a school includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work, and organizational goals. Schools are complex environments which influence a SLMS's purpose as well as who they are as a person. The last concept of this conceptual framework of the total educator is the culture of the school including dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMS form within the school between staff

and students. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs and their development.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology and study design. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the SLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the SLMS works in, and the culture of the SLMS's school.

The researcher used a holistic examination of the 'total educator' as a point of departure for the research. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) defined the four aspects of the total educator as

- 1) The educator's purpose
- 2) The educator as a person
- 3) The organization context in which the educator works
- 4) The culture of the school. (p. 18)

This concept of 'total educator' as developed by Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) formed the foundation for this investigation. Earlier examination of SLMS development has not accounted for these four aspects of development. This chapter is organized into several sections: the statement of the problem; the research questions; definition of terms; the design of the study; the rationale for case study methodology; the population and sample; and the summary.

#### Statement of the Problem

Media specialists' voices are often not heard yet they fill a valuable role in the



school. The power of voice is needed by SLMSs in order for these professionals to come to the forefront as effective educators and leaders in the school as well as to help bring about change in education and society. By hearing the ‘voices’ of the three ESLMSs in this study other professionals in the field are encouraged to also let their voices be heard. This study should encourage SLMSs to strive to fully utilize their position as leaders and change agents within the school and society. Understanding the development and role of ESLMSs encourages other educators within a school to utilize their services. The goal of this research was not to test a hypothesis regarding the phenomenon, but to understand, describe, and interpret the phenomenon—the perspectives of three National Board Certified SLMSs of their role and development as current educators in Georgia public High Schools.

By studying National Board Certified SLMSs, this study seeks to increase the understanding of why SLMSs put forth the enormous amount of effort and work needed to achieve such a distinction. SLMSs do not perform their jobs in isolation. Context is critical to the development of SLMSs. The organizational context of a school includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work, and organizational goals. The culture of a school considers dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMS form within the school between staff and students. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs’ role and their development.

## Research Questions

The overarching focus for this study was an exploration of the total educator concept in the development of National Board Certified SLMSs. Yin (1994) suggested that “how and why” questions are more explanatory and supports case studies as a preferred research strategy. The research questions in this study ask how, or in what ways ESLMS perceive themselves, their purpose, and the organizational context and culture of their school. The intention of this research was to answer four research questions:

- How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?
- How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

## Design of the Study

This qualitative study was conducted through the use of questionnaires, analysis of federal and state school reports, interviews and analysis of an online discussion forum. A pilot study was conducted to verify the clarity of the questionnaire and interview questions and to identify problems such as accuracy of estimated time to complete. One National Board Certified SLMS, who was not selected to participate in the study, was given the questionnaire and participated in the pilot interview. The volunteer for the pilot study was asked to identify any questions that were unclear or misleading. The wording of the questionnaire and interview protocol was modified where necessary for content and clarity.

Methods, data collection, and data analysis took place simultaneously in this qualitative research. Three high school media specialists currently employed in Georgia

public schools whom were deemed expert by having earned National Board Certification in Library Media in the past four years were selected to participate in this study.

Before the day of the interview, a questionnaire was given to each participant to determine their diversity and background (see Appendix D for copy of questionnaire).

The questionnaire considered numerous qualitative, descriptive variables:

- highest degree held by the media specialist and when it was earned
- reason for pursuing advanced degree
- number of years of professional experience as a SLMS
- number of years in their current school
- experience as a SLMS at elementary and middle school levels and preference of level
- number of years of experience as a classroom teacher (if any)
- subject and grade level taught (if any) before becoming a media specialist
- areas of certification
- number and types of other personnel working in the media center
- type of scheduling used in the media center (flexible, fixed, or combination)
- type of scheduling used in the school (block or traditional) and periods during a normal school day
- type of primary instruction used in the school (direct, resource, or combination)
- type of primary instruction used by the media specialist and amount of time spent on instruction
- perception of their familiarity and implementation of the four roles of a SLMS as defined by *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*

- identification of barriers to full implementation of the four roles
- staff developments or trainings offered by the media specialist
- required extended days and hours of work
- use of lesson plans and plan books
- identification and role of direct supervisor
- additional workload outside of the media center and outside of the school day
- the role of the library media specialist in school activities through committee work and in reading promotion within the school
- the media specialist's role with technology and Web site creation and maintenance in the school
- role of technology within the school
- perceived personal and professional benefits of achieving National Board Certification
- awards and/or accomplishments the media specialist has been recognized for besides National Board Certification
- level of willingness to transfer schools in order to receive a pay raise
- experience supervising and mentoring other educators in practice and in pursuing National Board Certification.

Identified strengths of questionnaires include their accuracy, ability to be generalized, and convenience. An identified weakness of using questionnaires in this study is that the researcher relied totally on the honesty and accuracy of the participants' responses.

The questionnaire and analysis of state and federal reports were used to identify relationships between the participants' background and their specific school setting. The

questionnaire was also used to establish areas of expertise in regards to subject areas, grade levels, and mentoring. The state and federal data records included school characteristics, teacher salary scale, and community economic data. Various school characteristics were obtained from the state and federal records: Adequate Yearly Progress improvement status, school enrollment, grade range for school, number of staff members, performance on the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) and on the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT), average American College Test (ACT) and SAT scores, graduation rate, attendance rate, enrollment in compensatory programs, percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, and racial/ethnic make-up of the school. The teacher salary scale was used to determine the ESLMS's salary level according to years of experience and degrees obtained. Several community characteristics were gathered: demographic location of the school in the state, classification of the community where the school is located (i.e. rural, urban, suburban), population of the area that the school serves, racial/ethnic make-up of the community the school serves, education level of the community, and poverty level of the community.

Artifacts were collected that provided insight into the phenomenon of ESLMSs' role and development. Several informative artifacts were collected from each school:

- copies of a collection analysis of the media center in which the ESLMS works (including number of resources in the collection, average check out rate, average age of the collection, etc.)
- copies of rules and procedures (or media center handbook if available) for the ESLMS's media center
- copies of the ESLMS's lesson plans and/or schedule books

- copies of syllabi and/or handouts for any professional development courses or training the ESLMS conducted
- copies of the school improvement plan
- copies of any flyers or newsletters that the ESLMSs produced for staff or the public
- copies of minutes from meetings that the ESLMS led or participated in
- copies of the ESLMS's media center Web site.

All of these artifacts were collected from each of the three schools that the expert school library specialist works in, if they were available.

The questionnaire, analysis of state and federal reports, and examination of artifacts were used to create rich, detailed school portraits of the three schools in which the ESLMSs currently work. Studying SLMSs whom are currently working in public schools provided the clearest picture of the reality that is present in schools today, at least of their perception of it. A portraiture, as defined by Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997), is a story that captures the “richness, complexity and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural context, conveying the perspectives of the people who are negotiating those experiences” (p. 3). Lawrence–Lightfoot described portraitists as researcher who “seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their visions—their authority, knowledge, and wisdom” (1984, p. xv). The school portraits in this study should “create a narrative that is at once complex, provocative and inviting, that attempts to be holistic, revealing the dynamic interaction of values, personality, structure and history” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 11).

The school portraits were important as forms of inquiry for this study. The school portraits allowed the researcher to analyze relationships between the role and the development of ESLMSs and their specific school culture and organization. Analyses of federal and state reports and artifacts were used to provide a detailed description of the schools as well as to identify discrepancies between documented reports of their schools and the ESLMS's perceptions of their schools. School portraits are important in terms of personal knowledge of the participants because by reading their school portrait the participants could learn valuable information about their colleagues, students, community members, administrators, and school environment. All educators should be knowledgeable about these characteristics if they are to provide learning opportunities that benefit each student. To provide students the best individual learning environment, their cultural backgrounds and differences need to be embraced just as different educational strategies and techniques need to be implemented for different students.

Interviewing was the primary tool used in this investigation. Patton (1980) contended that the purpose of interviewing, "is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. . .is *not* to put things in someone's mind but rather to access the perspective of the person being interviewed" (p. 196). The interview consisted of thirty-four open ended questions and took approximately one and a half hours to complete. The interview was used to determine the ESLMS's perception of their purpose, perception of their development as a person, perception of the organizational context in which they work, and perception of the culture of their school. The interview was used to obtain information to analyze the four areas of the total educator concept:

### **The ESLMS's Purpose**

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their purpose as a SLMS
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their contributions to student achievement in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to encourage others to enter the media specialist profession
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their professional goals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of whether there is a connection between their professional goals, personal goals, and their specific school's goals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their motivations for pursuing National Board Certification
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to encourage others to pursue National Board Certification
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to contribute to the implementation of an exemplary media program
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of rewards and benefits for exemplary work within their school

### **The ESLMS as a Person**

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their purpose for going into the profession
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their current position as a lifelong career
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their comfort level with each of the



four roles of a media specialist as defined in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the impact the successful completion of the National Board Certification process had on their professional practices and on them personally as individuals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their plans for future professional and personal growth
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their personal strengths, unique skills and experiences that contribute to the effectiveness of their school

#### **Organizational Context of the ESLMS's School**

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their role in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the benefit of their role to the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their expectations and evaluation of their performance
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their role as a leader in the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of systems of support within the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their school's goals and the school's decision making system
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of collaboration, decision making, and communication systems in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the importance of their role to the daily functioning of their school

### **Culture of the ESLMS's School**

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their motives for working in the specific school they currently work in
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the dominant beliefs and values present in their school and connections between these and their personal beliefs and values
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of systems of empowerment within the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of authority, community, and collegiality in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's own perception of their school's culture as well as their perception of students' and teachers' view of the school's culture

Face to face interviewing was one of the main sources of information for this study. Interviews can be in the form of open-ended (free flowing conversation), focused (answers to predetermined questions), structured (conversation that flows according to a predetermined format), or a mixture of the three. This study included a structured interview format. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) asserted that “when the interviewer controls the content too rigidly, when the subject cannot tell his or her story personally, in his or her words, the interview falls out of the qualitative range of interviewing” (p. 136).

All of the interviews were taped on audiocassettes, transcribed, and then analyzed. The use of tape recorders during the interviews was beneficial to the researcher to ensure accuracy of data collected. Cole and Knowles (2000) suggest the use of audio taping and stated that “replaying the conversation after the session is often like listening to it for the

first time: it is amazing how much the human ear and brain can miss and how much memory can distort” (p. 91). The interviewee was informed of the recording and agreed to it by signing the Informed Consent Document (see Appendix C). The audiocassette tapes were stored in a locked office cabinet and were immediately erased upon transcription, within one week after the interview. Immediately after completing the transcription, the transcribed interviews were sent to each participant to ensure the accuracy of responses was conveyed in the transcription. All participants had the opportunity to change their answers or elaborate on any responses. During the interview the participant’s perspective on the phenomenon of interest—their view of their role and development as ESLMSs—unfolded as the participant dialogued with the researcher. In-depth interviewing with a focus on the phenomenological allowed for “the assumption that there is a structure and essence to shared experiences that can be narrated” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 26).

Yin (1994) suggested that researchers using interviewing as a strategy must possess or acquire several skills: the ability to ask good questions and to interpret the responses, superb listening skills, an understanding of the issues being studied, they must be unbiased by preconceived notions, and they must be adaptive and flexible. The researcher should convey the attitude that the participant’s views are valuable and useful and the researcher should be able to gently probe for elaboration. It was mandatory for the researcher to establish rapport with the participants so that they would feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. Oakley (1981) acknowledged “in most cases, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is nonhierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to

invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship” (p. 41).

Strengths of interviewing include the ability to gather a wide variety of information across a number of subjects, ability to gather large amounts of data quickly, and immediate follow-up and clarification are possible. Limitations of interviewing include that the interviewer may not properly comprehend answers given, the interviewee may be unwilling or may be uncomfortable sharing all that the interviewer hopes to explore, cooperation is essential because interviews involve personal interaction and the interviewee may have motives for not being truthful during the interview.

Since one-time interviews are limited in the amount of information that can be obtained, this methodology was supplemented with a longer-term (two month) online discussion forum. The forum was used to add depth to the responses obtained from the more structured questionnaires and interviews. During these online discussions, new topics and themes surfaced in areas that were not explored during the interviews. An online group was created using Google Groups. Each of the three participants was assigned a Yahoo electronic mail account with a generic username (i.e. they logged in as Participant1, Participant2, and Participant3) so that their identity would not be revealed to other members of the discussion group. Membership to the group was restricted so that only the three participants and the researcher had access to the discussion board. Each participant was given instructions on how to use and participate in the online discussion forum. Participants were asked to log onto the online discussion forum at least once a week for two months. The participants were asked to post topics and reply to the other participants’ postings as often as possible but not to reveal any personal information or information that could be used to identify them or their schools. During the two months

of the online discussion forum, the researcher proactively elicited responses from participants by summarizing answers given during the interview and on the questionnaire and by asking how the stated perceptions impact practices by the ESLMSs. It is estimated that participants spent approximately four hours actively involved with the discussion group. The amount of time actually spent on the online discussion board depended on the extent of each participant's postings. It is estimated that participants spent a minimum of ten total hours involved in this study. The online discussion board allowed the participants to respond to conclusions drawn by the researcher from the data gathered and to respond to the other participants' answers to the questionnaire and interview questions. This research study made use of the information obtained on the questionnaires, extrapolated from federal and state school reports, acquired during the interviews, obtained during the online discussions, and analyzed from collected artifacts to form a case study for each of the three participants' schools. After findings were recorded and conclusions and recommendations were given, all the participants were provided with the opportunity to respond to or elaborate on the findings and conclusions. During the writing of Chapters 4 and 5, colleagues were called upon to comment on the findings as they emerged.

#### Rationale for Case Study Methodology

Qualitative methodology was well-suited for this study because the purpose of this research was to examine, understand, and describe the total educator development of National Board Certified SLMSs. The goal of this qualitative analysis was a complete, detailed description of a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. Because quantitative researchers have a propensity to draw generalized conclusions they use a

large sample population while qualitative researchers tend to select a small number of participants. Qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with process, rather than outcomes or products.

Merriam (1998) asserted, because the primary instrument in qualitative research is human, “all observations and analyses are filtered through that human beings’ worldview, values, and perspectives” (p. 22). Unlike quantitative research which utilizes methods that allow the researcher to remain detached from the research participants so that the conclusions drawn remain unbiased, this qualitative research allowed the researcher to retain the ‘humanness’ of the participants rather than reducing the participants to statistics and disaggregated data. This qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to keep in mind the inherent subjectivity of human behavior. Peshkin (1988) suggested that researchers monitor themselves as they conduct research by looking for the “warm and cold spots,” and by making note of the areas in which subjectivity may be present by uncovering biases (p. 21). This qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to construct multiple realities which surround a phenomenon. Rather than search for one objective truth, this qualitative research sought understanding of the phenomenon (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), qualitative research has the following five features

1. The natural setting is the data source and the researcher is the key data-collection instrument
2. It attempts primarily to describe and only secondarily to analyze
3. The concern is with process, that is, with what has transpired, as much as with product or outcome

4. Its data are analyzed inductively, as in putting together the parts of a puzzle
5. It is essentially concerned with what things mean, that is, the why as well as the what. (p. 10-34)

A case study design was used for this descriptive research study. Case studies are used to study a particular individual, program, or event in-depth for a defined period of time. Case studies are common in anthropology, sociology, psychology, education, political science, medicine, and law. Even though some social science researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) perceive qualitative and quantitative approaches as incompatible, others (Reichardt & Cook, 1979) deem that skillful researchers can successfully combine both approaches. While case studies may include both qualitative and quantitative research methods, this particular case study focused on qualitative research strategies.

Qualitative case studies are widespread throughout the field of education. Yin (1994) defined case study as a research process, while Wolcott (1994) defined the case study as “an end-product of field-oriented research” (p. 36). Merriam (1998) conceived the case as what can be “fenced in” to study (p. 27). Thus, the case becomes a bounded system or entity such as a student, a teacher, a principal, or a school. The three National Board Certified high school SLMSs that were studied represent three separate cases as well as one bounded case. Case study research derived from multiple data sources and sites are variously termed collective case studies (Stake, 1995), cross-case studies, multi-case or multi-site studies, or comparative case studies (Merriam, 1998).

Merriam (1998) suggested three ways that case study researchers could improve the generalization of findings:

1. Provide rich, thick descriptions.
2. Establish the typicality of the case.
3. Conduct a cross-site or cross-case analysis. (p. 177)

Cross-case analysis was utilized to examine data in this study. Lawrence-Lightfoot's (1983) study of six good high schools, a seminal example of a collective case study, provided a model of a cross-case study. In cross-case analysis, the researcher attempts "to build a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the cases will vary in their details" (Yin, 1994, p. 112). Analysis of data revealed similarities and discrepancies between the three cases.

According to Yin (1994), a case study approach is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident. Examining National Board Certified SLMSs' perceptions of their school context and culture as well as their purpose as a SLMS and as a person was inherently a study that needed to be considered within the real life context of the school's organizational context.

Although there is much support of case studies as a valid, reliable qualitative research method, there is also much criticism of this type of research. Case studies are often very detailed, making each case very specific and unique thus hindering it from being generalized on a larger scale. Critics assert that the dynamic nature of human beings render the issue of reliability of case studies problematic. Case studies are criticized as being unscientific because often replication is not possible. In response to this criticism Merriam (1995) argued,

Qualitative researchers are not seeking to establish "laws" in which reliability of



observation and measurements are essential. Rather, qualitative researchers seek to understand the world from the perspectives of those in it. Since there are many perspectives and many possible interpretations, there is no benchmark by which one can take repeated measures and establish reliability in the traditional sense.

(p. 170)

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended that qualitative researchers strive for “dependability” or “consistency” (p. 288). The real goal of qualitative researchers, argued Lincoln and Guba (1985) is not replication, but whether the data collected and the results of the study were consistent.

Case studies are also very personal to the researcher and thus have been criticized as being too subjective. In response to the criticism that qualitative research, such as a case study, is too subjective Myers (2000) argued,

Qualitative studies are tools used in understanding and describing the world of human experience. Since we maintain our humanity throughout the research process, it is largely impossible to escape the subjective experience, even for the most seasoned of researchers. As we proceed through the research process, our humanness informs us and often directs us through such subtleties as intuition or 'aha' moments. Speaking about the world of human experience requires an extensive commitment in terms of time and dedication to process; however, this world is often dismissed as 'subjective' and regarded with suspicion. (para. 1)

Reflexivity is often a problem in case studies because the participant being studied may do or say what the researcher wants to please them or the researcher's presence may cause a change in the participant's behavior. Since case study data is not tested to

discover whether it is statistically significant or due to chance it is often not considered credible research. Case studies are often one of the more time consuming research methods.

Although case study research may be used in its own right, it is more often recommended as part of a multi-method approach ("triangulation") in which the same dependent variable is investigated using multiple additional procedures. In triangulation, multiple sources of data are collected with the hope that they all converge to support a particular hypothesis or theory. Merriam (1998) suggested six basic strategies to enhance internal validity:

1. Triangulation—using multiple investigators, sources of data, or 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.
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. (p. 204)

Triangulation, member checks, peer examination, and clarifying the researcher's biases (see Chapter One for researcher biases) were the primary means of establishing the validity of this study. The use of multiple methods to collect data about the role and development of three ESLMSs enhanced the validity of the findings through a process

called triangulation. Triangulation means to verify facts by the use of more than one method of data collection (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Thus, the ESLMSs' perspectives from the questionnaires and interviews, analysis of federal and state reports, and the examination of artifacts were employed in data collection to illuminate the guiding research questions. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that member checks are the "most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). Each participant was mailed a copy of the interview questions prior to the face-to-face interview to ensure they understand the questions before they were asked. Member checks were conducted in the process of the study by allowing the participants to respond to the transcribed interviews and at the end of the study by allowing the participants to respond to the findings and conclusions. Participants were sent by postal mail, transcripts of their interview and the researcher's interpretations of the interviews. They were invited to comment on the accuracy of interview transcripts and interpretations. All three participants contributed during the online discussion forum and were given an opportunity to comment on the interpretations of the other participants' responses and findings in the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended that member checking be utilized to facilitate a judgment of overall credibility or validity.

The case study including a school portraiture for each of the three schools was created through the use of a questionnaire for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, a total development as an expert media specialist interview (see Appendix E for interview questions) of each of the three participants, examination of artifacts from each participant's school, and a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants who responded to and commented on each other's

interview answers without having their identity known (see Appendix F for online discussion forum posts). Multiple sources of data were included to increase the depth of information obtained from the participants. A colleague reviewed the questionnaire and interview to ensure the questions were accurate and to ensure these data collection devices could be completed in the allotted timeframe. Colleagues examined and commented on findings as they emerged in the study to increase validity. Two colleagues were given rough drafts of Chapters Four and Five in order to confirm that data and findings were clear and not misrepresented.

### Population and Sample

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) asserted that generally, the design of a case study is “best represented by a funnel” (p. 62). The beginning of the case study is the wide end of the funnel that narrows as the researcher looks for possible places and people that might be sources of data. For this study, participants were “purposefully” selected (Patton, 1980, p. 100) using “criterion-based selection” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 70). Patton (1980) indicated that purposeful sampling was useful when “one wants to learn something and come to understand about certain select cases without needing to generalize to all such cases” (p. 100). LeCompte and Preissle (1993) used the term criterion-based selection as opposed to the term purposeful sampling. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) suggested that in criterion-based selection, researchers “create a list of the attributes essential” to the study and then “proceed to find or locate a unit matching the list” (p. 70). Four criteria were used for selecting the three participants for my study:

1. The participants had to be National Board Certified in the Library Media field.
2. The participants must currently work as a SLMS.

3. The participant must currently work in a public high school.
4. The participant must currently work in Georgia.

The researcher began the research by reviewing the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site for information on the ninety-four library media specialists that were currently certified in the library media field in Georgia by September 2006. The researcher selected only those certified library media specialists that were currently working in a public high school in Georgia. From that list of potential participants that met all the required criteria for the study, the researcher selected five final candidates from various parts of the state and with as much varying backgrounds (race, gender, age, etc.) as possible to participate in the study. Three participants were selected and the remaining two served as alternates in case one or more of the selected three chose not to or was not able to participate.

The three chosen National Board Certified SLMSs were asked to participate in the study first through contact by electronic mail, then by letters sent by postal mail. The researcher gave assurances to each participant that their names, the names of their districts, and the names of their schools would remain confidential. The researcher developed pseudonyms for the participants and their schools were called Omega High School (OHS), Beta High School (BHS), and Delta High School (DHS) to assure anonymity. Participants were asked to sign two Informed Consent Forms (see Appendix C). One copy was given to the participant and the other copy retained for the researcher's records. A questionnaire was distributed to the participants prior to the interview (see Appendix D) consisting of thirty-five fill in the blank and short answer questions. All participants were asked to log onto a Google Group online discussion forum at least once

a week for two months. The three participants were asked to post topics and reply to the other participants' postings as often as possible but not to reveal any personal information or information that could be used to identify them or their schools. It is estimated that each participant spent approximately four hours actively involved with the discussion forum. The amount of time actually spent on the online discussion forum depended on the extent of each participant's postings.

Face to face interviewing was the primary tool used in this investigation. The interview consisted of thirty-four open ended questions and took approximately one and a half hours to complete. The interview was used to determine the ESLMS's perception of their purpose, perception of their development as a person, perception of the organizational context in which they work, and perception of the culture of their school.

#### Summary

A descriptive case study approach was used to examine current National Board Certified SLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, and the organizational context and culture of the school in which the ESLMS works. Data was gathered through the use of questionnaires, state and federal school reports, interviews, and online discussion forum postings. Chapter Three described the statement of the problem, the research questions, the design of the study, the rationale for case study methodology, and a description of the population and sample that was used for this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the SLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the SLMS works in, and the culture of the SLMS's school. There were four research questions specifically addressed in this study:

- How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?
- How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

Background information regarding the data collection methodology is located in Chapter Three. Utilization of the constant comparison method indicated themes rather than strong statistical results were gathered. To maintain confidentiality of the participants and the school sites in which they worked pseudonyms were developed: Lee was the ESLMS studied at Omega High School, Mae was the ESLMS studied at Beta High School, and Ann was the ESLMS studied at Delta High School.

The focus of this research was on furthering the understanding of the role and development of ESLMSs, meaning those SLMSs who have achieved National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification in Library Media. In addition to having National Board Certification, all three participants have also received the School Library Media Specialist of the Year Award for their districts. Having received this distinguished award further validates these three participants' level of expertise in the library media

field. Georgia Library Media Association, Inc. (GLMA) and Georgia Association for Instructional Technology, Inc. (GAIT) sponsor the School Library Media Specialist of the Year Award to recognize K-12 library media specialists whose services have resulted in exemplary library media programs. To be nominated, an individual must be currently assigned to a building level library media center, have three or more years of experience as a library media specialist, and be a member of one of the sponsoring organizations. Individual media specialists are nominated by evidence of personal leadership in fulfilling the roles of teacher, program administrator, information specialist, and instructional partner as defined in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*; evidence of professional involvement in the library media field; and evidence of providing a quality library media program to K-12 students and teachers by implementing the individual's personal philosophy of information technology utilization. An awards committee composed of volunteers from both organizations evaluate portfolios and videos created by all the nominees for the award. The committee scores portfolios and videos according to innovation in programs; attitude; technology use; ability to work with students and staff; appeal of the media center; sample lesson plans and visuals (transparencies, slides, prints, etc.); professional growth (attendance at conferences, workshops, staff development, college courses, etc.); contributions to the profession (presenting at workshops, publishing articles, etc.); membership in professional organizations; knowledge of standards and information literacy skills as evidenced in work with students or visuals; promotion of media programs; and school involvement.



## Significance of Reports Analyzed and Artifacts Collected

The *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 signed into law by President Bush on January 8, 2002 changed the role of the federal government in public schools. The act contained stronger accountability for results and consequences for schools that do not make the required results (*No Child Left Behind Act*, n.d.). This act has manifested itself in school systems throughout the country in the form of standardized tests and standardized curriculum. One of the requirements of the act is for all states to establish state academic standards and a state testing system that meet federal requirements. Georgia has a High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) that is administered to all eleventh graders and again to twelfth graders who did not pass it the previous year. The GHSGT is divided into four separate tests: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students must pass all parts of the GHSGT in order to graduate from high school. If they do not pass it the first time, they will have multiple opportunities to retake the test but only first time test takers are recorded on the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports. High school students also have to take End-of-Course Tests (EOCT) for many of the courses they complete such as 9<sup>th</sup> grade Literature and Composition, American Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Geometry, Physical Science, and Biology. The EOCTs count for fifteen percent of the students' final grade. The GHSGT and the EOCTs are standards-based assessments, which mean they measure how well students are mastering specific skills defined by the state of Georgia.

AYP is one of the elements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* that measures the year to year achievement of students on statewide assessments. AYP requires schools to meet criteria in three areas: Test Participation (for both Mathematics and

Reading/English Language Arts), Academic Performance (for both Mathematics and Reading/English Language Arts), and a Second Indicator (attendance rate or graduation rate). Schools that do not meet AYP criteria in the same subject area for two or more consecutive years are placed in ‘Needs Improvement’ status with escalating consequences for each successive year. One of the schools in this study has a ‘Needs Improvement’ status, one has an ‘Adequate’ status, and one has a ‘Distinguished’ status.

The state and federal data records collected in this study included school characteristics, teacher salary scale, and community economic data. Numerous school characteristics that were obtained from the state and federal records: AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) status, school enrollment, grade range for school, number of staff members, performance on the GHSGT and on the GHSWT (Georgia High School Writing Test), ACT (American College Testing) and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores, graduation rate, attendance rate, enrollment in compensatory programs, percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, and racial/ethnic make-up of the school. The teacher salary scale was used to determine the ESLMS’s salary level according to years of experience and degrees obtained. Several important community characteristics were gathered: demographic location of the school in the state, classification of the community where the school is located (i.e. rural, urban, suburban), population of the area that the school serves, racial/ethnic make-up of the community the school serves, education level of the community, and poverty rates of the community.

The Georgia Department of Education (DOE) has published the Georgia Public Education Report Card each year since 1995. According to the Georgia DOE, the Report cards have two major purposes: “First, they promote informed long-term and short-term

educational planning and decision making based on real data pertinent to schools. Secondly, they serve as a means of accountability at the state, system and school level for the taxpayers of Georgia” (Georgia Public Education Report Card, n.d., para. 1). Quantifiable data from the entire state of Georgia, which included 180 local school systems and over 2,000 individual schools was collected for the 2005-2006 Report Card, which was used in this study. The data is reported in nine categories: student demographics; graduate achievement; postsecondary achievement; college admissions credit tests; state-required tests; system accreditation and recognition; community data; fiscal and funding data; and certified personnel. The Georgia State Report Card and other artifacts used provided a rich description of the three schools in which the participants’ work.

Artifacts collected in this study provided insight into the phenomenon of ESLMSs’ role and development. These artifacts provided evidence that perceptions provided by the participants correlated to what was actually taking place in the schools. Several key artifacts were collected from each school:

- copies of a collection analysis of the media center in which the ESLMS works (including number of resources in the collection, average check out rate, average age of the collection, etc.)
- copies of rules and procedures (or media center handbook if available) for the ESLMS’s media center
- copies of the ESLMS’s lesson plans and/or schedule books
- copies of syllabi and/or handouts for any professional development courses or training the ESLMS conducted

- copies of the school improvement plan
- copies of any flyers or newsletters that the ESLMSs produced for staff or the public
- copies of minutes from meetings that the ESLMS led or participated in
- copies of the ESLMS's media center Web site.

All of these artifacts were collected from each of the three schools that the expert school library specialist works in, if they were available. The questionnaire, analysis of state and federal reports, and analysis of artifacts were used to create rich, detailed school portraits of the three schools in which the ESLMSs work.

#### Case Study of Participant One

Lee is a Caucasian male in his early forties. Lee could be described as ambitious and eager to please members of his learning community. Lee has been a SLMS for seven years and served as a middle school Special Education teacher for nine years prior to becoming a SLMS. Less than ten years ago, Lee earned his Specialist in Education degree in Special Education. Immediately upon finishing this degree, he completed the coursework for his library media certification. Lee chose to return to graduate school “for the salary increase and to fulfill the requirements to become a media specialist.” Lee is currently working on his doctoral degree, which is his main professional goal and focus for right now. Lee chose to pursue National Board Certification because as he noted, “it was a good way to recognize our profession as professional educators.” Lee went on to say “National Board Certification is really a recognition—nationally and internationally—and people seem to respect your opinion a little bit more when they know you have this certification.”

With the National Board Certification ten percent pay raise, his Specialist degree, and his years of experience Lee made over \$65,000 and received over \$400 in travel expenses for the 2005-2006 school year (Department of Audits and Accounts Salary and Travel Supplement, 2007). In addition to having National Board Certification, Lee has also received his District's SLMS of the Year Award, the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program Fellowship, the Georgia Exemplary High School Media Program Award, Teacher of the Year (TOTY) for his high school, School System TOTY Finalist, an invitation to attend the School Library Journal Summit for two years, and currently serves as an elected GLMA officer. He is active in local, state, and national media and technology organizations. Lee has conducted numerous workshops and presentations during several local and state conferences. He frequently conducts school and county staff development trainings.

Lee currently works at Omega High School (OHS). Lee is the sole media specialist but has the assistance of one full-time media paraprofessional. He shared, "Because I am the only library media specialist in my school and we do not have a technologist on staff, I have most of the technology responsibilities including maintenance and repair. It helps my relationship with students, teachers, and administrators when I can quickly find solutions to their technological problems. This also opens the door to instructional needs when I ask them to collaborate on a unit or lesson."

Lee has been the SLMS at this school for the past two years. Prior to transferring to this school he worked as the SLMS in another high school in the same county. Lee chose to become a school library media specialist because he had "always been interested in

technology, reading, and literature so it seemed like the best fit” for him. Lee had two factors that were the basis of his decision to apply for a position in this school—its location in relation to where he lives and it was a new school and he wanted the “experience of opening a new school, not just the school library but the whole school.” He has remained in the profession over the last seven years because he recognizes the many benefits of the profession, such as

Being able to work with all students and all teachers. Not being tied down to just one class or one role. There is never a dull moment in the life of a school library media specialist. Being on the forefront in instructional technology and resources.

OHS is a public high school in a rural community in Northwest Georgia. OHS serves 600 students in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. OHS is a new school that will have all four grade levels (ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth) during the 2007-2008 school year. According to Lee, an equal amount of direct and project-based instruction takes place every day in the classrooms at OHS. Lee identified that he spends an average of about twelve hours per week teaching lessons and that he predominately teaches student-centered lessons. Lee identified that he spends approximately ten hours at home per week on job related functions. He voluntarily works an extra hour each day to give patrons an extended opportunity to use the media center and he does not get any supplemental pay for working these hours. Lee is a voluntary member of his school’s improvement committee, his district’s technology committee, GaCOMO [Georgia Council of Media Organizations] conference planning committee, and NECC [National Educational Computing Conference] 2007 planning committee. He actively participates in reading promotion at OHS by sponsoring a reading club that participates in the Helen

Ruffin Reading Bowl, celebrating library events such as Teen Read Week, and planning and teaching lessons and projects based on literature. Lee maintained that he is able to focus his time on successfully fulfilling his role as a media specialist because he is not assigned any duties outside the media center.

OHS has met AYP every year since the school was established. According to the 2005-2006 AYP report, this school met criteria in the one area that was required and is labeled 'Adequate' for improvement status. OHS's test results, school demographics, and school program enrollment statistics are best represented by Table 3. The majority of the students at OHS come from moderate to middle-income families; as a result, students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches total 27%. There is high parental and community involvement in the school and the school teems with school pride.

Students are assessed in a variety of ways. Every four and a half weeks, students take a benchmark test in each class; vocational, core, P.E., and fine arts are included. These benchmark tests allow teachers to know if re-teaching is necessary and to offer remediation to those students who need more help. Students doing poorly in certain classes are offered remediation every day with their subject teacher, or they may go to another subject teacher. After reviewing the results of benchmark exams, departmental meetings are held to address student weaknesses and methods of improvement. These findings are shared with the staff and additional suggestions for improving student achievement are discussed.

To paraphrase OHS's mission statement, they 'will provide an educational opportunity for students to become lifelong learners through academic rigor, positive relationships, and systems of empowering students.' OHS maintains a clear vision,

mission, and direction that focus on student achievement and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Students in this school system attend 180 days of school with the teachers and SLMS working an additional ten days. The school day is set up with four, ninety minute classes called 'blocks.' Teachers are provided with one block for planning time. Every morning from 8:00 to 8:25 a.m. students attend an enrichment rotation where they receive remediation in subjects they are in jeopardy of failing or are allowed this time to read individually to improve their reading comprehension. OHS has an average ratio of approximately sixteen students per teacher, eleven teachers per support staff, and fourteen teachers per administrator. Spending about \$5,000 per student, Omega County is lower than the state average for approximate expenditures per student. OHS consists of the main building (classrooms, cafeteria, library media center, administrative offices), vocational classroom building with greenhouse (agriculture, automotive, health occupations, construction), music building (chorus, band), and gym. The stadium is shared with the middle school across the street.

Lee stated that not only did he believe it is important to implement technology into the curriculum but the staff at OHS also strongly supports this notion. Lee is responsible for the creation and maintenance of OHS's school Web site. OHS is equipped with a large amount of technology. Each classroom is equipped with one computer with Internet access for teacher use, data projector with pull-down screen, TV, and VCR/DVD player. There are five computer lab classrooms, eight wireless computer labs housed in carts with sixteen laptops in each, and a media center with ten computers in addition to a lab. There are four learning labs equipped with a total of sixty-one computers: Horticulture has fifteen, Auto Tech has nine, Health Occupations has nine, the



Technology Lab has eighteen, and Journalism has ten. There is wireless access in the media center, in the upstairs and downstairs hallway, and the first floor conference room. Other technologies available are twenty Airliner slates for individual teacher and classroom use, fifteen scanners, scientific calculators provided for student use in each mathematics and science classroom, and a set of thirty graphing calculators. The media center offers curriculum and instructional related resources that may be checked out as needed by staff members. The library media specialist teaches students research strategies and information literacy skills in collaboration with teachers. Collaboration with teachers and other professional staff helps ensure that all resources, materials, and equipment are used to the maximum benefit.

The library media center at OHS maintains an up-to-date comprehensive materials collection. The collection has eleven books per student, surpassing the ten books per student required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The library media center operates on a flexible schedule and provides access to media services, materials, technology, and equipment every day the students and teachers are in attendance. Time is provided before school, during lunch, and after school for students to use the library media center for reading, homework, or other educational activities. The library media center computer lab is available to students and teachers on a flexible schedule for research and information literacy skills instruction. Eight wireless mobile labs containing sixteen laptop computers are maintained by the library media center and are checked out to teachers for use in the classrooms. Lee trains teachers and staff as needed on a variety of topics including accessing, using, and producing Microsoft Office products (including Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Publisher, FrontPage, and

Outlook); Web site design; video streaming; copyright; online circulation system; online databases, and other topics. All teachers are provided opportunities for professional development on a weekly basis and special training sessions are on-going. Some training that has occurred this year is Technology Training (for example, Slate/Airliner Usage, Web site Setup and Usage); Student Support Team Training; Recognition of Child Abuse Training; GPB Streaming Video Usage in the classroom.

The staff and administration at OHS foster effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders. The school is actively involved with parents, county businesses, and local organizations. OHS has an active School Council that meets at least four times during the year to discuss school issues and concerns with stakeholders. All staff members have weekly departmental meetings. Parents are sent progress reports bi-weekly to remain up-to-date on their child's performance. Parents are also able to go online and view a complete summary of their child's grades whenever they want. Administrators keep an open door policy for stakeholders with concerns as well as for community members who wish to volunteer their time. Parents and the community are involved with OHS's Academic, Athletic, and Band Booster Clubs.

OHS strives to maintain a safe and secure environment where all students are treated fairly and respectfully. An environment of cooperation, honor, responsibility, and respect helps to foster qualities of good citizenship in their students. The school endeavors to provide its students with opportunities to develop leadership skills through participation in clubs such as Family Community Career Leaders of America (FCCLA), Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD), Academic Team, and in student-led organizations such as Student Council. Extra-curricular activities such as band, chorus

and literary events, as well as a full range of sports provide students with venues for their talents, interests, and abilities.

OHS is located in Omega County with an estimated county population in 2005 of over 50,000. The school serves a rural community of just under 5,000 people as of the 2000 census (U.S. Census Bureau, Census, 2000). The community is rapidly growing and although an official census has not been taken since 2000 the estimated population in 2005 was over 15,000; indicating the population has tripled in five years. There is still a small community atmosphere in this town, with only forty-seven violent crimes recorded by the FBI in 2003. County demographics and statistics, according to the 2000 census, are best represented by Table 4.

#### Case Study of Participant Two

Mae is a Caucasian female in her fifties. She is hardworking and well liked among the members of her learning community. Mae has been a SLMS for twenty-one years and served as a high school Biology teacher for nine years prior to becoming a SLMS. Twenty-two years ago, Mae earned her Masters and Specialist in Education degrees in Media. Mae chose to return to graduate school to be able to move into a media specialist position and for the salary increase. Mae has no professional goals right now because she is in the process of deciding if she should retire, if she should relocate to another media specialist position, or if she should find a new job outside of the media center. Mae shared that she has remained in the profession over the last twenty-one years because

Every day is different. Every day is challenging. Every day presents the opportunity to learn something new. I love helping teachers teach. I enjoy finding

materials to supplement teaching and learning. Collaboration is very rewarding.

The exchange of ideas and information is empowering. I am hungry to know new technologies and share new techniques. I am eager to keep current and try something new. I am proud to touch so many lives, even in a small way.

Mae wanted to enhance her skills as a professional so she chose to pursue National Board Certification. She earned three graduate degrees before 1985 so she felt she needed to update her knowledge base. She also looked into doctorate programs, which would be the next degree she could obtain, but all the programs were too expensive or too far away. Mae shared that “salary was also a consideration because I am at retirement age so I knew that it would be an increase.” After undertaking the National Board Certification process, Mae realized that it was one of the most fulfilling professional developments she has ever completed. She said, “I am proud to be National Board Certified! I know how very hard I worked! I keep my certificate framed and prominently displayed in my office.”

With the National Board Certification ten percent pay raise, her Specialist degree, and her years of experience Mae made over \$100,000 during the 2005-2006 school year and received \$500 in travel expenses (Department of Audits and Accounts Salary and Travel Supplement, 2007). In addition to having National Board Certification, Mae has also received her District’s SLMS of the Year Award, Teacher of the Month at her school, has been nominated for Teacher of the Year at her school (the only non-traditional non-classroom staff to ever be selected), and she currently serves as an elected GLMA officer. She has also served as the chairperson of her county’s Media Specialist council for the past twelve years. She is active in local, state, and national media and

technology organizations. Mae has conducted numerous workshops and presentations during several local and state conferences. She constantly conducts school and county staff development trainings.

Mae currently works at Beta High School (BHS). Mae is one of two media specialists and has the assistance of one full-time media paraprofessional. She also has access to the services of the school's technology specialist, the county's instructional technology specialist (shared between four schools), and the county's network specialist (shared between six schools). Mae has been the SLMS at this school for the past nine years. Prior to transferring to this school she worked as the SLMS in another high school and three different elementary schools. Mae relocated to this area and did not want an elementary school media position so she took the first middle or high school job that she was offered and has been in that high school ever since. Mae explained that she prefers the high school level because of the "rigor of research found with older students."

According to Mae, there is an equal amount of direct and project-based instruction that takes place every day in the classrooms at BHS. She identified that she spends an average of about three hours per week teaching lessons and that she spends an equal amount of time teaching student-centered and teacher-centered lessons. Mae identified that she spends approximately one hour every day at home on job related functions. Mae stated that she mostly facilitates when classes come to the media center but teaches many lessons when classes are working on research papers. She chooses to work an extra six to twelve hours per week in her media center during extended hours in order to receive her hourly pay as a supplement. Mae is a voluntary member of the staff development committee at her school and the county media committee. She actively

participates in reading promotion at BHS by planning reading events, as well as planning and teaching lessons and projects based on literature. Mae maintained that she is able to focus her time on successfully fulfilling her role as a media specialist because she is only required to be outside the media center for ten minutes of hall duty each morning.

BHS is a public high school in an urban community outside Atlanta, Georgia. BHS serves 2400 students in ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. BHS has met AYP every year since the legislation was established. According to the 2005-2006 AYP report, this school met criteria in seven out of seven areas and is labeled 'Distinguished' for improvement status. The percentage of students meeting and exceeding standards in 2005-2006 was 97%, which reflects a 3% gain over the prior year. This school received the 2006 Silver Award for Highest Percentage of Students Meeting and Exceeding Standards. Silver schools must have made AYP for two consecutive years and have a minimum of 25% Exceeding Standards and at least 96% of Students Meeting and Exceeding Standards. There is an 87% graduation rate with most graduates going on to institutions of higher education. Sixty-four percent of graduates are eligible for HOPE scholarships. BHS's test results, school demographics, and school program enrollment statistics are best represented by Table 3. The majority of these students come from middle to high-income families; as a result, students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches total only 13%.

To paraphrase BHS's mission statement, they 'will provide a safe, disciplined environment based on mutual respect and positive relationships in order to promote life-long learning and maximize each individual's potential.' BHS maintains a clear vision, mission, and direction that focus on student achievement and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Students in this school system attend 180 days of school with the teachers and SLMS working an additional ten days. The school day is set up traditionally with six fifty minute periods. Teachers are provided with one period for planning time. Every student and every teacher also receives a fifty minute period for lunch. There are four lunches throughout the day, which Mae describes as the busiest time in the media center where all she does is “crowd control.” In 2005-2006, BHS had an average ratio of approximately seventeen students per teacher, fifteen teachers per support person, and twenty-three teachers per administrator. Spending almost \$6,000 per student, Beta County is a little higher than the state average for approximate expenditures per student. BHS consists of a large building that is split with the high school in one half and the middle school in the other half. Each school has its own classrooms, cafeteria, library media center, administrative offices, and gym. The auditorium is shared by the high school and middle school.

Mae stated that not only did she believe it is important to implement technology into the curriculum but the staff at BHS also strongly supports this notion. She is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the media center’s school Web page but a business teacher maintains the rest of BHS’s Web site. BHS is equipped with a large amount of technology. Each classroom is equipped with at least one computer with Internet access for teacher use, TV, and VCR/DVD player. One-third of the classrooms have data projectors with pull-down screens. There are eight computer lab classrooms consisting of thirty computers each: the Science lab, the Foreign Language lab, the Academic lab (English and Social Studies), the Math lab, three Business labs, and the Drafting lab. The media center has forty-one computers in addition to a lab. Other

technologies available includes three mobile wireless labs consisting of eight computers, three mobile wireless labs consisting of sixteen computers, ten scanners, twenty digital cameras, and five SMART Boards. The media center offers curriculum and instructional related resources that may be checked out as needed by staff members. The library media center at BHS maintains an up-to-date comprehensive materials collection. The collection has nine books per student, which is below the ten books per student required by SACS. This library media center does realize this deficiency and is currently building the collection and plans to meet the ten books per student standard by the end of the school year.

The library media center operates on a flexible schedule and provides access to media services, materials, technology, and equipment every day the students and teachers are in attendance. Time is provided before school, during lunch, and after school for students to use the library media center for reading, homework, or other educational activities. The library media center computer lab is available to students and teachers on a flexible schedule for research and information literacy skills instruction. The library media specialists teach students research strategies and information literacy skills in collaboration with teachers. Collaboration with teachers and other professional staff helps ensure that all resources, materials, and equipment are used to the maximum benefit. The library media specialists train teachers and staff as needed for a variety of topics including accessing, using, and producing Microsoft Office products; SMART technologies utilization; video streaming; MLA format products; online circulation system; online databases, and other topics. All teachers are provided opportunities for professional development on a weekly basis and special training sessions are on-going.



Some training that has been taught by the media specialist this year is GPB Streaming Video Usage in the classroom, SMART Board training, and Georgia's Virtual Library (GALILEO) usage in the classroom.

The staff and administration at BHS foster effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders. The school is actively involved with parents, county businesses, and local organizations. BHS has an active School Council that meets at least four times during the year to discuss school issues and concerns with stakeholders. All staff members have weekly staff meetings. Parents are sent progress reports bi-weekly to remain up-to-date on their child's performance. Parents are also able to go online and view a complete summary of their child's grades anytime they desire. Administrators keep an open door policy for stakeholders with concerns as well as for community members who wish to volunteer their time. Parents and the community are involved with BHS's Academic, Athletic, and Band Booster Clubs.

BHS strives to maintain a safe and secure environment where all students are treated fairly and respectfully. An environment of responsibility and respect helps to foster qualities of good citizenship in their students. The school endeavors to provide its students with opportunities to develop leadership skills through participation in clubs such as Future Educators Association (FEA), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), the Book Club, and in student-led organizations such as Student Council. Extra-curricular activities such as band, chorus and literary events, as well as a full range of sports provide students with venues for their talents, interests, and abilities.

BHS serves Beta County with an estimated county population, in 2005, of almost 200,000. As of the 2000 census, the school serves an urban community of just over

10,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, Census, 2000). The area is growing and although an official census has not been taken since 2000 the estimated community population in 2005 was over 20,000. There were twenty-four violent crimes recorded by the FBI in 2003. County demographics and statistics, according to the 2000 census, are best represented by Table 4.

#### Case Study of Participant Three

Ann is a Caucasian female in her fifties. She could be described as intelligent and outspoken. Ann has been a SLMS for seventeen years and served as a reference librarian for six years prior to becoming a SLMS. Although Ann has never been a classroom teacher she is certified in Secondary English and Music (K-12). Ann is the current ESLMS who works at Delta High School (DHS).

Fifteen years ago, Ann earned her Specialist in Education degree in Instructional Technology. Ann chose to return to graduate school because she loves to learn, she wanted to refine her skills, and for the pay raise an advanced degree would bring. Ann chose to pursue National Board Certification because she was encouraged by a colleague who piloted the process the first year it was established, for the recognition, and for the financial incentive. Ann noted,

National Board Certification is a recognition that causes people to respect your professional standing more. That happened to me immediately when I received certification. I felt that the colleagues in the school where I worked at that time accorded me a level of prestige, led by the fantastic support of our principal, and that my ideas and opinions had added credibility.

Ann indicated the National Board process was one of the best staff developments she

ever participated in. She shared,

I keep the National Board Certified Teacher label in my email signature because I am proud of it –more so than I am of my degrees. It was hard-earned, and I do feel that when people realize what those letters are, the added respect helps. I also display the framed certificate in my office.

With the National Board Certification ten percent pay raise, her Specialist degree, and her years of experience Ann made over \$80,000 during the 2005-2006 school year and received over \$500 in travel expenses (Department of Audits and Accounts Salary and Travel Supplement, 2007). In addition to having National Board Certification, Ann has also received the School Library Media Specialist of the Year Award for her district, Teacher of the Month for her school, yearbook dedication for two years at two different schools, and the GLMA Intellectual Freedom Award. She is active in local, state, and national media and technology organizations. Ann has conducted numerous workshops and presentations during several local and state conferences. She constantly conducts school and county staff development trainings.

Ann works with one other full-time media specialist, one full-time media paraprofessional, as well as having two full-time technology specialists in her school. Ann has been the SLMS at this high school for the past four years. Prior to transferring to this school she worked for thirteen years as the SLMS in an elementary school in the same county. Ann choose to switch to the high school level because she felt the job security was stronger in the high school, she was tired of the misuse of Accelerated Reader, and her trusted colleague who was retiring from the high school position recommended she apply for the position. Ann prefers the elementary school level because

she maintained there are “more opportunities for relationships with students, more opportunities to promote reading, and more opportunities to be creative.” Ann believed that direct instruction is predominantly used in the classrooms at DHS, but she uses an equal amount of student-centered and teacher-centered instruction in the media center. She estimated the average number of hours she spends teaching each week to be about four hours. Ann identified that she spends approximately five hours at home per week on job related functions. Ann chooses to work an additional three hours per week during extended media center hours in order to get paid her hourly salary for those three hours. Ann is a voluntary member of the prom committee at her school and the leadership team. She indicated one way she promotes voluntary reading at DHS is through a recognition program that highlights exemplary readers in the school. Ann maintained that she is able to focus her time on successfully fulfilling her role as a media specialist because she is not assigned any duties outside the media center.

DHS is a public high school in a medium-sized community in Southeast Georgia. DHS serves almost 2000 students in ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Although DHS met AYP the year before, during the 2005-2006 school year this high school did not meet AYP criteria. The school met AYP criteria for Test Participation, Second Indicator for Graduation Rate, but did not meet criteria for Academic Performance. According to the 2005-2006 AYP report, this school only met the AYP criteria in seven out of nine categories and is thus labeled as ‘Needs Improvement’ status. The two criteria BHS did not meet were academic performance for their Black and Economically Disadvantaged subgroups. There is a 55% graduation rate with 53% percent of graduates eligible for HOPE scholarships. DHS’s test results, school demographics, and school program

enrollment statistics are best represented by Table 3. The majority of these students come from low to middle-income families; as a result, students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches total 42%. There is high parental and community involvement in the school.

Students are assessed in a variety of ways. Every four and a half weeks, students take a benchmark test in each class; vocational, core, P.E., and fine arts are included. These benchmark tests allow teachers to know if re-teaching is necessary and to offer remediation to those students who need more help. Students that are doing poorly in certain classes are offered remediation every day with their subject teacher, or they may go to another subject teacher. After reviewing the results of benchmark exams, departmental meetings are held to address student weaknesses and methods of improvement. These findings are shared with the staff and additional suggestions for improving student achievement are discussed.

To paraphrase DHS's mission statement, they 'will provide a safe, supportive, and disciplined environment that emphasizes quality learning opportunities for all students.' DHS maintains a clear vision, mission, and direction that focus on student achievement and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Students in this school system attend 180 days of school with the teachers working an additional ten days and SLMSs working an additional twenty days. The school day is set up traditionally with six fifty-five minute periods. Teachers are provided with one period for planning time. Students and teachers also receive a thirty minute period for lunch and ten minutes for homeroom each day. There are three lunches throughout the day. DHS has an average ratio of approximately seventeen students per teacher, thirteen teachers per support person, and twenty teachers

per administrator. Spending \$6,000 per student, Delta County is a little higher than the state average for approximate expenditures per student. DHS consists of a large building with its own classrooms, cafeteria, library media center, administrative offices, and gym.

Ann stated that the staff at her school believes technology implementation is important to teaching the curriculum but Ann warned “technology is a means, not an end, and its misuse is the source of some students’ problems.” Ann and the other media specialist at DHS are responsible for the creation and maintenance of the school’s Web site. DHS is equipped with a large amount of technology. Each classroom is equipped with at least one computer with Internet access for teacher use, data projector with pull-down screen, TV, and VCR/DVD player. There are five computer lab classrooms, three wireless computer labs housed in carts with thirty laptops in each, and a media center bank of twenty-nine computers in addition to a lab of thirty computers. There is wireless access in the media center and each hallway. Other technologies available are eighteen scanners, scientific calculators provided for student use in each mathematics and science classroom, twenty-six digital cameras, and three SMART Boards. The media center offers curriculum and instructional related resources that may be checked out as needed by staff members. The library media center at DHS maintains an up-to-date comprehensive materials collection. The collection has eleven books per student surpassing the ten books per student required by SACS.

The library media center operates on a flexible schedule and provides access to media services, materials, technology, and equipment every day the students and teachers are in attendance. Time is provided before school, during lunch, and after school for students to use the library media center for reading, homework, or other educational

activities. The library media center computer lab is available to students and teachers on a flexible schedule for research and information literacy skills instruction.

The library media specialists train teachers and staff as needed for a variety of topics including accessing, using, and producing Microsoft Office products; Web site design; video streaming; copyright; online circulation system; and online databases. All teachers are provided opportunities for professional development on a weekly basis and special training sessions are on-going. Some training that has occurred this year is Web site design, Grolier Online utilization Training, SMART Board Training, and Georgia Public Broadcast (GPB) Streaming Video Usage in the classroom. The library media specialist teaches students research strategies and information literacy skills in collaboration with teachers. Collaboration with teachers and other professional staff helps ensure that all resources, materials, and equipment are used to the maximum benefit.

The staff and administration at DHS foster effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders. The school is actively involved with parents, county businesses, and local organizations. DHS has an active School Council that meets at least four times during the year to discuss school issues and concerns with stakeholders. All staff members have weekly departmental meetings. Parents are sent progress reports bi-weekly to remain up-to-date on their child's performance. Parents are also able to go online and view a complete summary of their child's grades whenever they want. Administrators keep an open door policy for stakeholders with concerns as well as for community members who wish to volunteer their time. Parents and the community are involved with DHS's Academic, Athletic, and Band Booster Clubs.

DHS strives to maintain a safe and secure environment where all students are

treated fairly and respectfully. An environment of discipline and safety for all helps to foster qualities of good citizenship in their students. The school endeavors to provide its students with opportunities to develop leadership skills through participation in clubs such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), Beta Club, Technology Students Association (TSA), and in student-led organizations such as Student Council. Extra-curricular activities such as band, chorus and literary events, as well as a full range of sports provide students with venues for their talents, interests, and abilities.

DHS serves Delta County with an estimated county population, in 2005, of over 80,000. As of the 2000 census, the school serves a suburban community of just under 9,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, Census, 2000). There were one hundred thirty-three violent crimes recorded by the FBI in 2003. County demographics and statistics, according to the 2000 census, are best represented by Table 4.



Table 2: Comparison of the Three ESLMSs Who Participated in this Study

|   | Lee  | Mae  | Ann  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Gender  | Male   | Female   | Female   |
| Ethnicity                                       | Caucasian  | Caucasian  | Caucasian  |
| Age   | 40s  | 50s  | 50s  |
| Highest degree earned                           | Specialist; working on Doctoral degree   | Specialist   | Specialist   |
| When highest degree was earned                  | Less than 10 years ago   | 22 years ago   | 15 years ago   |
| When National Board Certification was earned    | 2004   | 2004   | 2002   |
| Years of experience as a media specialist       | 7 years  | 21 years   | 17 years   |
| Years of experience in the education profession | 16 years   | 30 years   | 17 years   |
| Day contracted in current position              | 190 days   | 190 days   | 200 days   |
| 2005-2006 Salary                                | Over \$65,000  | Over \$100,000   | Over \$80,000  |
| ESLMS's Awards/Achievements                     | National Board Certification; District SLMS of the Year Award; Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program Fellowship; Georgia Exemplary High School Media Program; Teacher of the Year (TOTY) for his high school; School System TOTY Finalist; School Library Journal Summit for two years; GLMA officer | National Board Certification; District SLMS of the Year Award; teacher of the month at her school; nominated for teacher of the year at her school (only non-traditional non-classroom staff to be selected); GLMA officer | National Board Certification; District SLMS of the Year Award; two yearbook dedications at two different schools; teacher of the year at her school; GLMA Intellectual Freedom Award |

Table 2: Comparison of the Three ESLMSs Who Participated in this Study (Continued)

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rank of roles according to time spent             | 1 <sup>st</sup> Teacher<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Instructional Partner<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Program Administrator<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Information Specialist | 1 <sup>st</sup> Instructional Partner<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Information Specialist<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Teacher<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Program Administrator | 1 <sup>st</sup> Program Administrator<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Information Specialist<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Instructional Partner<br>4 <sup>th</sup> Teacher |
| Role most comfortable in                          | Teacher   | Instructional Partner   | Program Administrator   |
| Role least comfortable in                         | Program Administrator   | Program Administrator   | Instructional Partner   |
| Predominant type of instruction used by the ESLMS | Student-centered  | Equal time spent on student-centered and teacher-centered   | Equal time spent on student-centered and teacher-centered   |

Table 3: Comparison of the Three Schools Where the ESLMSs Work

|   | Omega High School   | Beta High School  | Delta High School  | State Averages  |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Number of students                        | 600   | 2400  | 2000   | 1,559,828 (total)   |
| Grade levels                              | 9-11  | 9-12  | 9-12   | k-12  |
| Student to teacher ratio                  | 16:1  | 17:1  | 17:1   | 14:1  |
| Teacher to support staff ratio            | 11:1  | 15:1  | 13:1   | 10:1  |
| Teacher to administrators ratio           | 14:1  | 23:1  | 20:1   | 14:1  |
| Approximate Expenditures per student      | \$5,000   | Almost \$6,000  | \$6,000  | \$5,285   |
| Schedule Type                             | Block   | Traditional   | Traditional  | N/A   |
| Periods or blocks per day                 | 4   | 6   | 6  | N/A   |
| Predominant type of instruction in school | Mixture of direct and project-based instruction   | Mixture of direct and project-based instruction   | Direct instruction   | N/A   |
| Met AYP in 2005-2006                      | Yes-labeled 'Adequate'  | Yes-labeled 'Distinguished'   | No-labeled 'Needs Improvement'   | N/A   |
| Second Indicator for AYP                  | Attendance Rate   | Graduation Rate   | Graduation Rate  | N/A   |
| Make-up of school population              | 2% Black<br>94% White<br>4% Hispanic<br>>1% Multiracial<br>0% Asian and American Indian | 7% Black<br>82% White<br>7% Hispanic<br>1% Multiracial<br>2% Asian<br>>1% American Indian | 42% Black<br>53% White<br>3% Hispanic<br>2% Multiracial<br>>1% Asian<br>0% American Indian | 38% Black<br>48% White<br>9% Hispanic<br>2% Multiracial<br>3% Asian<br>0% American Indian |
| Make-up of school staff                   | 100% White<br>0% Hispanic, Black, Multiracial, Asian, and American Indian               | >1% Black<br>95% White<br>4% Hispanic<br>>1% Asian<br>0% Multiracial and American Indian  | 19% Black<br>79% White<br>2% Hispanic<br>0% Multiracial, Asian, and American Indian        | 17% Black<br>81% White<br>2% Hispanic<br>0% Multiracial, Asian, and American Indian       |

Table 3: Comparison of the Three Schools Where the ESLMSs Work (continued)

|  | Omega High School | Beta High School | Delta High School | State Averages   |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Percent of staff with ten years or less experience         | 56%               | 75%              | 38%               | 47%              |
| Percent of students enrolled in Gifted Programs            | 7%                | 10%              | 5%                | 9%               |
| Percent of students enrolled in Vocational Labs            | 52%               | 38%              | 57%               | 53%              |
| Percent of students enrolled in Alternative Programs       | 1%                | 3%               | 2%                | 2%               |
| Percent of students enrolled in Special Education Programs | 16%               | 11%              | 14%               | 12%              |
| Percent of students enrolled in ESOL                       | 1%                | 2%               | 1%                | 3%               |
| Percent of students enrolled in Remedial Education         | Data not given    | 9%               | 4%                | 5%               |
| Students eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches | 27%               | 13%              | 42%               | 50%              |
| Percent of students missing 5 days or fewer                | 53%               | 58%              | 53%               | 56%              |
| Average SAT scores   | 1406              | 1568             | 1438              | 1468             |
| Average ACT scores   | Data not given    | 22               | 19                | 20               |
| Students that passed the GHS GT in Science                 | Data not given    | 93%              | 73%               | 73%              |
| Students that passed the GHS GT in Mathematics             | Data not given    | 98%              | 90%               | 92%              |
| Students that passed the GHS GT in Social Studies          | Data not given    | 95%              | 86%               | 86%              |
| Students that passed the GHS GT in English                 | Data not given    | 99%              | 94%               | 96%              |
| Books per student in the media center                      | 11                | 9                | 11                | 10 book standard |
| Graduation rate  | Data not given    | 87%              | 55%               | 71%              |
| Percent eligible for the HOPE Scholarships                 | Data not given    | 64%              | 53%               | 62%              |

Table 4: Comparison of the Three Communities Where the ESLMSs Work

|   | Omega County   | Beta County   | Delta County  | State Statistics   |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Community type  | Rural  | Urban   | Medium sized city   | N/A  |
| Location  | Northwest Georgia  | Outside of Atlanta, Georgia   | Southeast Georgia   | N/A  |
| Population  | Over 50,000  | Almost 200,000  | Over 80,000   | 8,186,453  |
| Make-up   | 76% White<br>7% Black<br>>1% Native American<br>1% Asian<br>14% Hispanic or from other Latino races<br>1% from two or more races<br>>1% Pacific Islander | 86% White<br>5% Black<br>>1% Native American<br>1% Asian<br>5% Hispanic or from other Latino races<br>2% from two or more races<br>>1% Pacific Islander | 53% White<br>42% Black<br>>1% Native American<br>>1% Asian<br>2% Hispanic or from other Latino races<br>2% from two or more races<br>>1% Pacific Islander | 64% White<br>28% Black<br>>1% Native American<br>2% Asian<br>5% Hispanic or from other Latino races<br>1% from two or more races<br>>1% Pacific Islander |
| Percentage of the households with children            | Over 30%   | 40%   | 30%   | 35%  |
| median household income                               | over \$33,000  | under \$60,000  | under \$60,000  | \$42,421   |
| median family income                                  | over \$42,000  | over \$65,000   | over \$65,000   | \$62,294   |
| Percentage below the poverty line                     | 17%  | 4%  | 15%   | 13%  |
| Percentage with a high school diploma                 | 29%  | 24%   | 31%   | 29%  |
| Percentage with some college or an associate's degree | 21%  | 28%   | 29%   | 25%  |
| Percentage with a bachelor's degree                   | 10%  | 24%   | 21%   | 16%  |
| Percentage with a master's or high degree             | 7%   | 9%  | 8%  | 8%   |

## Summary of Three Case Studies

A descriptive case study approach was used to examine current National Board Certified SLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, and the organizational context and culture of the school in which the ESLMS works. The case study including a school portraiture for each of the three schools was created through the use of a questionnaire for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, a total development as an expert media specialist interview of each of the three participants, examination of artifacts, and a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants who responded to and commented on each other's interview answers without having their identity known. Qualitative data collection and analysis were utilized because it provided the opportunity to understand participants' perceptions within their own individual environments. Studying SLMSs whom are currently working in public schools provided the clearest picture of the reality that is present in schools today, at least of their perception of it. The goal of this qualitative analysis was a complete, detailed description of a phenomenon from the participants' point of view. The school portraitures allowed the researcher to analyze relationships between the role and the development of ESLMSs and their specific school culture and organization.

It is important to understand the unique situation each ESLMS works in to further analyze the roles and development of these SLMSs. Every SLMS is a unique individual with purposes and motivations, a distinctive view of themselves as persons including their beliefs and values, and an individual perception of the culture and organizational context of the specific school in which they work. Analysis of these three school

portraits highlight the similarities and differences between the three participants and the schools they work in. A summary of these comparisons are best represented in Tables 2, 3, and 4. No two schools will ever be exactly the same and these differences are noted in order to provide some basis for analyzing the participants' perceptions as noted in this study. For example, school size alone (the smallest school in the study had 600 students compared to the largest school with 2400 students) would greatly affect the role a SLMS was able to perform within the school. Each school has a unique organizational context and culture. Due to the fact that all individuals and schools are distinctive, a total educator theoretical framework was utilized in this study to obtain a clear multidimensional view of the participants' purpose, the SLMS as a person, and the organizational context and culture of the school in which the SLMS works.

## Findings Related to the Research Questions

### Introduction

The sources of data in this study were used to address the four parts of the total educator concept. This section summarizes the overall findings reported by the National Board Certified SLMSs for each of those four parts of the total educator concept including the SLMSs' purposes, the SLMSs as persons, and the organizational context and culture of the schools in which the SLMSs work. The questionnaire data, interview data, artifacts collected, state and federal reports, and online discussion forum responses were analyzed and findings are presented in this section. Data is grouped according to the four research questions in the study:

Research Question 1: How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?

Research Question 2: How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?

Research Question 3: How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?

Research Question 4: How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

*Research Question #1: How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?*

The ESLMSs' purpose refers to a concept of educator development that includes professional goals, beliefs and values including moral purpose, motivations, connections between organizational goals and professional goals, and reasons for seeking growth opportunities such as National Board Certification. Since the development and role of excellence in the media field begins with the SLMSs' purpose it is essential to discern the ESLMSs' perception of their own purpose in their profession. The questionnaire data, interview data, artifacts collected, state and federal reports, and online discussion forum responses were analyzed and these findings were categorized as pertaining to the SLMSs' purpose. The ESLMSs' purpose findings included

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their purpose as a SLMS
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their contributions to student achievement in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to encourage others to enter the media specialist profession
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their professional goals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of whether there was a connection between their professional goals, personal goals, and their specific school's goals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their motivations for pursuing National Board Certification



- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to encourage others to pursue National Board Certification
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of ways to contribute to the implementation of an exemplary media program
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of rewards and benefits for exemplary work within their school

Although there were some variations between the three participants' perspectives of their own purpose as SLMS, all participants referred to *Information Power* roles to describe their purpose. Lee maintained that his purpose as an ESLMS is to work "with the teachers and students to improve their educational experience in regards to information literacy skills and the use of the media center." Lee works "very hard to ensure that all students use the media center" and he hopes to "expose their true potential" through his position in the school. Mae elaborated on the roles in *Information Power* by stating her purpose was "to enable all students to become contributing citizens who can communicate effectively, gather and use information, make responsible decisions, utilize technology effectively and adapt to the challenges of the future." In addition to the roles in *Information Power*, Ann expressed her purpose as

I am here to maintain an orderly, resourceful, user-friendly facility and that is both a physical and virtual facility. I am here to assist all school staff and students in the location and use of resources and that is both physical and virtual resources. I am here to assist the school staff in the design of instruction and find instructional materials. I am here to teach large groups, small groups, and one on one. And I am here to use my technology skills in whatever way that will enhance

communication, instruction, school culture, and climate. In whatever ways the leadership and circumstances of this school allow me to do that.

Research has shown SLMSs have the capability to positively affect student achievement in their school (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004). SLMSs can help teachers meet the prescribed outcomes of today's standards-based education system in creative, engaging ways. Lee outlined his view of his role in student achievement:

The core function of the school is teaching and learning. The core function of the school library media program should be the support of student achievement. The school library media specialist should be teaching, collaborating, and providing information and resources that support this mission. In my opinion, the focus of the school library media specialist should be the mission of the school, which is teaching and learning.

Lee acknowledged one way he contributes to student achievement in his school is by purchasing needed resources to enhance learning and to assist with test preparation such as online graduation test preparation software. Lee recognized that by teaching information literacy skills and encouraging voluntary reading, he can help teachers and students effectively access and use resources during this explosion of information and technology. Lee noted in his school,

The research skills are taught in correlation with their classroom lessons. The research they are doing daily applies to a specific class but overall they are really

learning lifelong learning skills during these projects when they learn how to gather and use information that they need.

When asked why he believed he excels in his profession, Lee answered

I feel that my work with GLMA has really inspired me to take professionalism to the next step. When you are the only person in your school that does what you do, you can feel a bit isolated. Only when you get involved can you truly grow and push yourself. You are able to meet and collaborate with an amazing group of people who will inspire you and keep you fresh and excited. Working together, the media specialists in Georgia can truly make a difference in student achievement!

Mae concurred with Lee and Ann that SLMSs have a unique position within the school, which enables them to work with every member of the learning community. Mae recognized SLMSs impact their schools in many ways. She suggested,

Our job as a school media specialist is many faceted and impacts the entire school. I see these three things as most important: encouraging reading and providing information literacy skills to make our students lifelong learners; helping teachers teach through collaboration; and collection development to provide the best resources—print, electronic, equipment, AV—to support the curriculum. A good media program includes these elements and more....and, indeed, enhances student achievement. I know that my role is critical to the success of my school and the students in it.

Mae is convinced she contributes to student achievement in her school by helping one student at a time as they work on assignments and build information literacy skills by

using the media center. Mae acknowledged,

I must focus on making an impact one student at a time....one teacher at a time...  
Every time a student calls me by name or smiles and says thank you, I feel that  
maybe I've made an impression. Every time a teacher comes to the media center  
because a colleague has said that I can help, I know that I'm making a difference.  
Teachers are always amazed at the difference our contributions through  
collaboration can make!

She went on to say “so as far as contributing to test scores all I know is that what we do  
here supports what they are doing in the classroom so we constantly, one kid at a time,  
re-teach what they are doing in the classroom.” Mae acknowledged that the media  
program positively affects student achievement but she understands administrators want  
“something you can measure. But so much of what we [SLMSs] do with kids is not  
measurable.” Mae felt like it was hard to make a direct correlation from the media  
program to test scores and grades but she deemed she can make a difference on  
standardized tests by promoting reading. She stated,

If they read the scores go up. Kids don't score well because they don't read. I  
truly believe that. If kids read more then all their scores and grades would go up  
just because of exposure to the printed word.

When asked why she thought she excels in her profession, Mae acknowledged

It was the willingness of other leaders in the school library field to help a new  
media specialist to grow and learn that inspired me to continue to strive to do my  
best for the students and teachers each and every day.

Although Ann is disheartened by her role in her current school, she is adamant

about the positive impact all educators including SLMSs can have on students. Ann recognized that students in today's classrooms are tomorrow's decision-makers and that the role of educators is to prepare these young people for meaningful roles in an increasingly interconnected global society. Ann believed that SLMSs can have a positive effect on all learning that takes place in the school. When asked about SLMSs' affect on student achievement, Ann said

The term 'student achievement' is a little narrow for me, because the connotation in today's context is often narrowed to standardized test scores. Our mission is much wider—the 'learning' word is better, because it encompasses our mission to do everything we can to make lifelong learners (and avid readers) of our students, and that is way bigger than 'achievement.' The other word in the equation—teaching—is about us as teachers and about the many ways we support classroom teachers and administrators as they foster learning and the school's culture of excellence. Every day I try to tell myself that my interactions with students are laying the groundwork for days in their future when they may choose to take their own children to a public library's story hour. In this way, I believe my actions and work impact the NEXT generation. I think that's bigger and more profound than the term 'student achievement.'

Ann felt like she contributes to student achievement in her particular high school but only in small ways and she is not contributing up to the full potential that she knows she can. Ann maintained she has contributed to student achievement more in other schools she has worked in. She shared,

In this particular school, I don't feel I am making very much of an impact on

student achievement because the students who are achieving would be achieving if I weren't here. And the students who aren't achieving, I don't feel like I am in a position to help them achieve more. When I received National Board it was at an apex of a thirteen year career as an elementary school media specialist and the things I achieved there were bigger and more positive than anything I get to do here.

Ann expressed her concern for the students that were not achieving and has been looking for ways to reach out to them. She stated,

My concern is the lack of relationships with 'marginal' students who travel through their high school years as disengaged, hostile, lost, un-related-to individuals. I know of one media specialist who has really reached out to a certain segment by buying, reading, and being able to readily discuss graphic novels with them, informally. I believe all school library media specialists need to try to find some niche to reach students on a personal level.

When asked why she believed she excels in her profession, Ann stated

The experience of working with extremely at-risk populations for my entire career, in three different school districts, drove me to constantly innovate and try to find ways that the media program could help economically disadvantaged students. That led to some creative programming and high-energy activities. The flip side is that it can lead to frustration and burn-out if you're not careful.

Lee and Mae do not see the library media field as being in critical need of more people to enter the field. Lee reflected on the issue and declared "a lot of people see that the school library media specialist position is important and choose to move into the

field.” He is worried about

People who move into the field without knowing what the position is really all about and stay a couple of years before they decide it is not for them. Then the library media center is a mess because they were on emergency certification for several years [up to three years] without really knowing how to perform the tasks required of this position.

Mae shared this same concern. She explained,

I hope people are not leaving the classroom because they think this job is easier than teaching. They may think that ‘oh boy I do not have to grade papers and I don’t have to have parent conferences anymore.’ But this is not necessarily an easier job but a different job. To do this job well you have to have a passion for it. You have to care and you really have to put yourself out there with public relations or you will be sitting in here by yourself.

Mae went on to say,

I think probably the one thing that would make someone want to become a media specialist is having an experience with a good media specialist. A teacher in a school with a dynamic media specialist who is active and involved might want to go into the field. If I am a good role model then someone else might want to do what I do because they think it is a good thing.

Ann does not encourage people to go into the media field because

It is hard for me to encourage people right now because I don’t feel optimistic about the survival of this position. I think all you can do to inspire the right people to become media specialists are for the right people—the vibrant, successful

people—to be inspiring.

All three participants agreed that due to budget cuts and national accountability systems, their positions are in danger of being cut. They all believe every SLMS should proactively demonstrate their valuable role within the school. Other research concurs with this by indicating that unless SLMSs distinguish their role, particularly in relation to information technologies, they may disappear from schools (Yates, 1997). Ann recognized that many people do not understand the function of a SLMS:

It's sad and ironic to me that the ready availability of lots of information (quality and not-so-high-quality) online has given students and teachers a mindset that media specialists are no longer needed as mediators between them and the 'collection.' The collection, of which media specialists had traditionally been the masters and keepers, in a way—is now online resources, for which users feel a closer ownership, and which they believe they know how to navigate by virtue of its ready availability—their lack of skills notwithstanding.

The three participants were asked for their advice to new media specialists that would enable them to build up to the expert level in the profession. This line of questioning revealed the participants' thoughts about how they themselves became experts in the field. Lee thinks the most important thing someone who is new to the field can do is “to get involved with the professional organizations.” Mae has many suggestions for individuals thinking of entering the field—join a professional organization, read journals and children's or young adult literature, be organized, and never stop learning. Ann's advice is

Walk Two Moons [reference to the 1995 Newbery Medal winning book with this



title by Sharon Creech] in the shoes of one of the best. That is what it would take. Because a lot of people the first words that you hear out of their mouth when they are thinking about getting into this field is 'I just love to read.' There is a lot more to it than that so they need to walk in the shoes of a current media specialist.

These three ESLMSs had many suggestions for other individuals wanting to implement an exemplary media program. Lee offered that in order to implement an exemplary media program one needs to know what elements constitute a program that has been shown to be successful. Lee suggested that other media specialists

Look at an exemplary media program. The state [Georgia Department of Education] has set up an exemplary media program rubric and they can look at that to know what one looks like. The application process for that is a great way to know how to implement an exemplary program. The National Board standards in library media could also provide some guidance for what their perception of an exemplary library media program looks like.

Mae said if she could only give one piece of advice to other media specialists it would be "you have to do everything you can do every minute of every day for public relations. Always do everything you can do to get them in here." Mae understood that an ESLMS must promote the good things that are happening in the media program because the patrons must support a media program for it to truly be exemplary. Ann had lots of advice for media specialists wanting to implement an exemplary media program:

Choose program elements that will get the leadership at your school in your pocket right away; choose program elements that will meet the needs of your school and the people in your school; use your talents whatever they are; meet the

needs of your patrons one at a time; and make yourself indispensable in your school.

All three participants agreed that the National Board Certification process renewed their purpose and focus. Since receiving their certification, the three participants in this study remain passionate about their profession through several different means. Lee deemed one way to renew your purpose and focus is by networking with other exemplary professionals in the field. He recommended

Belonging to national organizations like AASL [American Association of School Librarians] and ISTE [International Society for Technology in Education] and attending their conferences (Reno, NV and Atlanta, GA 2007 respectively) keep me fresh and up-to-date. Belonging to state organizations like GLMA [Georgia Library Media Association] and attending state conferences like GaCOMO [Georgia Council of Media Organizations] and GaETC [Georgia Educational Technology Conference] provide a network of professionals in the state. The media consortiums at the ETTC [Educational Technology Training Center] or RESA [Regional Educational Service Agencies] are also great ways to reconnect and re-energize with media professionals. We [RESA in his region] just had our Fall Media Consortium and there were over 100 library media specialists in attendance from all over the region. We learned about the Georgia Standards, GALILEO [Georgia Library Learning Online], and obtained valuable information from Judy Serritella [Coordinator of Library Media Services at the State Department of Education]. All that to say, there is not an excuse for library media specialists to remain isolated in their schools with all the opportunities available.

After over thirty years, Mae stays passionate about her profession by appreciating the benefits of her job and staying current on new technologies and resources. She elaborated,

In order to remain passionate about the most important job in the school, in the largest classroom in the school, I must delight in small successes—a heartfelt thank-you from a teary student whose paper you rescued from a faulty diskette; the delight in the face of a social studies teacher when you showed her the Writing Prompt Builder in video streaming; the proud parent looking at her child's art on display at the school's very first art show; the school secretary who sighed when you finally got her to understand how to send a meeting to someone's Outlook calendar; the assistant principal who had been searching the Internet for hours looking for something and finally came to you for help. Keeping up with professional reading and going to conferences also help keep me passionate. Our [SLMSs] job requires that we must keep up with new resources and technologies. I take every professional development opportunity I can. . . I have to take the responsibility of keeping myself fresh and the passion alive.

Ann reported that connecting with students and teaching successful lessons keeps her rejuvenated in her job. She shared,

After finishing a particularly good zinger of a book, the anticipation of sharing this with students in the coming months fuels my passion for the profession. After a discouraging month this fall, I decided to return to one of the profession's foundations—the power of story—and go tell stories in some of our upper level classes. The faces of these 16 and 17 year olds were not much different than those

of elementary children who had been listeners for years in my previous job. The cool thing was that I was constantly trying to apply National Board Certification principles. I felt like I knew my learners, and I knew that these learners would need a visual cue or hook to hang from during these stories, so I used software and music to produce a video ‘trailer’ to open the story session, and it had the exact effect I had hoped for. So the power of story, literature, and okay, yes, technology too invigorated me.

To encourage more educators to pursue National Board Certification, all three participants indicated that the monetary incentive needs to be reinstated without all the limitations that are currently in place. In 2005, the General Assembly amended the incentive legislation that gave National Board Certified educators in Georgia a ten percent pay raise on their state salary. The amended legislation now rewards only those educators who achieve National Board Certification AND who work in a high-needs (i.e. the school must have ‘Needs Improvement’ status) school as determined by the State Report Card. In response to this new legislation, former Georgia Governor Roy E. Barnes declared, “investing in teacher quality is not a luxury to be afforded only in times of economic prosperity. By supporting National Board Certification in ALL of our schools, we will help create the schools that all of our children deserve” (Barnes, 2005, para. 8).

Lee recognized that the number of professionals choosing to undertake the National Board Certification process has dropped from previous years. He acknowledged, “people just did not want to go through the rigorous process without a guaranteed pay raise. The research has shown that people who go through the process are much more effective educators so they deserve a pay incentive.” Mae asserted, “It seems they are

going backwards. They [Georgia's Professional Standards Commission] want highly qualified educators in the schools, but then they change the rules and discourage National Board Certification." Ann expressed,

It distresses me that some states are moving toward their own model of master teacher certification. It seems redundant, expensive, and unnecessary, given the fabulous model that National Board Certification already provides. Why reinvent a great wheel? Why add more offices, positions, and expenses to state education bureaucracies when this mechanism is already available?

Ann was referring to the Professional Standards Commission establishing a Master Teacher Certification with criteria similar to the National Board Certification. A public school teacher (SLMSs are not allowed to apply) with three or more years of teaching experience in Georgia may submit an application for the Master Teacher Certification. If the Professional Standards Commission determines the teacher meets the criteria then he/she must complete a portfolio that includes evidence of student achievement and progress. Upon meeting the criteria, a teacher is awarded the Master Teacher Certification that is valid for a seven year period of time. There are not monetary incentives in place yet for individuals achieving the Master Teacher Certification but many districts give these certified teachers additional planning periods in order to collaborate with other teachers.

National Board Certification has been recognized as a way to show accomplishment as well as a way to renew an educator's purpose and focus. All three participants deemed National Board Certification as one of the best professional development opportunities available to educators. Lee declared,

The National Certification process is the most powerful professional development that I have been involved in. Not only is it specifically geared towards improving my specific school library media program, but the process of reflecting on your own practice is an intense way of recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of your own professional practices. You have to be actively involved during the National Board Certification process in all aspects of the library media program to be successful and it is not something that you can throw together in a couple of weeks. The preparation and support that I participated in for beginning and completing the National Board Certification process were also effective professional development activities. The entire National Board Certification process has helped me to establish myself as an effective educational professional.

All three participants asserted that they are personally and professionally more reflective after having gone through the National Board Certification process. Lee reported, "I still use the reflection process to think about and decide what works and what does not and reflecting how to make things better." He reasoned, "Growth happens when we are able to reflect on our practice." Lee also felt like the process was beneficial because of the contacts that he made in the library media field and in other education fields. He said, "The National Board Certification process is definitely a time-consuming and grueling process, but the recognition and respect that has been generated definitely puts us at another level in our careers." Mae explained that the National Board process made her more reflective and focused. She maintained,

Your reason for existing [meaning the reason for the SLMS position to exist in schools] changes because all of a sudden if it is not about student learning then it

should not be happening. You learn to see everything through a focus of student achievement so that makes things different and you become reflective. That whole reflective thing is something that I never took the time to do.

Ann expressed that due to successfully completing the National Board process she is much more analytical and critical of what is happening in the education system. Ann admitted,

I analyze all the teaching that I do and I agonize over failures that I commit everyday. I am far more critical of school leadership. I am way more sympathetic to teachers. When I went through the National Board Certification process and when I passed, it was a great affirmation that I can do this. I change my lessons and strategies all the time. I analyze every little segment of instruction all the time. I analyze my learners. And I have less and less patience for riding dead horses.

Although all three participants maintained that National Board Certification is the highest recognition they could achieve in their profession, they acknowledged that they must continue to set professional goals in order to grow as professionals. Lee held he

Would really like to apply for the exemplary media program recognition through the state. The rubric really is all encompassing for what we do here with the media program so whether I apply and get it, I still use the rubric as a benchmark for the media program here in order to ensure high standards are being set and obtained.

Mae revealed that her professional goal for a long time has been to become the system director and that is what she has worked towards by adding Leadership to her

certification and completing the National Board Certification process. Although she believed this position was going to be created in her county she now realizes it will not happen before she is ready to retire. Mae has resolved to set new professional goals and she noted, “I need to find another venue to use the gifts and knowledge that I have and I don’t know what that is going to be yet.” Ann has set numerous goals for herself: to produce, revise, and maintain the Web page and kiosk; revamp the yearly projects—for example, the ninth grade project where she spends seventeen weeks with every Geography class in her school—five days per class; weed the collection; revitalize interest in the print collection; make the wireless infrastructure at her school work more effectively; revamp the media center rules to enforce an atmosphere of academic achievement in the media center; to reduce the number of duties outside of the media center such as organizing prom [This ESLMS, with the other media specialist in her school, volunteered to plan prom four years ago and they have been doing it ever since. She is planning to get out of this outside voluntary duty by speaking with the principal, who is new this year]; improve her professional skills; make the media center more inviting by remodeling; offer more mandatory sessions for staff development; and create a newsletter for the media program.

Lee’s personal goal is to earn a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and his professional goal is to remain active in state and national organizations. Lee felt like there is a strong connection between his personal and professional goals and the school’s goals because the work he does in his graduate classes is used to better the media program at his school. He revealed,

My job is integrated into pretty much everything that I do for graduate school. If I



have a research class or write a paper I try to incorporate it into how the school library media center affects whatever we are covering in class.

For her professional goals, Mae wants to attend more national conferences and to take more online classes. Although Mae is in a transition period and is working on setting her new personal goals, in the past she has always seen a connection between her goals and the school's goals. She wishes that the national goals imposed on the schools [through the *No Child Left Behind* legislation] would allow for the promotion of lifelong learning skills that cannot be measured on a test. She asserted,

Laws and policies demand that everything is test driven and everything is finite. But personally for me I think of my job as literacy. Just read and learn and set yourself to the point that you can do that the rest of your life. So I look at it as my goal is literacy, which is everything from reading to finding ideas and being able to answer your own questions. Lifelong learning is something that can't always be measured on a test.

Ann is in agreement with Mae; she does support her school's goals but does not necessarily support all the goals of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Ann elaborated,

Those things that stand at the principal's forefront [academic achievement, safety, discipline, and staff morale], I support them and I understand that safety, discipline, and staff morale have got to be repaired here. I don't feel like my goals connect directly to the graduation rate and the AYP [the current way academic achievement is measured at her school]. I feel a dissonance between some of my personal ideas and the *No Child Left Behind* legislation because that is a game. Getting the 80%, the 90% who are not college prep material, getting those to get a

piece of paper from this dysfunctional system just bothers me. We need to do what is right for each individual student and that may not be to push them to go to college.

Ann believed the only way she could grow professionally and personally is by leaving her current school. She plans to transfer to an elementary school in the same county next year.

Unlike in the business world, education does not have profit sharing incentives or bonuses for successful work but there are many potential rewards for exemplary work in the education field such as leadership opportunities, stipends, intrinsic rewards, and so forth. Due to his exemplary work in his school, Lee felt like he has received numerous rewards and benefits. He identified

Leadership opportunities. I am involved with several state professional organizations in a leadership capacity due to my exemplary work being recognized. I have had some opportunities to travel. I was able to travel to Japan and to New Zealand with related school library functions. Monetarily, the ten percent was a great incentive. Just the contacts and networking that I have done are great benefits. I was invited to the School Library Journal summit in New York and there is another one this year in Chicago.

Clearly, Mae understood the strongest reward she has received for her exemplary work is the intrinsic reward of self satisfaction for a job well done. Mae offered some rewards and benefits received because of her exemplary work are personal pride, Teacher of the Month award at her school, nomination for Teacher of the Year award at her school, leadership opportunities, and gratitude from students and staff at her school. Mae

indicated the best leadership opportunity she has received is her invitation to serve on the county ad hoc committee due to her National Board Certification. This committee allows Mae to provide input into the school district initiatives and needs. She clarified this role,

Our school superintendent has established an ad hoc committee of only National Board Certified teachers that meet biannually for discussion about issues in our district. He recognizes and values our opinions on ways to improve the efforts of our system to increase student achievement.

Although she feels right now she is only getting a monetary benefit from her exemplary work, Ann discussed in the past she has received leadership opportunities; intrinsic rewards when students and staff showed their appreciation; power; prestige; and recognition. Ann expressed,

National Board Certification is a recognition that causes people to respect your professional standing more. That happened to me immediately when I received certification; I felt that the colleagues in the school where I worked at that time accorded me a level of prestige, led by the fantastic support of our principal, and that my ideas and opinions had added credibility.

*Summary of the Findings for the Concept of the ESLMS's Purpose*

The ESLMSs' purpose refers to a concept of educator development that includes professional goals, beliefs and values including moral purpose, motivations, connections between organizational goals and professional goals, and reasons for seeking growth opportunities such as National Board Certification. The findings of the ESLMSs' perception of their purpose were gathered from the data from the questionnaires for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, examination of artifacts

collected, and the responses from a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants. All data resources were used to obtain data to analyze the ESLMSs' purpose, the first area of the total educator concept. The overall finding for the notion of ESLMSs' purpose indicate that ESLMSs must understand their purpose and goals and those purposes and goals must align with those of the schools in which they work in order to excel in their profession.

*Research Question #2: How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?*

The ESLMSs' perception of themselves as persons refers to a concept of educator development that includes attitude, comfort levels, personal goals and motivations, connections between organizational goals and personal goals, emotional intelligence, recognition of strengths and skills, and identification of areas for improvement and needs. Who SLMSs are as people, both personally and professionally, shape who they are as educators. If there is only a focus on external behaviors and criteria with no allowance for the exploration of the inner SLMS as a person than the chances for growth and change may be minimized. The questionnaire data, interview data, artifacts collected, state and federal reports, and online discussion forum responses were analyzed and these findings were categorized as pertaining to the SLMSs' perception of themselves as persons. The findings on the ESLMSs' perception of themselves as persons included

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their purpose for going into the profession
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their current position as a lifelong career
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their comfort level with each of the

four roles of a media specialist as defined in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the impact the successful completion of the National Board Certification process had on their professional practices and on them personally as individuals
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their plans for future professional and personal growth
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their personal strengths, unique skills and experiences that contribute to the effectiveness of their school

Many SLMSs are frustrated teachers who wanted to get out of the classroom.

There is a saying that “those who can’t do teach. Those who can’t teach become administrators or support staff” (i.e. school library media specialists, school counselors, etc.). But as can be seen from the ESLMSs in this study, many people become SLMSs because they see greater possibilities to positively affect more students and they see the opportunity to bring about change in the whole school. Lee saw the position as a SLMS as an opportunity to share his love of reading and skills in technology with the students in his school. When Lee became a SLMS, he felt his school was lacking a strong voluntary reading program and someone to assist with technology and instructional technology needs in the school. Lee entered the field because he saw this need in his school and resolved to fill that need. Mae became interested in the media profession because she loved to read; as a teacher she was a user of media; and her favorite elementary school teacher and mentor became a high school media specialist. Thus, her mentor inspired Mae to also become a SLMS because she recognized the position as a way to positively

affect student learning on a school wide basis. Ann chose to become a librarian on the recommendation of her professor who knew her passion for learning and helping others learn. Ann added,

One attribute of many people who end up as teachers is that they like to do well in a school setting. We were achievers in school, who liked school, and so we basically never left. Exemplary educators are often just extending their careers as exemplary students, while wearing the hat of staff members as adults. In this field, being a high achiever is not just a matter of doing the same thing well over and over again, but innovating and adjusting to new conditions and technologies.

All three participants expressed current and/or past satisfaction with their chosen profession but all three have future plans to move to other positions. Although Lee admitted “I really enjoy what I do so I could do this for the rest of my career,” he “would really like to move into a higher position by moving into administration, or into the central office, or the department of education.” Mae has been in education for over thirty years so she did hold this position as a lifelong career. She is currently considering other options for jobs. Mae revealed, “I never thought I would say this but I am getting burned out here. I can’t keep doing **this** [emphasized] job at **this** [emphasized] school forever. I don’t want to retire but I do want to do something else.” Ann expressed her desire for this position to be a lifelong career but she is feeling very insecure about how long the position will be around. She indicated,

I do view it as a lifelong career and I have seven or eight years at least left. But I see this position as being very endangered. I don’t know if this position will live long enough for me to make it a lifelong position. I think it might die before that.

I might become an elementary music teacher if I have to.

When asked why she feels she has no job security in her position she elaborated,

If *No Child Left Behind* and the federal regime stay the same and if we go state wide in terms of the accreditation board, I think that standardized testing with the pressures of scores and the inability to REALLY, REALLY [emphasized] prove a tangible DIRECT, DIRECT [emphasized] impact on school by media programs will make these positions very scarce. I think they will still exist but I think that they will be scarce. I think a professional will serve several schools with clerks serving all schools. That is my guess. I hope that won't take place but we will see.

Due to his previous work in the education field, Lee indicated his strength is working with students of every ability level and at all grade levels. Lee identified his strengths as a SLMS are in the areas of reading and technology. He revealed, "not only am I strong in technology and instructional technology and knowing how to find good resources but I also have strength in reading and young adult literature and really like to work with the reading aspect of the field." Lee also believed that there are specific areas in the curriculum where his strength is evident. He elaborated,

I have specific areas where I have become the 'expert.' For example careers and the career databases, young adult literature and book selection, and the GALILEO research databases. The students, teachers, and administrators know that I can answer their questions and facilitate their needs in these areas. In my first position as a SLMS, I selected these areas because they complemented the other SLMS's [in his school] skills.

Mae believed her strengths are that she reads and attends conferences to stay current on

the trends in the field and she also has strong communication skills. Ann held that she has many strengths but she feels she is not able to use all of her strengths fully. She identified some of her strengths as being a caring person; being proficient in technology; being innovative; having a passion for reading and learning; having knowledge about the media profession; and as trying to work to make a change to the current education system, which she perceives as failing many students.

Dewey (1915) posited we not only learn from school and from books, but we learn from others because of relating to their experiences. All three individuals that participated in this study have unique experiences and skills that are or have been utilized in their positions that enable them to excel in their professions. Lee reported that his unique experiences and skills are that he is from the community so he has known everyone in the small community for a long time and he has worked as a special education teacher so he is specifically trained to work with students with a wide range of ability levels. Mae judged her unique experiences that make her an ESLMS are that she has completed the National Board process; she has been in other schools in other counties and in other states so she has a global perspective beyond her school; and she participates in national initiatives through professional organizations and conferences. As far as what she gained from undertaking the National Board Process she related,

I have been in education a long time and I have done lots of things and I have three graduate degrees but this, without a doubt, National Board Certification is the most powerful thing I have ever done as a professional educator. It really was a powerful thing. It was a difficult process but very powerful. It gave me recognition in my own building but it took me through a change in the way you



look at what you do on a daily basis. Day after day after day you can just get in a rut. So it really honestly took me to another place in what I do. The National Board Certification process was a way to validate my work as a professional. Ann felt she truly made the elementary school she previously worked in a better place by personally positively affecting student achievement. Ann deemed the current high school she works in is so large and test driven that she is not afforded the opportunity to form relationships with students and affect their learning using her unique skills. She complained,

The problem is that I don't feel like I am able to use any of my unique skills or experiences to make this school more effective. I can write. I can speak. I can do music. I can do storytelling. I can do video production. I can do Web page design. I can design instruction. I can do direct student instruction. But some how I am not doing those things here to make this school more effective.

When asked how the National Board process personally changed her, Ann replied

Just as a person I am more reflective and analytical. For example, I have a music job outside of this—I direct music at a church. I reflect and analyze everything that happens after I hold a rehearsal and after we perform. Did I choose the right music? What happened? What could I have done in the rehearsal that would have helped that? I am using all these National Board strategies in my personal life.

Another example is when I cook; I am just more reflective and analytical.

She went on to say, “One thing about National Board is it empowers you personally. In order to achieve National Board Certification I did it as a team member in the context of my entire school but **I** [emphasized] did it. It was my program.”

Once known as the ‘keeper of books,’ the library media specialist role has transformed into being an integral leader in the education community. As a teacher, information specialist, program administrator, and instructional partner the media specialist does more than just check out books. The ESLMSs that participated in this study performed a wide variety of tasks that were identified in *Information Power* as responsibilities of the media specialist. All three participants in this study indicated that they successfully implemented all four roles as described in *Information Power*. All three ESLMSs agreed that barriers that inhibit them from fulfilling a theoretical ideal role within the school include lack of time, large number of students and staff to serve, and lack of administrative and staff support. Although Lee maintained that he felt comfortable in all the roles of a media specialist, he felt most comfortable as a teacher and least comfortable as a program administrator. Lee noted, “I really enjoy the teacher aspect not only teaching students but also teaching teachers.” He went on to say, “I do feel equally comfortable in all the roles. I would say that program administrator is my least favorite just because there is not enough time in the day to get everything done so that role sometimes falls to the bottom of the list.” Lee did acknowledge that SLMSs must not spend all their time in their favorite role but must fulfill all the roles. He elaborated,

It is so easy to just get bogged down in the day to day running of your media center—doing things the way they have been done for years; checking in those professional journals, but never reading them; running overdue lists rather than doing collection development based on the new standards; going home rather than going to conferences and trainings. It is very important that we step out of our

comfort zone and get involved in instruction, collaboration, and planning. Armed with knowledge and enthusiasm, we must be instructional leaders and instructional partners.

Mae perceives all the roles as intertwined together but highly enjoys “helping teachers teach” so considers the role of instructional partner as her favorite role. Mae acknowledged her least favorite role is that of program administrator. Mae identified the reason for program administration being her least favorite role as “there is never enough time for selection and collection development.” Ann admitted that the role she feels most comfortable in is the program administrator role. She explained,

We have to do all the roles but program administrator is probably the one I am most comfortable in. Even though program administrator sounds far removed from teaching and interacting with the students. When I was at the elementary school, I led the storytelling group, I led the new show broadcast, I led my book clubs. I thought of myself as a program leader. I led those programs. I was working directly with my students. I was a program leader and that is where I was allowed to flower and where I felt like I was making an impact. The kids that I was a program leader for, and that I felt like I had a relationship with, are the kids today that know me and respect me. It is all about relationships.

Ann’s least comfortable role is that of instructional partner. She elaborated,

My personality is such that I like to be in control. When I am partnering with a teacher on a lesson, I am often frustrated with what has or has not been done in the classroom before they got here so that makes me a frustrated partner. I am an instructional partner with my co-media specialist and I stay pretty frustrated in

that role too. So that role is my least comfortable role.

Ann recognizes that the instructional partner role is a very valuable role but she insisted it must be performed properly. She identified,

Collaboration, in the best sense, is a matter of actually trying to conceive with the teacher worthwhile projects from the very beginning point, rather than insert our resources and expertise into assignments that are just not very valid to begin with.

*Summary of the Findings for the Concept of the ESLMs' Perception of Themselves as Persons*

The ESLMs' perception of themselves as persons refers to a concept of educator development that includes attitude, comfort levels, personal goals and motivations, connections between organizational goals and personal goals, emotional intelligence, recognition of strengths and skills, and identification of areas for improvement and needs. The findings of the ESLMs' perception of themselves as persons were gathered from the data from the questionnaires for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, examination of artifacts collected, and the responses from a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants. All data resources were used to obtain data to analyze the ESLMs' perception of themselves as persons, the second area of the total educator concept. The overall finding for the notion of ESLMs' perception of themselves as persons was that ESLMs must be aware of themselves as persons in order to grow and develop as professionals and educators.

*Research Question #3: How do ESLMs perceive the organizational context of their schools?*

The SLMs' perception of the organizational context of their schools refers to a

concept of educator development that includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work and organizational goals. SLMSs' personal and professional lives do not exist in a vacuum. Context of schools as organizations affect SLMSs' role and development. The questionnaire data, interview data, artifacts collected, state and federal reports, and online discussion forum responses were analyzed and these findings were categorized as pertaining to the SLMSs' perception of the organizational context of their schools. The ESLMSs' perception of the organizational context of their schools findings included

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their role in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the benefit of their role to the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their expectations and evaluation of their performance
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their role as a leader in the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of systems of support within the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their school's goals and the school's decision making system
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of collaboration, decision making, and communication systems in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the importance of their role to the daily functioning of their school

Lee distinguished his role within the school as vitally important to its daily functioning. Lee defined it as, "if the school is the backbone that holds everything

together then the media program would be the life blood that carries the oxygen that the body needs to survive.” Lee went on to say that his role is important “because I work with all the teachers in the school trying to find resources and assist with technology.” Lee stated he is “constantly involved in the day to day functioning throughout the school.” Lee felt he has been able to increase public relations for the media center and improve the media program through these actions. Lee observed, “I have known most members of the community for a long time and I think being a member of the community helps in my position.” He judged involvement in the whole community also gives him a wide perspective of what goes on in his school. Lee went on to say “truthfully the library media specialist is an instructional leader in the school already because they have contact with every student and every teacher and are administering the media program.”

Mae perceived herself as essential to holding the school together on a daily basis by assisting students and teachers with class assignments, resource purchases, and technology support. She reported,

I am like the filling of the Oreo cookie. That space between the classroom and the kid. The place between the teachers and the students. Because I work with the students and I work with the teachers and because I am in the middle holding them all together I feel like we reach a satisfying ending.

Mae thought, “On a daily basis our biggest contribution is a place to get homework and project work taken care of.” Mae considered she has been truly vital for bringing about several things in her school that would not currently be present if she had not done them. For example, she started the school Web page; she created the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade English research paper progression; and she added needed resources across the

curriculum such as NoodleBib and Turnitin. Mae went on to say, “I am proud of all of those things and I worked really hard to accomplish them.”

Ann described herself as a support person in the daily functioning of the school—meaning she is not filling the vital teacher role but what she does on a daily basis does make an impact. She understood there are small things she does in her school everyday that would not be done if she did not do them, such as update the school Web site; create scrolling daily announcements; solve technology problems; and help students and teachers find information and resources. Ann thought the most important thing she does on a daily basis is assist the teachers. She offered, “I feel like I make a difference each day in the respect that the teachers are stressed out and stretched to the max so anytime a teacher walks in or anytime someone brings their class in, any little thing I can do to lighten that teacher’s load makes a difference.” Ann posited the role the SLMS can perform in the school depends on the school climate/culture and the role of the administration in setting this culture. She described herself as “a star player on an offense of a football team” in her previous school under supportive administration. In her current school, she feels stuck in a situation in which she has no control. She compared her situation to “riding a dead horse” where her job is to act as a farrier maintaining the hooves, “which is a huge part of the horses’ health because if the feet are not maintained then they will die.” Ann explained, “I am doing the hooves but the horse is already almost dead and it is almost a forgone conclusion so I feel a little silly doing the hooves.” Ann felt like her school is not truly benefiting from her skills, experiences, and qualifications. She revealed,

After four years I feel like I am in a dysfunctional situation at a dysfunctional

school, so they are not really benefiting from having me more than anybody else right now. I feel to a large extent that my hands are tied by a number of things. So I need to leave.

All three participants identified the goals of their school were to increase the number of students that are on track for graduation as well as to increase standardized test scores. Each school also set other smaller goals in addition to the graduation rate and test scores, which were to increase the level of technology integration within the school; to increase the level of parent involvement and contact within the school; and to improve the discipline and safety in the school. Lee stated, “There is also a goal for increasing the level of technology integration for the teachers called the LOTI [Level of Technology Implementation] score.” The goals at Omega High School were decided on by the School Improvement Committee. Lee is on that committee and felt “all the stakeholders had input. Our whole school system went through the accreditation even though each school has its own plan and each school’s committee was made up of a representative from all the stakeholders including parents and students.” Mae explained the goals of Beta High School,

Formally we are trying to improve graduation rates and test scores and SAT scores so everything is high stakes testing. I think one goal of this school through the years has been more parent involvement. We do have high test scores but they are constantly pushing to show an increase no matter how high they go.

Mae related that the goals were decided on by the School Improvement Committee which consists of representatives from every department in the school, administrators, parents, community members, and students. Ann shared that the goals of her school were set by



the principal and superintendent as “safety, discipline, and once those are established and staff morale improves then graduation rate and AYP will come along.”

All three participants believed they are leaders in their schools even if the key participants in their school (i.e. administrators, teachers, and students) do not formally recognize their leadership. For example, Mae referenced the fact that students will often refer to the guidance counselors as administrators because their office is in the administrative suite of the building but they never refer to the media specialists as administrators or leaders. The ESLMSs in this study indicated they lead from the middle through technology expertise, daily interactions with teachers and students, public relations with the community, reading promotion, conducting staff development trainings, collaborative planning, and through their work with committees and leadership teams. The artifacts collected in each school provided evidence that this leadership was taking place in the schools. Lee deemed his most important role as a leader in the school is as an instructional technology specialist. He elaborated,

I am a leader in instructional technology. I got this idea from someone on one of the listservs. They did a Tech Tuesday where they do technology training on Tuesdays. I do it [offer technology trainings on Tuesdays] on an as needed basis. For example, we have thirty-seven new staff this year and they needed training on their email, Microsoft Office products, resources available to them, video streaming, and that sort of thing. So I handle those trainings during Tech Tuesdays. As an instructional technology leader I focus a lot on technology issues in the school.

Mae is only one of two media specialists in her school. The other media specialist was in

the school before her and is the 'head media specialist.' Thus, Mae felt like her leadership role in the school has to be subtle so not to offend the head media specialist. Mae expressed,

I have to find ways in which I can make changes in small subtle ways. If I come up with an idea I go to the department heads. The department heads are the people who make things happen so if I can get an in with the department heads I can make a suggestion and work into some kind of collaboration. So it all has to be done in a subtle way. For example, offering trainings allows me to serve as a leader.

Ann was not satisfied with the leadership role she performs in her current school. She complained,

I am stymied, that is my role. My hands are tied. I am not a department head. Neither the other media specialist nor I are department heads. We go to the meetings but we are not seen with the power, prestige, or importance of a department head. Under three principals, I don't think we have ever been seen that way. I don't see myself as a leader in this school, unfortunately, and I don't think anyone else does either.

When asked how expectations are communicated, all three participants said through yearly evaluations. All three ESLMSs in this study reported that expectations were not clearly communicated to them and that any feedback they receive on their performance was minimal. Lee stated it is actually the opposite of the administration communicating expectations to him because he actually communicates his expectations to the administration. Lee related,

I communicate expectations to the administration so they know what to expect from me. In the past, I have printed off the GLMA evaluation and taken it to the principal because principals often don't know that there are other evaluation forms besides the teacher evaluation instrument.

As far as expectations are concerned, Lee stated

A SLMS's function in the school requires a great deal of public relation skills. . . I make administrators aware of the successes as well as the teachers [in his school] so they will begin to expect the collaboration rather than me having to initiate it every time.

Mae explained that the only expectations for media specialists, in her county, are in the form of a county job description which she helped write and update. Before she initiated the writing of the SLMSs' description several years ago, there were no expectations for media specialists in her county. All three participants create monthly reports covering media center statistics and accomplishments for the month for the administration so that they are knowledgeable about what is happening in the media program on a monthly basis. Mae shared,

The assistant principal for curriculum is our evaluator here and she generally does not do a formal evaluation where someone comes and sits in your room while you are teaching. It has basically been a come in and sign this. Satisfactory, satisfactory. So you are never really sure if the administration knows what we [the two SLMSs in the school] do.

Ann seems to communicate expectations, as Lee and Mae do, to the school administration rather than vice versa. Ann also said that she only receives feedback on

the once a year evaluation form. Although the ESLMSs perceived that their principals were communicating their expectations and encouraging motivation amongst the teachers in the school, the SLMSs seemed to be left out and received no expectations or motivational encouragement from their principals. Principals can potentially influence positive behaviors by encouraging and motivating staff to complete tasks and to reach personal and organizational goals.

Lee felt like the administration at his school was very supportive of him and the media program and he likewise is supportive of the administration in any way possible. He related,

The administration is very open and anytime that I have gone to them they are willing to work with me to solve whatever the issue is. And the same is true with me. Anytime they come to me with a problem I am willing to work through it. So I think the best thing to say is that it is really about finding solutions to whatever is needed.

Mae observed that the administration supports the media program by enforcing a flexible schedule for the media center; by allowing the media specialists full control of their state allotment of media funds; by providing additional funding for items such as overhead bulbs and poster paper; and by providing assistance whenever it is asked for. Mae indicated she had never really thought about ways the media specialists can support the administration before this question was asked, but she felt like the administration is supported by her being in school everyday, by her work that contributes to the school's goals, by solving technology problems for the administration as well as the staff and students, and by setting up equipment for meetings and special events. Ann illustrated

that her administration provides her with full autonomy over her media program. Ann explained her administration “allows us to spend our budget without question. They allow us to do whatever we want in here. That is very supportive.” Ann noted that she supports the administration in many ways:

I try to make them aware of what my talents and abilities are. And I have tried to gently point out some needs in this school. I support the administration by keeping this place orderly and safe and maintaining discipline, which are their big goals. So I try to do my individual part in the big picture of their goals.

All three participants indicated that planning occurs frequently at all times during the day. Lee maintained planning occurs “all the time. The teachers feel comfortable coming to me at any time. I go out in the school and attend lots of the meetings for opportunities to work with teachers.” Mae expressed, “you collaborate when you can. I am sorry to say there is no plan for it. It just happens on the fly most of the time.” Ann reinforced Lee and Mae’s situations with planning, when she identified planning occurs “on the fly. Informally. Via email.”

*Summary of the Findings for the Concept of the SLMSs’ Perception of the Organizational Context of their school*

The SLMSs’ perception of the organizational context of their schools refers to a concept of educator development that includes the environmental issues such as the facility itself, the way work is organized, systems of support within the school, the role of the ESLMS within the school, coordination and collaboration to complete work, and organizational goals. Schools are complex environments which influence a SLMS’s purpose as well as who they are as a person. The findings of the ESLMSs’ perception of

the organizational context of their schools were gathered from the data from the questionnaires for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, examination of artifacts collected, and the responses from a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants. All data resources were used to obtain data to analyze the ESLMSs' perception of the organizational context of their schools, the third area of the total educator concept. The overall finding for the notion of ESLMSs' perception of the organizational context of their schools indicate that the organizational context of the ESLMSs' school must allow them control of aspects of their media program in order to implement an exemplary media program.

*Research Question #4: How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?*

The SLMSs' perception of the culture of their schools refers to a concept of educator development that includes dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMSs form within the school between staff and students. SLMSs' role and development within a school does not take place in isolation. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs' role and their development. The questionnaire data, interview data, artifacts collected, state and federal reports, and online discussion forum responses were analyzed and these findings were categorized as pertaining to the SLMSs' perception of the culture of their schools. The ESLMSs' perception of the culture of their schools findings included

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of their motives for working in the specific school they currently work in

- identification of the ESLMS's perception of the dominant beliefs and values present in their school and connections between these and their personal beliefs and values
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of systems of empowerment within the school
- identification of the ESLMS's perception of authority, community, and collegiality in their school
- identification of the ESLMS's own perception of their school's culture as well as their perception of students' and teachers' view of the school's culture.

Lee described his school as “a big family” using only positive attributes to describe his school. He explained, “We only have one feeder middle school and one elementary school which are together on this side of the county so this is truly a community high school. It is really like a big family here.” He considered the school atmosphere to be very “laid back and friendly.” Regarding her school, Mae used the metaphor of a jar of jellybeans, which has both positive and negative traits. Mae answered,

Our school is like a jar of jellybeans. We are in this tiny, little space and we are all so different. We have all kinds of diversity but we are sitting in such a small space and they are not going to be building another high school for at least four years.

To describe her school as a metaphor, Ann explained she had to describe her school in a pessimistic way because that is how she views her school right now. Ann chose a train wreck to describe her school and only used negative attributes in the description. In Ann's words, her school is

Actually a train wreck. The middle class students are in this safe car. Just by virtue of what they were born as. They are in the safe car and they are going to be okay but all the others are in a fatal situation. That is the culture of this school. When you are in high school you are at the end of the train route here, you see the end result. In elementary school you still have hope. The odd thing is that I am seeing my elementary kids here. The very last group that I had at the elementary school is now in the ninth grade. I have this connection with those kids that were in my storytelling group, in my reading clubs, they were on my news crews. I have this connection with them and they respect me. I see hope for some of them that I know personally but I have sympathy for a lot of them that are not the middle class achievers because they are putting them in this dangerous train that is not getting them anywhere.

All three participants expressed that their high schools were aligned to the norm by fostering beliefs and values that are typical for middle class rules, regulations, and expectations. All three participants also reported that there are numerous subgroups of students within their schools that are not being successful due to the fact that they do not fit in with these beliefs and values. Other than the normal school values, Lee felt the dominant beliefs and values present in his school were all tied to family values and the community. He pointed out that most people have lived in this small community most of their lives and everyone knows each other in the community. Lee affirmed that all the students know each other and since there is only one feeder elementary and one feeder middle school they all go to school together through high school. He declared, “The community atmosphere makes sure everyone feels connected to the school.”



Mae believed it was too hard to pinpoint underlying beliefs and values of her school other than the middle class norms, because “we have lots of diversity to the point we are fragmented.” She acknowledged,

Probably the most consistent part of my high school is the media center, its staff and program. We work hard to provide our students with an information and technology center, a place where they can work and succeed. This may not give us the power to change the culture in our school, but I hope it does create an equal playing field where all are welcome and all achieve.

Mae deemed her personal value of believing every student can be successful aligns with the school placing such a high value on academic success. She asserted,

Accountability is very important in my school and district. I work very hard as a library teacher and feel that I am accountable for the largest classroom in my school. While accountability is often tied to test scores, I do feel that I contribute to student achievement. My media program, run by an accomplished library teacher, is able to assist students in being successful in their class work and contributes to extended lifelong learning.

Similar to Lee and Mae’s perception of their schools, Ann reported that her school places a high value and aligns all their beliefs with academic achievement and producing disciplined, productive citizens. Ann stated that her goals align to the school’s goals, “I value order and safety, certainly, and academic achievement. I value all those things but we are not serving all our kids by just looking at those goals.”

Theoretically, the fact that these SLMSs are exemplary implies that they do have some influence in the school culture at their schools. Lee felt like his voice is heard in the

school. He gets heard by volunteering to serve on the leadership committee and the school improvement team committee where he is not “shy about speaking up but in a diplomatic way.” He also gets his voice heard by working closely with the county technology media director. Mae maintained she has a voice in the school and she also felt she has a voice in the county because she has worked so closely with the technology director over the years that she often is called upon for advice from this director. Although Ann felt she had a voice in the school, she also felt her voice could not really make a difference even though the administration is always willing to listen. She revealed, “I have a voice but the train is on the track and it is going no matter what. This administration is absolutely willing to listen but *No Child Left Behind* is driving this train.” Ann maintained, because of her own personal experiences, in elementary schools there is a better chance of the school staff changing the culture than at the high school level. She elucidated,

I think when you get to high school you realize that in an elementary school the adults have power they are the biggest people and they have physical power, and they can dictate the culture. They can establish it. Here [high school] the adolescent culture is in control no matter what.

All three participants concurred that strong leadership is needed within a school in order to empower students and staff, set a positive school culture, and enable a SLMS to implement an exemplary media program. Lee felt that the administration at his school empowers their students and staff by letting them know that their opinion matters. He explained,

It goes back to the family feeling and that they show that they [administration]

care and that you matter and that the students matter and their educational process matters. I have worked with administrators that have tried to micromanage and showed that your decisions really did not matter unless they approved of it but this administration recognizes that you have an opinion and that opinion matters.

The main thing is that the principal will listen and shows that he cares.

Lee also acknowledged his ability to empower students in his school when he stated,

Being in the position of being an instructional leader [indicating the SLMS position] in a school is a big deal, because it is such a responsibility and opportunity to be able to touch every student and staff member. I do believe that it's much easier and more fulfilling to act as an instructional leader if one is actually empowered to do so by a very successful leader, such as a principal. The best principal I have had was able to empower all his staff to be leaders, and the school climate reflected this.

Mae believed the administration empowers students by allowing them to have say in the way the school is run through the student advisory council and by having student representatives on numerous committees throughout the school, such as the media committee and school improvement committee. Mae understood the administration empowers her by allowing her control of the media program and its budget. Ann acknowledged that an effective school leader can provide the right kind of support in order to ensure the entire school is successful. She shared,

At one time I lived in Camelot and it was at \_\_\_\_\_ elementary school where we had a fabulous leader. It was a 99% high poverty school that just had everything going against it but it had a very effective leader and he empowered

other people to be effective leaders. While you are on the Titanic and it was sinking you still felt like you were saving people.

Ann noted that her current school leader empowers her and the students at her school by “creating a safe and orderly environment.”

All three participants were in unison in their perception that their schools do not promote community and collegiality amongst the professional staff. It seems at the high school level that each department is a separate community, which does not spend much time relating or working with other departments or the community in general. Although Lee referred to his school as departmentalized, he does believe the community is encouraged to become involved in the school. He elaborated, “The community has just really come together around the school. The openness of the school encourages parents to come up.” Mae does not feel her school promotes community or collegiality at all. She observed, “I don’t get that camaraderie, whether it is in the staff or students within the school.” Mae went on to say “people know their department and really that is all they know. In here we [the media staff] try to know everybody because that is part of public relations.” Ann felt her school did not promote community and collegiality, but that it existed naturally within the departments. She maintained, “Within departments there is community and collegiality. I feel completely left out of that loop.”

The media specialist often feels isolated in the school so they often view the school culture as ‘outsiders.’ SLMSs often believe the students and staff are the key participants in the school and are the true ‘insiders’ of the school. Thus, questions were asked to see if the media specialists perceived that students and staff felt differently about the school culture due to their status as insiders but all three participants thought students

and staff would view the culture of their schools the same way as they did. Lee thought students would see the school as a place to go to be cared about. He indicated,

I think a student would describe the school as a place to hang out and see their friends. We do have students that go to college but the majority will work in one of the large industries where they don't really need an education. We also have a large vocational college here and tech school that are popular choices for students. I think most students would agree that there is a caring atmosphere at this school so they come for the caring atmosphere as opposed to preparation for post-secondary education.

Lee deemed the teachers at his school see the school culture the same way as he does, even though his role in the school is different. He reported,

The teachers at this school are all from the community. They have either adopted it as their community or actually grew up in the community so they have a lot invested in the school and this can be shown from the caring atmosphere and they would see it the same way I do—caring and laid back.

Mae actually asked a senior her impressions of the school culture and she had a similar response to Mae that the school is very diversified and full of cliques. The student shared, “You are friends with the kids in your neighborhood, or friends with your football team guys so we are having the hardest time getting everyone to be a school.” Mae also asked a science teacher, who is also a football coach, about his thoughts on the school culture and his response was similar to Mae's and the senior's about the diversity causing a fragmented culture. The teacher responded, “We have had such a rough history at this school of trying to be on the same page. The football team is turning around so there is a

little building of pride that we did not have here before.”

Similar to Mae, Ann also referred to the diversified subcultures in her school when she discussed the topic of the students’ impressions of the school culture:

I think it depends on which little pocket of adolescent culture you happen to ask. I think that is the problem. If you ask the students who are in line with our goals—graduation and academic achievement—if you asked one of our little college preppies who is involved in activities you would have a different answer than if you asked one of the hip hop or redneck students.

Ann noted,

I think a teacher would say the same thing that I would say, that you have this little group of kids who are playing the game that achievement is supposed to be about and there are all these other groups that are not being served and that we are losing them. If we don’t get back to small communities where each little student is cared about and considered somebody by their teachers, and it is not the teachers’ fault it is just that it is too big and there is too much on the teachers’ plate, if we don’t get back to that then it will never get better. It comes down to Ruby Payne’s belief that ‘no significant learning occurs without a significant relationship.’ The only significant relationships that occur in this school are with the students that are succeeding in both the academic and extracurricular areas. The other relationships are just not there. Those students are literally falling through the cracks because there is no relationship holding them up above the cracks.

All three participants believe that school culture is set by the staff at the school,

including the SLMS. In Lee's own words in regard to influences on culture

I think the staff and administration can affect the school culture. For example, last year my high school had an authoritarian principal who tried to control the students, as well as staff, with a loud voice and a brusque demeanor. This year, we have a friendly and outgoing principal who relates well to the students. There is a world of difference in the climate of the school. As a library media specialist, I can have a welcoming pleasant atmosphere for a diverse clientele or I can create a strict, tense atmosphere that creates stress. Since the library media center ultimately impacts all students and teachers, the atmosphere can affect the entire school. Even though our school had an unpleasant principal last year the library media center became a haven for students and teachers alike so I would like to think that in some small way we helped to keep the school culture from totally deteriorating, luckily we didn't have to wait long to get a great new leader.

Ann goes on to further say that not only is setting the school culture a possibility for staff but it is a responsibility:

It is our job to work continuously to mold the school culture, together with our colleagues. Talented administrators can do wonders as leaders of the school staff in this area. One phenomenon I have encountered in a number of schools, though, is that the culture of poverty has different rules and values than the middle class school culture that educators seek to create. When you compound the challenge of establishing a school culture that differs from the students' culture in the totality of their life of poverty, AND that is counter to some of the values of adolescent culture, it is difficult indeed. In an elementary setting, educators' potential to

successfully establish a school culture is tied up with their quasi-parental role. Children are quite readily shaped by the adults around them, at home, or in a school, even if they are steeped in the culture of poverty; the school staff is ‘in loco parentis’ and can point young children in the direction of achievement and excellence. Developmentally, things change when the students become adolescents, and this balance tips in a different direction. In my experience, molding school culture (middle class values) is especially challenging in a culture of poverty in a high school. But our hands aren't tied. Skillful leadership in the administration is critical.

*Summary of the Findings for the Concept of the ESLMSs’ perception of the Culture of Their Schools*

The ESLMSs’ perception of the culture of their schools refers to a concept of educator development that includes dominant beliefs and values of the school, staff and student empowerment, power and authority relationships, systems of community and collegiality, perceptions of norms within the school, and the relationships the SLMSs form within the school between staff and students. The culture and community of schools are essential to SLMSs and their development. The findings of the ESLMSs’ perception of the culture of their schools were gathered from the data from the questionnaires for each of the three participants, state and federal school reports, examination of artifacts collected, and the responses from a long-term (two months) online discussion forum between the three participants. All data resources were used to obtain data to analyze the ESLMSs’ perception of the culture of their schools, the last area of the total educator concept. The overall finding for the notion of ESLMSs’ perception of the culture of their



schools indicate that the culture in which the SLMSs works must provide administrative and staff support for the media program in order for them to implement an exemplary media program.

#### Summary: Overall Findings for the ESLMSs as Total Educators

Three National Board Certified SLMSs, whom currently work in public high schools in Georgia, were selected to participant in this study. As can be seen from the case studies the three participants and their schools are unique in many ways. Many commonalities can also be seen between the three participants and between their three schools. These comparisons of the participants, their schools, and their communities are best represented in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Chapter Five, the final chapter in this research study, addresses the findings presented for each of the four research questions. In Chapter Five, findings from Chapter Four are used to draw conclusions regarding the total educator concept, including the educator's purpose, the educator as a person, the organizational context in which the educator works, and the culture of the school. From these conclusions, Chapter Five presents recommendations for educational policy and practice and for future research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### Introduction

The purpose of this final chapter is to provide the conclusions and recommendations based on the data and analysis conducted in this study of National Board Certified SLMSs. This chapter addresses the findings presented for each of the four research questions. The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in an alternative point of departure for research in educator development—the total educator concept. This researcher used the findings from Chapter Four to draw conclusions regarding the total educator concept, including the educator’s purpose, the educator as a person, the organizational context in which the educator works, and the culture of the school. This chapter is organized into several distinct sections: a summary of the study, a summary list of the findings of this research study, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, and conclusions.

#### Summary of the Study

The focus of this research was on furthering the understanding of the perceptions of ESLMSs of their role and development. The participants of this study were identified as having managed to excel in their careers in an age of increasing workload and daily pressures tied to national standards and accountability. Motivation and optimism are drained from many educators due to the media’s criticism of education and educators, overwhelming imposed reforms, large classes of pluralistic students with varying individual needs, and so forth. Yet these SLMSs sought to better themselves as professionals, in order to keep up with the changing tide in education, by undertaking the

rigorous National Board Certification process. This interest in the development and roles of ESLMSs is linked to the need to allow SLMSs the capacity to run an exemplary media program in order to positively impact student learning outcomes in their schools. The development and role of SLMSs is at the heart of learning at the school because these educational professionals work with every member of the learning community and research has shown they have the capability to positively affect student achievement in their school (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004).

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the ESLMS works in, and the culture of the ESLMS's school. National Board Certified SLMSs were the expert educators under study. This study was grounded in previous research on the roles of the SLMS and the media program in schools; characteristics of National Board Certified SLMSs as expert educators; and SLMSs' development as professionals within and outside the organizational context and culture of the school as well as a person with purpose.

Data collection in this case study consisted of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews with each of the three ESLMSs, and an online discussion forum with all the participants. In addition, artifacts were collected from each participant's school as well as state and federal reports were analyzed. The interviews were guided by questions from a pre-determined interview protocol (see Appendix E). Each participant completed a

questionnaire prior to the initial interview (see Appendix D). Interviews were audio taped, transcribed, and analyzed using the constant comparative approach. An online discussion forum was conducted to clarify themes that appeared through the interview process (see Appendix F for discussion forum posts). Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study.

This research study was designed to answer the following four major research questions regarding the role and development of ESLMSs as total educators:

Research Question 1: How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?

Research Question 2: How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?

Research Question 3: How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?

Research Question 4: How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

### Summary of Findings

Many themes concerning the role and development of ESLMSs, arose from this study. Some of the themes, commonalities, and unique attributes noted in the findings may contribute to these ESLMSs excelling in their profession.

#### *The ESLMS's Purpose*

- As can be noted from the school portraits in Chapter Four, all three schools and individuals that participated in this study have unique attributes and characteristics. For example, school size alone (the smallest school in the study had 600 students compared to the largest school with 2400 students) would greatly affect the role a SLMS was able to perform within the school. Individuals' characteristics such as personal background, education and experience level, and

unique skills and talents contribute to the role and development of ESLMSs.

Schools and individuals were chosen to participate based on a variety in their personal characteristics and school attributes in order to obtain a broader view of ESLMSs in Georgia public high schools.

- All three participants place a high value on the purpose of and roles played by a library media specialist within a school. Although there were some variations between the three participants' perspectives of their own purpose as SLMS, all participants referred to *Information Power* roles to describe their purpose and all three cited their ability to contribute to students acquiring lifelong learning skills. Ann recognized the fact that her school being labeled as a 'Needs Improvement' school this year is a major factor that has brought about a change in her role within the school. She has worked at DHS for four years and has seen the new label (the school met AYP the previous school year) bring about many changes as well as a recent turnover in administration. Working in schools that met AYP criteria last year, both Lee and Mae shared descriptions of their strong and highly valued roles within their school.
- All three participants were familiar with the current research that indicates the positive affect media centers and SLMSs have on student achievement (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004). All three ESLMSs in this study recognized the SLMS position as a unique position in the school which provides the opportunity to positively

affect student learning outcomes in the entire school. Lee and Mae believed they positively affect student achievement, although this affect may not be in a direct way and may not be able to be documented. Ann felt like she contributes to student achievement in her particular high school but only in small ways and she is not contributing up to the full potential that she knows she can. Ann indicated she is having a hard time recognizing her impact on student achievement in her current school at this time. Ann recognized her impact in her former school and in previous years at her current school but identified several reasons such as the current accountability systems and new administration in her school. It is important to recognize areas that limit the SLMS's vital role within a school in order to bring about changes. So Ann has identified the limitations as the administration and accountability system and plans to move to a new school next year in order to positively impact student achievement without these limitations, which she is not able to change. Similar to most educators, these three ESLMSs revealed they feel the constant pressure to help raise standards and increase achievement within their schools.

- The participants in this study indicated they do not feel the need to recruit individuals into the media field but they all concurred that observing an exemplary SLMS run an exemplary media program would encourage individuals to enter the field.
- These three ESLMSs had many suggestions for other individuals wanting to implement an exemplary media program: understand the elements that constitute a successful program by studying the Georgia's Department of Education

Exemplary Media Program rubric; promote the good things that are happening in the media program because the patrons must support a media program for it to truly be exemplary; and choose program elements that meet the needs of the individuals in the learning community of your specific school because all schools are unique.

- All three ESLMSs expressed they are currently passionate about their profession despite any obstacles or difficulties that they have in their current positions. These ESLMSs remain passionate about the media profession in numerous ways such as joining professional organizations, appreciating the benefits of the SLMSs position (i.e. working with all students in the school, appreciation from students and staff), attending trainings and conferences, and keeping up with professional readings.
- All three participants maintained that National Board Certification is the highest recognition they could achieve in their profession. Having obtained this highest recognition in their profession, these three ESLMSs still acknowledged that they must continue to set professional goals in order to grow as professionals.
- All three participants identified that the monetary incentive was a major deciding factor for them choosing to pursue National Board Certification but they also wanted the recognition. The salary incentive is such a large motivator that all three participants stated that they would move to receive the pay raise if they had not been ‘grandfathered’ into the pay incentive without having to abide by the new legislation limitations. To encourage more educators to pursue National Board Certification, the participants suggest taking the limitations off the

incentive and providing more administrative support and recognition.

- These three ESLMSs all recognized the professional growth that occurred as a result of undertaking the National Board Certification process. Since the National Board Certification renewal process only requires about half the amount of work that the original certification requires, all three participants agreed that the professional growth was so beneficial that they plan to renew their certification even if they will not receive the monetary incentive.
- All three participants agree that the National Board Certification process renewed their purpose and focus.
- Leadership opportunities, monetary incentives, the intrinsic reward of self satisfaction for a job well done, appreciation from staff and students, prestige, and recognition were all listed as perceived rewards and benefits these ESLMSs have received for their exemplary work within their schools.

#### *The ESLMS as a Person*

- These three ESLMSs entered the profession because they saw greater possibilities to positively affect more students and they saw the opportunity to bring about change in the whole school. The participant's responses underscored the importance of the passion for or love of education and learning in the education profession.
- All three participants expressed current and/or past satisfaction with their chosen profession but all three have set future professional goals to move to other positions either to another SLMS position or another position in education. Determination of the cause of this phenomenon falls outside of the realm of this



study so further analysis would have to be performed to determine the cause and ways for schools to retain these expert educators.

- The three participants stated that their school's goals align with their personal and/or professional goals yet their personal and/or professional goals are all to move to other positions.
- All three participants agreed that due to budget cuts and national accountability systems, their positions are in danger of being cut. They all believe every SLMS should proactively demonstrate and promote their valuable role within the school.
- All three participants acknowledged their strengths and weaknesses, which is necessary to become effective in continuing to grow as a professional. Although Ann indicated her many strengths as a professional, she revealed her limited ability to use those strengths in her current position.
- All three ESLMSs were very familiar with the roles (teacher, program administrator, information specialist, and instructional partner) of a SLMS as described in *Information Power* (1998) and try to fulfill all four roles successfully. All three ESLMSs believe they are able to fully implement their ideal function but cite many obstacles that make this difficult such as lack of administrative and staff support, lack of time, and the size of the school served.
- These three ESLMSs possessed a broad knowledge of the teaching/learning process, of how to obtain information, and of how to apply their knowledge to a variety of situations which enables them to successfully perform all roles required in their positions.
- All three participants have limited or no duties outside the media center, thus they

are able to fully devote the majority of their day to the functions of the media program.

- The ESLMSs in this study indicate that they spend most of their time in the media center in the roles that they feel more comfortable in and less time in the roles they feel less comfortable in.
- These three individuals all emphasize reflection on their practices, which they indicated was a result of undertaking the National Board Certification process. Reflection allows SLMSs to identify strengths and weaknesses in their daily work and individual media programs in order to overcome any weaknesses that keep them from fully implementing their roles.
- All three media specialists in this study were life-long learners and leaders within their profession. They are self-directed and proactive in their development as experts in the field—constantly seeking ways to better themselves as professionals. All three individuals in this study hold advanced degrees, regularly attend and present at conferences, and actively participate in professional organizations.

#### *Organizational Context of the ESLMS's School*

- All the participants see their role within their school as important to its daily functioning. Unlike Lee and Mae who view their positions as vital to the daily functioning of the school, Ann views her role as a support person in the school. In that support person role, Ann acknowledged that she assists with the daily functioning of her school in small ways such as creating the daily announcements, maintaining the Web page, assisting students and staff in finding information and

resources, and so forth. Ann does not see her role as important to the daily functioning of her school because she adamantly believes the school as a whole is not functioning effectively and efficiently. Thus, she does not want to acknowledge herself as a vital component in that “dysfunctional” situation.

- All three ESLMSs in this study indicated they were active members of their school by serving on school committees, providing trainings in the use of technology and information literacy resources to teachers, providing opportunities to support the curriculum, collaborating with teachers, and so forth.
- All three participants were able to identify unique experiences and skills that could enable them to impact the learning in their schools. Lee and Mae shared that they use their unique qualifications to positively affect the student learning in their schools. Ann became the dissenting voice when she stated that although she could identify her unique skills and experiences that ‘could’ impact the student learning outcomes in her school she was not able to use those distinct qualifications. She discussed how her current learning community does not currently benefit from her unique experiences or skills but the elementary school she previously worked in did.
- All three media specialists are leaders, although in more of an informal capacity, in their schools. All three participants believed their leadership in their schools is not formally recognized by the key participants in their school (i.e. administrators, teachers, and students). The ESLMSs in this study indicated they lead from the middle through technology expertise, daily interactions with teachers and students, public relations with the community, reading promotion, conducting

staff development trainings, collaborative planning, and through their work with committees and leadership teams.

- All three participants create monthly reports covering media center statistics and accomplishments for the month for the administration and staff so that they will be knowledgeable about what is happening in the media program on a monthly basis. These ESLMSs use these monthly reports as one means to promote their media programs' accomplishments and the benefits of their media program to the whole school.
- It is not possible to grow or improve without a clear vision of goals to be achieved. In successful schools, educators work together on a common goal, such as higher achievement scores on standardized tests, improved student attitudes toward learning, improved grades, decreased retention rates, improved social behavior, increased graduation rates, improved attendance rates, improved community participation, and so forth. The ESLMSs in this study had a clear understanding of their organizational goals. All three participants identified the goals of their school were to increase the number of students that are on track for graduation as well as to increase standardized test scores. Each school also set other smaller goals in addition to the graduation rate and test scores, which were to increase the level of technology integration within the school; increase the level of parent involvement and contact within the school; and to improve discipline and safety in the school.
- When asked how expectations are communicated, all three participants said through yearly evaluations. All three ESLMSs in this study believed that

expectations were not clearly communicated to them and that any feedback they receive on their performance was minimal. Although the ESLMSs deemed that their principals were communicating their expectations and encouraging motivation amongst the teachers in the school, the SLMSs seemed to be left out and received no expectations or motivational encouragement from their principals. Principals would have to be interviewed to understand this particular phenomenon. It may be that principals do not impose expectations on these SLMSs because they recognize the SLMSs are already excelling in their field. Further analysis that included the principals' perceptions would be needed to determine if these principals recognize the high standards that these SLMSs have set for themselves or if they simply do not understand the importance of the SLMSs' role.

- Although they are given few or no expectations to work toward, these ESLMSs look for evidence and feedback about how well they are performing their job and honestly examine how they can do things better. For example one media specialist in this study, referred to a reading promotion program she began. She would try different reading incentive techniques then analyze circulation statistics to see if there was a correlation between increased circulation checkouts and reading promotions.
- All three participants have provided support to candidates seeking National Board Certification. These ESLMSs received no monetary incentive for time spent working with candidates but stated their strong belief in this professional development opportunity as the reason for their willingness to provide support.

- All three ESLMSs experienced full autonomy from their administration involving major issues in their media programs such as scheduling, budgets, and so forth. This autonomy was also viewed by the participants as a way the administration empowers them as ESLMSs.
- All three participants in this study indicated they maintain positive relationships with all staff members and administration, which results in increased support from these key members of the learning community for the media program.
- Although they encourage and proactively seek collaboration with teachers, all three participants reported there is no planned or set aside time for planning with teachers. They also judged that most teachers in their schools are willing to collaborate with them and will give up part of their planning time or come before or after school to do so.

#### *Culture of the ESLMS's School*

- These ESLMSs had a wide range of reasons for working and staying in their specific school. Reasons included location of school, availability of a job, and interpreted job security.
- When asked to use a metaphor to describe their school, Lee chose “a big family” and used only positive attributes to describe his school. Regarding her school, Mae used the metaphor of a jar of jellybeans to describe the diversity in one small area, which has both positive and negative traits. To describe her school as a metaphor, Ann explained she had to describe her school in a pessimistic way because that is how she views her school right now. Ann chose a train wreck to describe her school and only used negative attributes in the description.

- All three participants expressed that their high schools were aligned to the ‘norm’ by fostering beliefs and values that are typical for middle class rules, regulations, and expectations. All three ESLMSs also reported that there are numerous subgroups within their schools that are not being successful due to the fact that they do not fit in with these ‘middle class’ beliefs and values.
- The participants in this study reported that they, as well as other members of the learning community, are encouraged to provide input to the leadership team for school improvement which provides a sense of empowerment.
- These ESLMSs perceive that consensus is used for important decisions in their schools, particularly addressing needs of students. Thus, administration empowers students and staff within the school.
- All three ESLMSs indicated that they have a voice within their school but Ann expressed that due to the *No Child Left Behind* legislation her voice cannot be used to make any changes in the culture of her current school.
- All three participants were in unison in their perception that their schools do not promote community and collegiality amongst the professional staff.
- The media specialist often feels isolated in the school so they often view the school culture as an ‘outsider’ would. SLMSs often believe the students and staff are the real key participants in the school and are the true ‘insiders’ of the school. Thus, questions were asked to see if the media specialists perceived that students and staff felt differently about the school culture due to their status as insiders but all three participants thought students and staff would view the culture of their schools the same way they do.

- All three participants believe that school culture is set by the staff at the school, including the SLMS. Ann goes on to further say that not only is setting the school culture a possibility for staff but it is a responsibility.
- All three participants concurred that strong leadership is needed within a school in order to empower students and staff, set a positive school culture, and enable a SLMS to implement an exemplary media program.

#### Recommendations for Action

The research findings point to recommendations for various members of the educational community. These recommendations would help to create more effective school library media programs.

#### SLMSs' Roles

The ESLMSs in this study indicate that they spend most of their time in the media center in the roles that they feel more comfortable in and less time in the roles they feel less comfortable in. SLMSs should feel comfortable enough in each role to successfully function in all four of their roles (teacher, program administrator, information specialist, and instructional partner) within the school. In our ever changing society the SLMSs' roles are constantly changing. Thus, institutions of higher education with media certification programs may not be able to provide enough practicum training to allow SLMSs to feel proficient in all four roles. This study's findings recommend that SLMSs must be given opportunities to enhance their skills as professionals if they are going to continue to perform their job effectively throughout the years of their careers.

All three ESLMSs in this study indicated they were active members of their school by serving on school committees, providing trainings in the use of technology and



information literacy resources to teachers, providing opportunities to support the curriculum and collaborate with teachers, and so forth. Since these three SLMSs are considered experts in their field, other SLMSs hoping to also excel in the media field should proactively seek opportunities to promote their role within the school. SLMSs should contribute to the quality of the school and to student learning by running an effective media program, collaborating in direct instruction, participating in the construction of curriculum, and conducting professional staff development trainings. SLMSs should be empowered by the administration to initiate and facilitate on-site staff development. SLMSs should not wait to be asked to serve on curriculum and standards committees but they should insist that the library staff be included in all curricular decisions. SLMSs must assert themselves as leaders in their schools if their role within the school is going to be viewed as essential to the functioning of the school. It is the responsibility of SLMSs to take the initiative required for information literacy to become an integral part of the school curriculum.

#### National Board Certification

All three participants identified that the monetary incentive was a major deciding factor for them choosing to pursue National Board Certification but they also wanted the recognition. To encourage more SLMSs to pursue National Board Certification, the participants suggested taking the limitations off the incentive and providing more administrative support and recognition. The financial incentive for achieving National Board Certification must be reinstated without the limitations currently imposed in order to encourage more SLMSs to pursue this valuable professional development opportunity. Such a strategy would benefit students by attracting better candidates into the education

profession and by targeting top performers already in the field by raising the prestige and professionalism associated with the media profession. Research has shown that traditional salary increases based on experience and degrees do not improve teaching performance (Flyer & Rosen, 1997; Heneman & Ledford, 1998; Milanowski, Odden, & Youngs, 1998). Monetary incentives for obtaining National Board Certification will improve the quality of teaching that is taking place and therefore will affect student achievement (Kelley & Kimball, 2001).

By paying incentives for achieving National Board Certification, educators are encouraged to demonstrate superior performance and seek recognition for that performance. All three participants agree that the National Board Certification process renewed their purpose and focus. All three participants in this study stated that the National Board Certification process was the most powerful professional development any of them had ever completed and all three stated that they would not have begun the process if the financial incentive was not in place. In addition to the reinstatement of the state funded incentive without limitations, school reward and recognition systems should be established for exemplary work. These reward and recognition systems can be established within the school to honor educator excellence and exemplary contributions to the school. Rewards and recognitions could consist of monetary compensation, release from duties, opportunities to attend professional development or professional conferences, and differentiated roles and responsibilities.

#### School Administration

National guidelines (AASL and AECT, 1998, p. 52) affirm that “steady and visionary leadership is widely evident in effective school library media programs” and

this research study confirms this. All three schools in this study have new administrations this school year. All three participants reported a lack of “steady and visionary leadership” for the media program because the new administration was not informed about their media program. All three participants create monthly reports covering media center statistics and accomplishments for the month for the administration and staff so that they will be knowledgeable about what is happening in the media program on a monthly basis. School administrators must be constantly informed about the media program and about the role of the SLMS to provide support for the media program and media staff. These ESLMSs use these monthly reports as one means to promote their media programs’ accomplishments and the benefits of the media program to the whole school.

Administrators must know about exemplary media programs when they enter a school, no matter which school they enter, in order to provide a school culture that encourages a media program that positively affects student learning outcomes. If all administrators are knowledgeable about the standards and expectations of an exemplary media program then when administration turns over the media program will not suffer. The three participants in this study have few or no duties outside of the media center. All three SLMSs in this study attribute their limited outside duties to excelling in their field due to the fact that they are able to spend their work day implementing an exemplary media program. Thus, school administrators should strictly limit the duties that place SLMSs outside the media center if they are to devote their time to fully implementing an exemplary media program. The administration should also encourage collaborative opportunities between the SLMS and all members of the learning community. High

quality learning depends on more and deeper kinds of professional collaboration.

Administrative support includes working directly with school staff to develop their understanding of the role of the media center and SLMS. This is accomplished through staff in-services, stating expectations of staff regarding the use of the school media center, featuring media program initiatives in staff meetings, and by serving as a positive role model by effectively using the media center and its programs.

To accomplish this recommendation, institutions of higher education that provide degrees for school administrators should require a course on information literacy and school library media programs. This course would provide school administrators with a basis of how effective media programs can positively affect student achievement within their schools. Current administration programs do not discuss the vital academic, curriculum collaboration, information specialist, leadership, and technology roles played by the SLMS.

When asked how expectations are communicated, all three participants said through yearly evaluations filled out by their administrators. All three ESLMSs in this study believed that expectations were not clearly communicated to them and that any feedback they receive on their performance was minimal. Although the ESLMSs deemed that their administrators were communicating their expectations and encouraging motivation amongst the teachers in the school, the SLMSs seemed to be left out and received no expectations or motivational encouragement from their principals. Although they are given few or no expectations to work toward, these ESLMSs look for evidence and feedback about how well they are performing their job and honestly examine how they can do things better. Many SLMSs do not hold themselves to the same high

standards that the ESLMSs in this study do. Thus, school leaders are challenged to create a school climate where SLMSs are motivated to excel. Through the findings of this study it is recommended that principals communicate their high expectations to SLMSs and thereby promote motivation and high performance in their SLMSs.

### Accountability Systems

All three participants indicated it is a responsibility of SLMSs to link their position to student achievement if they are to secure this valuable position within the schools during this time of educational budget cuts. To make an impact on student achievement SLMSs must believe that they CAN impact student achievement and set the high expectation that they WILL impact student achievement. Standardized testing is the overwhelming educational focus around the country and all educators, including SLMSs, are being asked to document their contributions to student achievement. Jami Jones (2006) indicated that SLMSs have a distinct role in student achievement:

*Meeting No Child Left Behind* mandates to increase academic achievement may depend on finding ways to strengthen students, but especially those at risk, to effectively handle their problems and challenges so time spent at school is focused on learning. . . . Because the library media specialist holds a unique instructional and leadership role in his or her school, he or she is the key to raising the bar on student achievement. For instance, students benefit when the library media specialist is a mentor and also can teach information literacy models to help them become better problem solvers. . . . Library media specialists who want to play an important role in student achievement need look no further than the six building blocks of resiliency: bonding, boundaries, life skills, caring and support,

high expectations, and participation. (p. 22-24)

Similar to most educators, the three ESLMSs in this study revealed they feel the constant pressure to help raise standards and increase achievement within their schools. Previously tests were administered to decide what kind of help students needed. Now standardized tests are being used as the primary criteria to measure the achievement of students in our country. By controlling what is taught, these standardized programs often reduce creativity which can be both counter-productive to student learning and demoralizing to educators seeking to make a difference. Currently education in the U.S. is driven by tests, standardization, and accountability. Educators are held accountable for what they teach, and students are held accountable for how they perform on standardized tests. Test scores, relative to state and national standards, are suppose to allow educators, parents, advocates, and policymakers to identify successes as well as areas in need of improvement in their schools.

In an ideal educational system the focus would be on individualized instruction and would allow all educators to work with students in creative, differentiated ways. As educational professionals and leaders in schools, SLMSs should fight for educational reform that would focus on higher level thinking skills rather than simply testing. Unfortunately, there seems to be no shift away from the current accountability system so it is imperative that SLMSs, even the ESLMSs in this study, link their valuable position within the school to student achievement if their position is going to continue to exist. Ann recognized the fact that her school being labeled as a 'Needs Improvement' school this year is a major factor that has brought about a negative change in her role within the school by limiting her role. She has worked at DHS for four years and has seen the new

label (the school met AYP the previous school year) bring about many changes as well as a recent turnover in administration. Working in schools that met AYP criteria last year, both Lee and Mae shared descriptions of their strong and highly valued roles within their school. Therefore, it behooves all SLMSs to not only work to increase student achievement in their schools but to document any actions that can result in beneficial learning outcomes.

All three participants were in unison in their perception that in their position in their schools, they are not able to document their influences on student achievement. It is not enough to state that SLMSs contribute to learning but it is time to prove it through documentation. SLMSs need to detail the relationship between library media program services, particularly information skills instruction, and student performance as measured on standardized tests. Information skills instruction provides students with needed skills in gathering, processing, evaluating, and applying information that will enable them to achieve better on any school assignments as well as standardized tests. SLMSs should analyze state standards and test items to determine direct connections to information skills instruction. SLMSs should design and deliver lessons that help students to learn and apply the relevant information skills to specific test questions. Media programs must be developed or changed to directly impact student achievement within the schools.

#### The School Library Media Profession

All three participants agreed that due to budget cuts and national accountability systems, their positions are in danger of being cut. They all believe every SLMS should proactively demonstrate and promote their valuable role within the school. Theoretically, ESLMSs are leaders in their field. ESLMS should work for the advancement of the

profession. This can be accomplished in many ways such as holding office in professional organizations and mentoring new media specialists. Through active participation in professional organizations ESLMSs work to promote the positive image of school library media programs and their affect on student achievement. Exemplary media specialists should mentor new media specialists in order to share their knowledge to help other SLMSs also excel in the media field. All three participants have provided support to candidates seeking National Board Certification. These ESLMSs received no monetary incentive for time spent working with candidates but stated their strong belief in this professional development opportunity as the reason for their willingness to provide support. SLMSs can also simply support accomplished teaching within their school on a daily basis by collaborating with those teachers and recognizing them in small ways. Although not all media specialists will opt to seek National Board Certification, they can adopt methods used by those who have already accomplished certification.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

This qualitative study analyzing National Board Certified SLMSs using the total educator concept is only the beginning of research about the perspectives of the role and development of ESLMSs. A qualitative study, such as this one, usually ends with tentative answers or hypotheses about what was observed. These tentative questions and hypotheses may form the basis of future qualitative and/or quantitative studies:

- Examine the perspectives of the other media specialists, who are not National Board Certified, in Mae and Ann's schools to see if their perspectives are different than the participants that were used in this study even though they are in the same school. Lee is the only media specialist in his school so this comparison



could not be made for OHS. By studying these two media specialists, the study would be extended to compare media specialists who have not been deemed exemplary by receiving National Board Certification to see if there is a difference in their perspectives from the perspectives of the ESLMSs used in this study. Ann revealed that it is due to her past exemplary work that she now finds her current position unsatisfactory. She stated that her partner media specialist does not feel the same distress in the current situation because she does not hold herself to the same high standards. Mae expressed a similar situation when she discussed that the other media specialist in her school never seeks any opportunities to develop her skills as a professional. Thus, it seems necessary to further analyze these contradictions between different individuals in the same position in the same school.

- Study exemplary media specialists at the elementary and middle school levels to see if the level of the school affects the perspectives of the media specialist. While Lee and Mae stated they preferred the high school level, Ann shared that she preferred the elementary school level. Ann was the dissenting voice through much of the data collection process due to her level of frustration in her current high school position. Ann only shared positive comments about her successes in her previous position in an elementary school. She indicated she was able to excel in the organizational context and culture of an elementary school as opposed to the high school environment. It seems apparent that SLMSs would have different perceptions depending on the level of the school they work in and their personal comfort level within that school level. Thus, studying ESLMSs at different levels

would provide a more global view of the role and development of the media profession since media specialists are certified to work in kindergarten through twelfth grade.

- Conduct the same study with Lee one year later after twelfth grade as been added to his school, increasing the enrollment of the school by 300 to 400 students. By conducting this study again at Lee's school the effect of school size on ESLMSs' perceptions of their role and development could be analyzed.
- Conduct a time study with the participants of this study to determine how they are actually spending their time on a daily basis and whether this contrasts to their perceptions as noted in this study.
- All three participants in this study expressed current and/or past satisfaction with their chosen profession but all three have future plans to move to other positions. Conduct a survey with veteran SLMSs, such as the ones used in this study, to determine reasons for leaving the field in order to learn ways to retain these valuable professionals.
- Conduct interviews with teachers and administrators in the participants' three schools to see if there are differences between perceptions of school staff and the participant's perceptions. Since only the ESLMSs' perceptions were analyzed in this study, it would be appropriate to determine if there are any discrepancies between their perceptions and the views of other key participants on the role and development of those ESLMSs within their schools.
- Although the ESLMSs in this study deemed that their principals were communicating their expectations and encouraging motivation amongst the

teachers in the school, the SLMSs seemed to be left out and received no expectations or motivational encouragement from their principals. Principals would have to be interviewed to understand this particular phenomenon. It may be that principals do not impose expectations on these SLMSs because they recognize the SLMSs are already excelling in their field. Further analysis that included the principals' perceptions would be needed to determine if these principals recognize the high standards that these SLMSs have set for themselves or if they simply do not understand the importance of the SLMSs' role.

- Examine more National Board Certified SLMSs in Georgia and throughout the country. This case study has focused exclusively on one unit of analysis, National Board Certified SLMSs in Georgia, and therefore represents the perceptions of a small population of only three out of ninety-four possible participants. In order to generalize the results of a similar study, more data from more participants would have to be gathered.

### Concluding Thoughts

Whilst most of the public perceives Georgia schools as being steeped in mediocrity there is a call for school reform, not only in our state but throughout the nation. Fullan (1991) calls for “a new ethos of innovation” in order to meet the new challenges that lay ahead of us. He stated,

It is time to produce results. Individual and institutional renewal, separately and together, should become our *raison d'être*. We need to replace negativism and Pollyanna-ish rhetoric with informed action. Armed with knowledge of the change process, and a commitment to action, we should accept nothing less than

positive results on a massive scale—at both the individual and organizational levels. (p. 354)

School reform literature abounds with the findings that school leaders are the central agents of effective and efficient change (Deal & Peterson, 1991; Fullan, 1992; Hilty, 1999; Johnson, 1996; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Sarason, 1990) and SLMSs can be school leaders. Essentially, the school administrators and the SLMS are the only individuals in the school to have a global perspective of the curriculum, share instructional leadership responsibilities, and work with all the staff in the school. Hartzell (1997b) referred to SLMSs as “principals in disguise” (p. 11). In the eyes of many administrators achieving National Board Certification marks an educator as a leader in the school, thus they may give additional leadership roles to these distinguished individuals.

The time for teaching in isolation has long since passed and improving student achievement in today’s schools requires cooperative decision-making and collaborative leadership among all school professionals, including the SLMS. The fact that the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has developed a certification for SLMSs validates that this essential school position affects student learning outcomes. Students are the beneficiaries when SLMSs, with their familiarity with a broad range of resources as well as expertise in information literacy skills, are acknowledged as partners in the learning and teaching process. Through collaboration SLMSs can help teachers address the many challenges they face everyday in their classrooms. SLMSs can help teachers and students effectively access and use resources during this explosion of information and technology. SLMSs can assist teachers with overwhelming issues such

as how to use innovative means to meet prescribed outcomes while engaging students in meaningful learning experiences, how to access and use the large amount of information and technology that is available, how to use resources to provide differentiated instruction to a diverse group of students, and so forth.

All three participants were familiar with the current research that indicates the positive affect media centers and SLMSs have on student achievement (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004). All three ESLMSs in this study recognized the SLMS position as a unique position in the school which provides the opportunity to positively affect student learning outcomes in the entire school. Lee and Mae believed they positively affect student achievement, although this affect may not be in a direct way and may not be able to be documented. Ann felt like she contributes to student achievement in her particular high school but only in small ways and she is not contributing up to the full potential that she knows she can. Ann indicated she is having a hard time recognizing her impact on student achievement in her current school at this time. Ann recognized her impact in her former school and in previous years at her current school but identified several reasons such as the current accountability systems and new administration in her school. It is important to recognize areas that limit the SLMS's vital role within a school in order to bring about changes. So Ann has identified the limitations as the administration and accountability system and plans to move to a new school next year in order to positively impact student achievement without these limitations, which she is not able to change. Similar to most educators, these three

ESLMSs revealed they feel the constant pressure to help raise standards and increase achievement within their schools.

These three ESLMSs entered the profession because they saw greater possibilities to positively affect more students and they saw the opportunity to bring about change in the whole school. The participants' responses underscored the importance of the passion for or love of education and learning in the education profession. Teachers and media specialists often enter the education profession because they care about children and they want to contribute to improvements in society. Having been in the profession for an extended period of time, some veteran educators become submerged by the workload and pressures of their job and lose their focus. Accomplishment in the field of education is not synonymous with competence. All three participants in this study agree that the National Board Certification process renewed their purpose and focus. Practitioners who remain in their jobs for an extended period of time are expected to be competent. "Spending year in and year out performing the same role is inherently deadening. Twenty years of experience doing the same thing is only one year of experience twenty times over" (Fullan, 1997, p. 11). Ann reiterated this when she said, "In this field, being a high achiever is not just a matter of doing the same thing well over and over again, but innovating and adjusting to new conditions and technologies." Accomplishment should represent exceptionality, high achievement, and exemplary practice. National Board Certification has been recognized as a way to show accomplishment as well as a way to renew an educator's purpose and focus. National Board Professional Teaching Standards recognizes educators for improving their competence and documenting their students' achievements.

The conceptual framework that guided this study emerged from Fullan and Hargreaves' (1996) review and examination of pertinent issues in educator development. This study expanded the total educator concept by specifically addressing the roles and development of ESLMSs. This study of ESLMSs was structured around the four dimensions of the total educator: the SLMS's purpose, the SLMS as a person, the organizational context of the school in which the SLMS works, and the culture of the school in which the SLMS works. Concepts of SLMS development that ignore the SLMS as a person disallow an essential dimension for understanding the ESLMS. Hence, this study described the ESLMS as a person in-depth through the examination of motivations, pathways for development, and personal comfort levels. SLMSs' lives do not exist in isolation. According to Hummel (1994), it is difficult to separate an individual's identity from the institutions within which they work. As an organization the school contributes to the development of the total educator (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Schools are complex environments which influence a SLMS's purpose as well as who they are as a person. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) propose that total educators that excel in their profession . . . are most likely to emerge, develop and prosper in total schools, in schools which value, develop and support the judgment and expertise of all their teachers in the common quest for improvement. (p. 24)

Educator development must be more than pre-service programs; it must be ongoing and lifelong. The word 'development' describes the pathways the ESLMSs have taken to reach their current level of expertise, including professional development, which have contributed to growth, motivations and influences that have encouraged progress, and purposes behind their actions. Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) stated, educator

“development is tantamount to transforming educational institutions” (p. 6). Educators must become life-long learners and should question what is handed down to them to determine if it is in the best interest of the student. Educators have a responsibility to question what they see and read in the literature. It is not enough to finish a four-year (or even higher) degree and to sit back in complacency. Educators must always strive to learn more—to become more academic minded. All three media specialists in this study were life-long learners and leaders within their profession. They are self-directed and proactive in their development as experts in the field—constantly seeking out ways to better themselves as professionals. All three individuals in this study hold advanced degrees, regularly attend and present at conferences, and actively participate in professional organizations. “It is impossible to accomplish the deep purposes of student learning unless teachers are continuous learners themselves” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998, p. 48).

All three participants expressed that their high schools were aligned to the ‘norm’ by fostering beliefs and values that are typical for middle class rules, regulations, and expectations. All three ESLMSs also reported that there are numerous subgroups within their schools that are not being successful due to the fact that they do not fit in with these ‘middle class’ beliefs and values. Unlike many educators in today’s school system, these ESLMSs recognize the fact that schools are working from a middle class foundation and that many students’ needs are not met because of this. Educators must go deeper to be able to confront the issues that really need addressing—such as social justice, multiculturalism, and Eurocentric curricula. “The challenge is to improve education in the only way it can be—through the day-to-day actions of empowered individuals”



(Fullan, 1997, p. 46). The National Board Certification process offers educators an opportunity to analyze their school and classrooms and to become more reflective individuals in order to work toward change in their schools. As confirmed by the three ESLMSs in this study who concurred that the National Board Certification process provided a foundation for them to emphasize reflection on their practice. Once SLMSs have the skills necessary to reflect on and analyze their media program and professional practices, they will be able to implement changes that will positively impact the student learning outcomes within their schools.

## REFERENCES

- About National Board Professional Teaching Standards: State and local support and incentives. (2005). Retrieved June 15, 2005, from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site: <http://www.nbpts.org/about/state.cfm>.
- The alignment of National Board Certification and Elementary and Secondary Education Act's definition of a "highly qualified" teacher. (2002). Retrieved June 17, 2005, from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site: [http://www.nbpts.org/pdf/hqt\\_chart.pdf](http://www.nbpts.org/pdf/hqt_chart.pdf).
- American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1998). *Information power: Building partnerships for learning*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- American Association of School Librarians and Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (1988). *Information power: Guidelines for school library media programs*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- American Library Association. (1996, January 23). Library Bill of Rights. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from The American Library Association Web site: <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/statementsif/librarybillofrights.pdf>
- Anderson, M. A. (1998). Expectations: Building partnerships with principals. *Multimedia Schools*, 5(5), 26-27.
- Aristotle, Saunders, T. (Translator), & Sinclair, T. (Translator). (1981). *The politics*. London: Penguin Classics.
- Ashton, P., & Webb, R. (1986). *Making a difference: Teacher's sense of efficacy*. New York: Longman.

Asimov quotes. (2004). Retrieved May 11, 2005, from The Thinkexist Web site:

[http://en.thinkexist.com/quotation/when\\_i\\_read\\_about\\_the\\_way\\_in\\_which\\_library\\_funds/334137.html](http://en.thinkexist.com/quotation/when_i_read_about_the_way_in_which_library_funds/334137.html)

Atkinson, E. (2000). An investigation into the relationship between teacher motivation and pupil motivation. *Educational Psychology, 20*(1), 45-57.

Average teacher salary in 2003-2004. (2005). Retrieved March 17, 2006, from

<http://www.aft.org/salary/2004/download/2004Table1.pdf>.

Barnes, R. E. (2005). Georgia state support and incentives. Retrieved June 15, 2005, from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site:

<http://www.nbpts.org/about/stateinfo.cfm?state=Georgia>

Baughman, J. (2002, October 26). School libraries and MCAS scores. Retrieved July 14,

2006, from Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons

College Web site: [http://web.simmons.edu/~baughman/mcas-school-](http://web.simmons.edu/~baughman/mcas-school-libraries/Baughman%20Paper.pdf)

[libraries/Baughman%20Paper.pdf](http://web.simmons.edu/~baughman/mcas-school-libraries/Baughman%20Paper.pdf)

Baumbach, D. (2002). *Making the grade: The status of school library media centers in*

*the sunshine state and how they contribute to student achievement*. Spring, TX: Hi

Willow Research and Publishing.

Baxter, S., & Smalley, A. (2003). *Check it out! The results of the school library media*

*program census*. St. Paul, MN: Metronet.

Bell, M., & Totten, H. (1992). Cooperation in instruction between classroom teachers and

school library media specialists: A look at teacher characteristics in Texas

elementary schools. *School Library Media Quarterly, 20*(2), 79-85.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. R. (1994). *Empowering teacher: What successful principals do*. CA:

Corwin Press.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bogdan, R., & Taylor, S. (1975). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A phenomenological approach to the social sciences*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Bolman, L., & Deal, T. (1991). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Briskin, A. (1998). *The stirring of soul in the workplace*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, Inc.

Bruner, J. S. (1968). *Toward a theory of instruction*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Burgin, R., & Bracy, P. (2003). *An essential connection: How quality school library media programs improve student achievement in North Carolina*. Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and Publishing.

Creativity. (2002). Retrieved December 23, 2005, from Dictionary.com Web site:

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. (1986). *A nation prepared: Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Carroll, L. (1960). *Alice's adventures in wonderland and through the looking-glass*. New York: Penguin Books.

Cole, A., & Knowles, J. (2000). *Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry*. Boston: Allyn and Boston.

Czubaj, C. (1996). Maintaining teacher motivation. *Education*, 116(3), 372-379.

- Darling-Hammond, L., & Sykes, G. (2003). Wanted: A national teacher supply policy for education: The right way to meet the “highly qualified” teacher challenge. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 11*(33). Retrieved June 28, 2006 from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v11n33>
- Deal, T., & Peterson, K. (1991). *The principal's role in shaping school culture*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.
- Deemer, S. (2004). Classroom goal orientation in high school classrooms: Revealing links between teacher beliefs and classroom environments. *Educational Research, 46*, 74-90.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Department of Audits and Accounts Salary and Travel Supplement. (2007, January 9). Retrieved January 19, 2007, from The Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts Web site: <https://www.audits.state.ga.us/esa/>
- Dewey, J. (1915). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York: The Free Press.
- Donham, J. (1999). Collaboration in the media center: Building partnerships for learning. *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 83*(605), 20-26.
- Donham, J., Bishop, K., Kuhlthau, C., & Oberg, D. (2001). *Inquiry-based learning: Lessons from Library Power*. Worthington, OH: Linworth Publishing, Inc.
- Eisenberg, M. B. (2004, March). It's all about learning: Ensuring that students are effective users of information on standardized tests. *Library Media Connection, 22*(6), 22-30.

- Feagin, J., Orum, A., & Sjoberg, G. (Eds.). (1991). *A case for case study*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Firestone, W., & Pennell, J. (1993). Teacher commitment, working conditions, and differential incentive policies. *Review of Educational Research*, 63(4), 489-525.
- Flyer, F., & Rosen, S. (1997). The new economics of teachers and education. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 15, 104-139.
- Freire, P. (1983). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (1992). *Successful school improvement*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform*. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.
- Fullan, M. (1997). *What's worth fighting for in the principalship?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (1999). *Change forces: The sequel*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.
- Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1996). *What's worth fighting for in your school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fuller, D. (2005). State-level support of K-12 virtual libraries. *Knowledge Quest*, 33(3), 25-28.
- Galeano, E. (2000). *Upside down: A primer for the looking glass world* (Trans. M. Fried). New York: Metropolitan Books. (Original text published in 1998).
- Garrison, J. (1997). *Dewey and erōs: Wisdom and desire in the art of teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Georgia Public Education Report. (2006). Retrieved October 10, 2006, from the Card  
Georgia Department of Education Web site:

<http://techservices.doe.k12.ga.us/reportcard/default.htm>

Georgia Standards. (2006). Retrieved February 1, 2007, from Georgia Department of  
Education Web site:

<http://www.georgiastandards.org/SearchResults.aspx?viewmode=details&StandardIDSelected=1442>

Giorgis, C., & Peterson, B. (November 1996). Teachers and librarians collaborate to  
create a community of learners. *Language Arts*, 73(7), 477-482.

Glick, A. (2005, February). The guy who gets it. *School Library Journal*, 51(2), 52-54.

Goldhaber, D. (2002). The mystery of good teaching: Surveying the evidence on student  
achievement and teachers' characteristics. *Education Next*, 2(1), 50-55.

Goldhaber, D., & Anthony, E. (2004, Mar. 08). Can teacher quality be effectively  
assessed?, Retrieved June 17, 2005, from

<http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=410958>.

Greene, M. (1989). The teacher in John Dewey's works. In P. W. Jackson and S.

Haroutunian-Gordon (Eds.), *From Socrates to software: The teacher as text and  
the text as teacher. Eighty-Ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of  
Education. Part I* (pp. 24-25).

Gwatney, M. C. (2001). Reality versus the ideal. *Knowledge Quest*, 5(29), 36-40.

Hanushek, E. (1992). The trade-off between child quantity and quality. *The Journal of  
Political Economy*, 100(1), 84-117.

Hargreaves, A. (1993). Teacher development in the postmodern age: Dead certainties,

- safe simulation and the boundless self. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 19(2), 95-113.
- Hargreaves, A., Earl, L., & Ryan, J. (1996). *Schooling for change: Reinventing education for early adolescents*. London: Falmer Press.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (1998). *What's worth fighting for out there*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2000). Mentoring in the new millennium. *Theory Into Practice*, 39(1), 50-56.
- Hargreaves, D. H. (1982). *The challenge for the comprehensive school: Culture, curriculum and community*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Hartzell, G. N. (1997a). The invisible school librarian: Why other educators are blind to your value. *School Library Journal*, 43(11), 24-29.
- Hartzell, G. N. (1997b). Play a mind game: Think about becoming an administrator. *The Book Report*, 15(4), 11-15.
- Hartzell, G. N. (2002). What's it take? *The Journal for School Library Professionals*, 30(1), 81-86.
- Hartzell, G. N. (2003). Why should principals support school libraries? *Teacher Librarian*, 31(2), p. 21.
- Haycock, K. (1992). *What works: Research about teaching and learning through the school's library resource center*. Vancouver, BC: Rockland Press.
- Haycock, K. (1999). Strengthening the foundations for teacher-librarianship. In Haycock, K. (Ed.), *Foundations for effective school library media programs* (pp. 3-11). Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.



- Haycock, K. (2001). School libraries and student achievement. *Teacher Librarian*, 31(1), 34.
- Heneman, R., & Ledford, G. E. (1998). Competency pay for professionals and managers in business: A review and implications for teachers. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 12(2), 103-121.
- Hilty, E. (1999). Southern schools, southern teachers: Redefining leadership in rural communities. In D. M. Chalker, (Ed.), *Leadership for rural schools: Lessons for all educators* (pp. 157-172). Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Company.
- Hughes-Hassell, S., & Wheelock, A. (Ed.). (2001). *The information-powered school*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Hummel, R. (1994). *The bureaucratic experience: A critique of life in the modern organization* (4th ed.). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Improving literacy through school libraries. (n.d.). Retrieved May 10, 2006, from The U.S. Department of Education Web site:  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/lsl/index.html>.
- In support of credentialed library media professionals in school library media centers. (2000, May). Retrieved July 12, 2006, from International Reading Association Board Resolution Summary Web site:  
[http://www.reading.org/downloads/resolutions/resolution00\\_library\\_media\\_professionals.pdf](http://www.reading.org/downloads/resolutions/resolution00_library_media_professionals.pdf)
- Johnson, S. (1996). *Leading to change: The challenge of the new superintendency*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Jones, J. (2005). Promoting resilience: Ways library media specialists strengthen

- children. *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, 22(3), 25-27.
- Jones, J. (2005). The library media specialists: A vital link. *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, 22(6), 22-24.
- Kelley, C., & Kimball, S. (2001, September). Financial incentives for National Board Certification. *Educational Policy*, 15(4), 547-574.
- Krashen, S. (1993). *The power of reading*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Lance, K., Rodney, M., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2000). *Measuring up to standards: The impact of school library programs and information literacy in Pennsylvania schools*. Greensburg, PA: Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries.
- Lance, K., Rodney, M., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2001). *Good schools have school librarians: Oregon school librarians collaborate to improve academic achievement*. Terrebonne, OR: Oregon Educational Media Association.
- Lance, K., Rodney, M., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2002). *Make the connection: Quality school library media programs impact academic achievement*. Bettendorf, IA: Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency.
- Lance, K., Rodney, M., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (2005). *Powerful libraries make powerful learners: The Illinois study*. Canton, IL: Illinois School Library Media Association.
- Lance, K., Rodney, M., Hamilton-Pennell, C., Petersen, L., & Sitter, C. (1999). *Information empowered: The school librarian as an agent of academic achievement in Alaska schools*. Anchorage, AK: Alaska State Library.
- Lance, K., Wellborn, L., & Hamilton-Pennell, C. (1993). *The impact of school library media centers on academic achievement*. Spring, TX: Hi Willow Research and

Publishing.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (1983). *The good high school: Portraits of character and culture*.

New York: Basic Books.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. & Davis, J. (1997). A view of the whole: Origins and purposes.

In *The art and science of portraiture* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

LeCompte, M., & Priessle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational*

*research* (2nd ed.). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Leithwood, K., & Montgomery, D. (1982). The role of the elementary principals in

program improvement. *Review of Education Research*, 52(5), 309-339.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Publications.

Liston, D. D. (2001). *Joy as a metaphor of convergence: A phenomenological and*

*aesthetic investigation of social and educational change*. Creskill, NJ: Hampton

Press.

Lunenburg, F., & Ornstein, A. (1991). *Educational administration: Concepts and*

*practices*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Mackey, B., & White, M. (2004). Conversations, collaborations, and celebrations: How

the school library media specialist can shape early literacy instruction. *Knowledge*

*Quest*, 33(2), 30-33.

Margolis, R. (2002, September 1). A measure of respect. *School Library Journal*,

Retrieved June 19, 2005, from

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/index.asp?layout=articlePrint&articleid=CA240043>.

- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Martin, B., & Sargent, L. (1980). *The teacher's handbook on the school library media center*. Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press.
- Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50, 370-396.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper and Row.
- Matthews, K. M., & Holmes, C. T. (1992). *Managing classroom learning: A guide for improving student achievement*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia.
- McCracken, A. (2001). SLMSs' perceptions of practice and importance of roles described in Information Power. *School Library Media Research*, 4, Retrieved May 10, 2006, from <http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/slmrb/slmrcontents/volume42001/mccracken.htm>
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: HarperCollins College Publishers.
- Merriam, S. (1995). What can you tell from an N of 1?: Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 4, 51-60.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Milanowski, A., Odden, A., & Youngs, P. (1998). Teacher knowledge and skill assessments and teacher compensation: An overview of measurement and linkage issues. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 12(2), 83-101.
- Misakian, J. E. (2004). *The essential school library glossary*. Worthington, OH: Linworth

Publishing.

Myers, M. (2000). Qualitative research and the generalizability question: Standing firm

with Proteus. *The Qualitative Report*, 4. Retrieved December 22, 2005, from

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-3/myers.html>

National Board Certified Teachers by year. (2005). Retrieved June 15, 2005, from

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site:

[http://www.nbpts.org/nbct/nbctdir\\_byyear.cfm](http://www.nbpts.org/nbct/nbctdir_byyear.cfm).

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The*

*imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: Decision Resources

Corporation.

*No Child Left Behind Act*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 10, 2006, from U.S. Department of

Education Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to*

*education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing women: A contradiction in terms. In H. Roberts (Eds.),

*Doing feminist research* (pp. 30-61). London: Routledge.

Osler quotes. (2004). Retrieved May 11, 2005, from The Thinkexist Web site:

[http://en.thinkexist.com/quotation/the\\_librarian\\_of\\_today-and\\_it\\_will\\_be\\_true\\_still/332498.html](http://en.thinkexist.com/quotation/the_librarian_of_today-and_it_will_be_true_still/332498.html)

Pajares, G. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in achievement settings, *Review of Educational*

*Research*, 66, 543-578.

Palmer, P. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's*

*life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Patton, M. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity—One's own. *Educational Researcher*, 17(7), 17-22.
- Peterson, K. D., & Deal, T. (1998). How leaders influence the culture of schools. *Educational Leadership*, 56(1), 28-31.
- Pinar, W., Reynolds, W., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. (2002). *Understanding curriculum*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Pond, P. B. (1998). The history of the American Association of School Librarians. Part I: origins and development, 1896-1951. In Latrobe, K. H. (Ed.), *The emerging school library media center: Historical issues and perspectives* (pp. 207-226). Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.
- Ramos, F., & Krashen, S. (1998). The impact of one trip to the public library: Making books available may be the best incentive for reading. *Reading Teacher*, 51(7), 614-615.
- Reichardt, C., & Cook, T. (1979). *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rogers, S., & Renard, L. (1999). Relationship-driven teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 57(1), 34-37.
- Roscello, F., & Webster, P. (2002). *Characteristics of school library media programs and classroom collections: Talking points*. Albany, NY: Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Continuing Education, New York State Education Department.
- Sarason, S. (1990). *The predictable failure of educational reform: Can we change course*

- before it's too late?* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Schraw, G., & Olafson, L. (2002). Teachers' epistemological world views and educational practices. *Issues in Education*, 8, 99-148.
- Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sidorkin, A. M. (2002) *Learning relations: Impure education, deschooled schools & dialogue with evil*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Smith, E. (2001). *Texas school libraries: Standards, resources, services, and students' performance*. Austin, TX: Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- Spence, C. (2002). *On time! On task! On a mission!* Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood.
- Spring, J. (2000). *The American school 1642-2004* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Steinberg, S., & Kincheloe, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Kinderculture: The corporate construction of childhood* (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Stripling, B. (1995). Learning-centered libraries: Implications from research. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 23(3).
- Tenth-Grade literature and composition. (2004). Retrieved April 25, 2005, from Georgia Department of Education Web site: <http://www.georgiastandards.org/langart.asp>

- Tobin, K., & LaMaster, S. (1995). Relationships between metaphors, beliefs and actions in a context of science curriculum change. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 32, 225-242.
- Todd, R. J. (2003, August/September). School libraries and evidence: Seize the day, begin the future. *Library Media Connection*, 22(1), 12-18.
- Todd, R., & Kuhlthau, C. (2004). *Student learning through Ohio school libraries: The Ohio research study*. Columbus, OH: Ohio Educational Library Media Association.
- Top ten states by total National Board Certified Teachers. (2005). Retrieved June 15, 2005, from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site:  
[http://www.nbpts.org/nbct/nbctdir\\_topten\\_total.cfm](http://www.nbpts.org/nbct/nbctdir_topten_total.cfm)
- U. S. Census Bureau. (2000). United States Census 2000. Retrieved October 10, 2006, from <http://www.census.gov>
- Vallone, G. J., & Mack-Kirschner, A. (2003). Low performing schools. Retrieved January 21, 2007, from Accomplished Teaching Web site:  
<http://www.accomplishedteaching.com/Low%20Performing%20Schools.htm>
- Van Deusen, J., & Tallman, J. I. (1994). The impact of scheduling on curriculum consultation and information skills instruction. *School Library Media Quarterly*, 26(17).
- What teachers should know and be able to do: The five core propositions of National Board. (2003). Retrieved June 15, 2005, from National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site: <http://www.nbpts.org/about/coreprops.cfm>
- Winkler, A. (2002). Division in the ranks: Standardized testing draws lines between new and veteran teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 84, 219-226.



- Whitehurst, G. J. (2002). Improving teacher quality. *Spectrum Journal of State Government*, 75(3), 12.
- Wolcott, H. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yates, B. (1997). Our patch vs. their patch: Information technology and literacy in schools. Retrieved November 10, 2006, from [http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content\\_storage\\_01/0000000b/80/22/e2/32.pdf](http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/22/e2/32.pdf)
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**IRB APPROVAL LETTER**

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs

**Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

Phone : 912-681-5465

Administrative Annex  
P.O. Box 8005  
Statesboro, GA 30460

Fax: 912-681-0719

Ovrsight@GeorgiaSouthern.edu

**To:** Melissa Allen  
116 Eagle Crest Drive  
Brunswick, GA 31525

**CC:** Dr. Judith Repman  
P.O. Box 8131

**From:** Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs  
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees  
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

**Date:** September 15, 2006

**Subject:** Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: **H07034**, and titled "**Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists**", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

*Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.*

**This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter.** If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol, you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior** to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,



Julie B. Cole  
Director of Research Services and Sponsored

**APPENDIX B**  
**IRB APPLICATION**

# Research Compliance Consolidated Cover Page

## Georgia Southern University

### *Application for Research Approval*

| <b><i>Investigator Information:</i></b>   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Name of Principal Investigator:<br>Melissa Allen  | Email:<br>melissa_a_allen@georgiasouthern.edu            | <b>For Office Use Only:</b><br><br>Protocol ID:<br>_____<br><br>Date Received:<br>_____ |
| Phone:<br>912-265-0577  | Address:<br>116 Eagle Crest Drive<br>Brunswick, GA 31525 |   |
| Department:<br>Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading Department  |  |   |
| Name(s) of Co-Investigators:  | Title of Co-Investigator(s):                             |   |
| <p>Personnel and/or Institutions Outside of Georgia Southern University involved in this research:<br/>           Dr. Mary Ann Fitzgerald, associate professor of Instructional Technology at the University of Georgia is one of three committee members, in addition to my advisor, serving on my dissertation committee. Dr. Fitzgerald, as well as the other two committee members, will not have access to any information that directly identifies the participants or their schools.</p> |  |   |
| <b><i>Project Information:</i></b>  |  |   |
| Title:<br>A Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists  |  |   |
| Brief (less than 50 words) Project Summary:<br>Surveys, interviews, analysis of federal and state reports, examination of artifacts, and an online discussion forum will be used to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators—including their purpose and as a person, the organizational context and the culture of the media specialist’s school.  |  |   |
| <b><i>Compliance Information:</i></b>   |  |   |
| <i>Please indicate which of the following will be used in your research:</i>  |  |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Human Subjects (Complete Section A: Human Subjects below)</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals (Complete Section B: Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals below)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Biohazards (Complete Section C: Biohazards below)  |  |   |
| <b>Section A: Human Subjects</b>  |  |   |
| Number of Subjects: Three   | Project Start Date: 10/1/06<br>Date: 3/10/07             | Project End<br>(no more than 1 year)  |
| *Date of IRB education completion: 7/19/06 ( <b>attach copy of completion certificate</b> )   |  |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Purpose of Research:</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For use in thesis/dissertation<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of a class project<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Publication (journal, book, etc.)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Poster/presentation to a scientific audience<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Results will <b>not</b> be published<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> | <p><i>Please indicate if the following are included in the study:</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informed Consent Document<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Greater than minimal risk<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Research Involving Minors<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Deception<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Generalizable knowledge (results are intended to be published)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Survey Research<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> At Risk Populations (prisoners, children, pregnant women, etc)<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Video or Audio Tapes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Procedures, including exercise, administering drugs/dietary supplements, and other procedures</p> |
| <p>Check one: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student    <input type="checkbox"/> Staff/Staff    <i>If student project please complete advisor's information below:</i></p>  |   |
| <p>Advisor's Name: Dr. Judith Repman</p>   | <p>Advisor's E-mail:<br/>jrepman@georgiasouthern.edu</p>  |
| <p>Advisor's Phone: 912-681-5394</p>   | <p>Advisor's Department: Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department<br/>P.O. Box: 8131</p>   |
| <p><i>Signature of Applicant:</i> _____ <i>Date:</i> _____</p> <p>X</p>  |   |
| <p><i>Signature of Advisor (if student):</i> _____ <i>Date:</i> _____</p> <p>X</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Section B: Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals</b></p>  |   |
| <p>Project Start Date: _____ Project End Date: _____ (no more than 1 year)</p>   |   |
| <p><i>Purpose of use/care of animals:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Research<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibition<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Display</p>   | <p><i>Please indicate if the following are included in the study:</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Physical intervention with vertebrate animals<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Housing of vertebrate animals<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Euthanasia of vertebrate animals<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Use of sedation, analgesia, or anesthesia<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgery<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Farm animals for biomedical research (e.g., diseases, organs, etc.)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Farm animals for agricultural research (e.g., food/fiber production, etc.)<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Observation of vertebrate animals in their natural setting</p>  |
| <p>Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Student    <input type="checkbox"/> Staff/Staff    <i>If student project please complete advisor's information below:</i></p>   |   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Advisor's Name:   | Advisor's E-mail:   |
| Advisor's Phone:  | Advisor's Department:<br>P.O. Box:  |
| Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____   |   |
| X   |   |
| Signature of Advisor(if student)/Dept. Chair(if staff): _____ Date: _____   |   |
| X   |   |
| <b>Section C: Biohazards</b>  |   |
| Project Start Date:   | Project End Date: (no more than 3 years)  |
| Biosafety Level:<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> Exempt<br><input type="checkbox"/> BSL 1<br><input type="checkbox"/> BSL 2 | Please indicate if the following are included in the study:<br><br><input type="checkbox"/> Use of rDNA |
| Signature of Applicant ( <b>Staff ONLY</b> ): _____ Date: _____   |   |
| X   |   |

Please submit this protocol electronically to the Georgia Southern University Compliance Office, c/o The Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs, P.O. Box 8005. The application should contain all required documents specific to the committee to which you are applying. Questions or comments can be directed to (912)681-0843 or [oversight@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:oversight@georgiasouthern.edu)



This is a proposal narrative for Melissa Allen's proposed research study titled "A Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists."

### **Personnel.**

Only the principal researcher Melissa Allen, an Ed.D. student in the Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading Department, and her advisor Dr. Judith Repman, professor of Instructional Technology in the Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department, will have access to all confidential information regarding the identity of the participants and their schools. There will be three other committee members: Dr. Grigory Dmitriyev, professor of Curriculum Studies in the Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading Department at Georgia Southern University; Dr. Linda Arthur, assistant professor of Educational Leadership in the Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department at Georgia Southern University; and Dr. Mary Ann Fitzgerald, associate professor of Instructional Technology at the University of Georgia. The three committee members will not have access to any information that directly identifies the participants or their schools.

### **Purpose.**

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of Expert School Library Media Specialists (ESLMSs) as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS's purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the ESLMS works in and the culture of the expert library media specialist's school.

The overarching focus for this study is an exploration of the total educator concept in the development of National Board Certified School Library Media Specialists (SLMSs). My hypothesis is that ESLMSs excel in their field due to their purpose, beliefs, values, motivations, perceptions, and the culture and organizational context of the specific school in which they work. The research questions in this study will ask how, or in what ways ESLMS perceive themselves, their purpose, and the organizational context and culture of their schools. The aim of this research is to answer the following questions:

- How do ESLMSs perceive their purpose?
- How do ESLMSs perceive themselves as persons?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the organizational context of their schools?
- How do ESLMSs perceive the culture of their schools?

The value of my research will rest, in part, on the contribution this study will make to understand the beliefs, values, motivations and perceptions of ESLMSs as they work to excel in their profession. Although there are numerous studies found in the literature concerning effective school library media centers (Baughman, 2002; Baumbach, 2002; Baxter & Smalley, 2003; Burgin & Bracy, 2003; Eisenberg, 2004; Haycock, 1992, 2001; Lance et. al. 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005; Roscello & Webster, 2002; Smith, 2001; Todd, 2003; Todd & Kuhlthau, 2004), there is little or no mention of the daily activities, roles, or development of ESLMSs. Thus, this study will address the gaps in the literature of previous studies. There was no literature found in which researchers applied the total educator (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996) conceptual framework to SLMSs. Although there are several studies analyzing the impact National Board Certified teachers have on students, there are no such studies focusing on National Board Certified SLMSs. The investigation of motivations for pursuing National Board

Certification is an unexplored topic for SLMSs. While there are numerous studies investigating the impact of SLMSs and media programs on student achievement, there is a gap in the literature about the daily activities and roles that SLMSs fulfill in a school to contribute to that impact. Even though there are several studies that indicate the barriers that keep SLMSs from fully implementing their role within a school, there is a gap in the literature about the development of expertise of SLMSs despite those barriers.

One foreseen benefit of participating in this study is for participants to gain a better understanding of their own beliefs, values, motivations and perceptions of their role and development as well as a deeper understanding of the organizational context and culture of their school. One aim of this study is to encourage other media specialists to strive to become ESLMSs themselves. Other media specialists can use the data gathered in this study to compare the roles and development of ESLMSs to their own situation in order to better themselves as professionals and to have a greater impact on student achievement. The information derived from this study can also be used by higher education institutions that prepare SLMSs for their field in order to enhance the services and classes they offer. Higher education institutions that specialize in administration and teacher preparation can also use the data from this study to supplement their current courses with information about the role and development of ESLMSs as well as their impact on student achievement in order to encourage school staff to fully utilize this valuable educational partner in their schools.

The conceptual framework the researcher will be using is Fullan and Hargreaves' (1996) concept of total educator. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) define the four aspects of the total educator as:

- 1) The educator's purpose
- 2) The educator as a person
- 3) The organizational context in which the educator works
- 4) The culture of the school in which the educator works.

Fullan and Hargreaves argue that these four important aspects have been overlooked in education research. Fullan and Hargreaves are noted experts and leaders in educator development and school change. While some aspects of the total educator concept may overlap, each of the four parts will be discussed separately for purposes of examination and understanding and all notions will focus specifically on SLMSs.

### **Describe your subjects.**

The criteria to be used for selecting the three participants for my study will be:

1. The participants must be National Board Certified in the Library Media field.
2. The participants must currently work as a SLMS.
3. The participant must currently work in a public high school.
4. The participant must currently work in Georgia.

I will begin my research by reviewing the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Web site for information on the ninety-four library media specialists that are currently certified in the library media field in Georgia. I will select only those certified library media specialists that are currently working in a public high school in Georgia. From that list of potential participants that meet all the required criteria for the study, I will select five final candidates from various parts of the state and with varying backgrounds (different races, genders, ages, etc.), if possible, to participate in the study.

Three participants will be selected and the remaining two will serve as alternates in case one or more of the selected three chooses not to or is not able to participate. All participants are eighteen years of age or older and there are no requirements for gender or race although diversity among the three participants is preferred.

The three National Board Certified SLMSs will be asked to participate in the study first through contact by electronic mail, then by letters sent by postal mail. The researcher will give assurances to each participant that their names, the names of their districts and of their schools will remain confidential. The researcher will develop pseudonyms for the participants and their schools will be called Omega High School (OHS), Beta High School (BHS), and Delta High School (DHS) to assure anonymity. Participants will be asked to sign two Informed Consent Forms (see Appendix). One copy will be given to the participant and the other copy will be retained for the researcher's records. The participants' administrator will also be asked to write a statement of approval, including the researcher's name and title of the project on official school letterhead in order to give authorization for this project (see Appendix). A questionnaire will be distributed to the participants prior to the interview (see Appendix). Interviewing will be the primary tool used in this investigation. The interview will consist of thirty-four open ended questions and will take approximately one and a half hours to complete (see Appendix). The interview will be used to determine the ESLMSs' perception of their purpose, perception of their development as a person, perception of the organizational context in which they work, and perception of the culture of their school. State and federal reports will be analyzed and artifacts will be collected from each school.

The participants will be informed that all results will be confidential, known only to the researcher, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without their prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. The data resulting from this study will be kept for up to two years in secure office storage for purposes of data analysis. The participants will be informed that all participation is voluntary and no compensation will be received for participation. No discomforts, stresses, or risks are foreseen in this study.

With any research study there are limitations. In this study the following limitations were identified:

- Sampling will be small. Only three individual SLMSs will be included in the study so it will not be possible to generalize results to the larger population of all SLMSs.
- Only high school level schools will be included in this study. Thus, results may not be able to be generalized to elementary and middle school levels even when the media specialists at these schools share the same other selection criteria of the media specialists used in this study.
- Only having achieved National Board Certification will be used to identify expert media specialist. While there are numerous SLMSs with expertise in the field, only National Board Certification as an indicator of expert practices will be used to select participants. There are only ninety-four certified SLMSs in the state of Georgia so this will limit the participants that can be selected.
- Participants may not be fully honest during the interview or on the questionnaire. One limitation of interviews and questionnaires is that the researcher must assume honesty on the part of the participants. Also having received the questions prior to the actual interview may lead to filtering of answers.

In spite of the limitations of the study, the data is valuable because it shows how expert media specialists perceive their roles and their own development. Whereas, generalization is not claimed, the findings will have implications for other sites where context and dispositions match those of the described schools and/or the described ESLMSs.

### **Methodology (Procedures).**

A case study design will be used for this descriptive research study. Qualitative research methodology will be utilized to create case studies of three ESLMSs. This qualitative study will be conducted through the use of a questionnaire, an interview, analysis of state and federal reports, an examination of collected artifacts, and an analysis of an online discussion forum. I will select three high school media specialists currently employed in Georgia public schools whom were deemed expert by having earned National Board Certification in Library Media in the past four years. Before the day of the interview, a questionnaire will be given to determine the diversity and backgrounds of the participants of the study. The questionnaire will also be used to identify relationships between the participants' background and their specific school setting. This questionnaire contains thirty-five fill in the blank and short answer questions and should take about thirty minutes to complete. The questionnaire data and federal and state reports will be used to create school portraits of the three schools in which the three selected participants currently work. Studying SLMSs whom are currently working in public schools will provide the clearest picture of the reality that is present in schools today, at least of their perception of it. A school portraiture is important in terms of the personal knowledge of the participants because the participants will learn valuable information about their colleagues, students, community members, administrators and school environment that they may have never realized before. All educators should be knowledgeable about these characteristics if they are to provide learning opportunities that will benefit each student.

The interview consists of thirty-four open-ended questions. The interview should take one and a half hours to complete. My study will include a structured interview format in which I have set questions but will allow conversation to flow freeing according to this predetermined format. Interviews will be taped on audiocassettes, transcribed and analyzed using the constant comparative approach to analysis. Categories and the responses of each of the participants will be compared and contrasted. The use of tape recorders during interviews is often beneficial to the researcher to ensure accuracy of data collected. The interviewee will be informed of the recording and will sign a consent form agreeing to it (see Informed Consent form in the Appendix). The audiocassette tapes will be stored in the researcher's locked office cabinet and will immediately be erased upon transcription no more than one week after the interview.

An online discussion forum will be set up so all three participants and the researcher can interact in regards to their perceptions of their roles and development within their school. The online discussion forum will allow the participants to interact with one another without revealing their identity. The discussion group will allow participants to interrelate for an extended period of time, two months, at their own convenience since they can post discussion topics twenty-four hours a day on the Internet. The discussion group postings will be used to add depth to the responses obtained from the more structured questionnaires and interviews as well as to record

responses of the ESLMSs' reactions to each other's perspectives of their own role and development. Collected artifacts will include: a copy of a collection analysis of the media center, copies of the media center rules and procedures or a media center handbook, copies of lesson plans and/or schedule books, copies of syllabi and/or handouts for any professional development courses or trainings that the ESLMS has conducted, a copy of the school improvement plan, copies of any flyers or newsletters that the ESLMS produced for staff or the public, copies of minutes from meetings that the ESLMS led or participated in, and a copy of the media center Web site.

Triangulation, member checks, peer examination and clarifying the researcher's perspective and biases will be the primary means of establishing the validity of this study. Member checks will be conducted in the process of the study and at the end of the study. Participants will be sent by postal mail, transcripts of their interview and the researcher's interpretations of the interviews. All participants will be invited to comment on the accuracy of their interview transcripts and the researcher's interpretations of the interview answers. I am including multiple sources of data—questionnaire, interview, online discussion entries, artifacts, and state and federal school reports—to increase the depth of information received. I also plan to have colleagues examine and comment on findings as they emerge in the study. I will identify and clarify my perspective and biases and include a description of these in my proposed study (see Appendix).

**Research involving minors.** No minors will be used in this research study.

**Deception.** No deception will be used in this research study.

**Medical procedures.** No medical procedures will be used in this research study.

**Risk.** No risks are foreseen in this study although there is potential for discomfort or stress when participants are asked to reflect on their practices and feelings. The potential for this discomfort and stress is minimal since these ESLMSs have engaged in similar reflections in order to have successfully completed the National Board Certification process.

**Cover page checklist.** The interview will be recorded on audiocassette tapes. The audiocassette tapes will be stored in the researcher's locked office cabinet and will immediately be erased upon transcription no more than one week after the interview. See attached copy of Informed Consent Document and Administrative Permission for Research for more details.

**APPENDIX C**

**INFORMED CONSENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT FORMS**



**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

---

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, FOUNDATIONS, AND READING**

---

**INFORMED CONSENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to take part in a research study titled “A Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists,” which is being conducted by Melissa Allen. Ms. Allen is conducting this study for Georgia Southern University and her results will be written up and submitted to the Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading Department (912-681-5091) as part of her required work for her Doctorate of Education degree. Ms. Allen’s staff advisor is Dr. Judith Repman in the Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department at Georgia Southern University (912-681-5394).

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 related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed. The researcher has explained that the purpose of her research is to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS’s purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the ESLMS works in, and the culture of the ESLMS’s school. I understand that the researcher uses the term ESLMS interchangeably with National Board Certified SLMS. The benefit I may expect from participating in this study is to gain a better understanding of my beliefs, values, motivations and perceptions of my role and development as well as a deeper understanding of the organizational context and culture of my school.

The procedures are as follows:

- 1) I will be asked to fill out an initial questionnaire containing thirty-five fill in the blank and short answer questions. The questionnaire should take about thirty minutes to complete.
- 2) I will be asked to answer thirty-four open-ended questions in an interview. The interview should take one and a half hours to complete and will be recorded on audiocassette tapes. The audiocassette tapes will be stored in a locked office cabinet and will immediately be erased upon transcription no more than one week after the interview.
- 3) I will be asked to log onto a Google Group online discussion forum at least once a week for two months. I will be asked to post topics and reply to the other participants’ postings as often as possible but not to reveal any personal information or information that could be used to identify myself or my schools. It

is estimated that I will spend approximately four hours actively involved with the discussion group. The amount of time actually spent on the online discussion board will depend on the extent of my postings.

- 4) I will be asked to provide the following artifacts, if available: a copy of a collection analysis of my media center, copies of rules and procedures or a media center handbook, copies of lesson plans and/or schedule books, copies of syllabi and/or handouts for any professional development courses or trainings that I have conducted, a copy of the school improvement plan, copies of any flyers or newsletters that I produced for staff or the public, copies of minutes from meetings that I led or participated in, and a copy of my media center Web site.

The results of this participation will be confidential, known only to the researcher, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. The data resulting from this study will be kept for up to two years in secure office storage for purposes of data analysis. I understand participation is voluntary and no compensation will be received for participation. No risks are foreseen in this study although there is potential for discomfort or stress when participants are asked to reflect on their practices and feelings. The potential for this discomfort and stress is minimal since these ESLMSs have engaged in similar reflections in order to have successfully completed the National Board Certification process.

The researcher or her advisor will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project. The researcher, Melissa Allen, can be reached by phone at (912) 265-0577; via mail at 116 Eagle Crest Drive Brunswick, GA 31525; or via email at [melissa\\_allen2002@yahoo.com](mailto:melissa_allen2002@yahoo.com). The researcher's advisor, Dr. Judith Repman, can be reached by phone at (912) 681-5394; via mail at Georgia Southern University, Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department, P.O. Box 8131 Statesboro, GA 30460-8131; or via email at [jrepman@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:jrepman@georgiasouthern.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at (912) 486-7758, or [ovrsight@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:ovrsight@georgiasouthern.edu).

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered all of my questions to my satisfaction, I am eighteen years of age or older, and that I consent to volunteer for this study after reading all the above terms. I have been given a copy of this form for my records.

---

Signature of Participant

Date

---

Signature of Researcher

Date

**PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES OF THIS FORM. KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER TO THE RESEARCHER.**





**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

---

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, FOUNDATIONS, AND READING**

---

**ADMINISTRATIVE PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH**

The media specialist in your school has been selected to participate in a research study titled “A Study Analyzing the Perspectives of National Board Certified Media Specialists,” which is being conducted by Melissa Allen. Ms. Allen is conducting this study for Georgia Southern University and her results will be written up and submitted to the Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading Department (912-681-5091) as part of her required work for her Doctorate of Education degree. Ms. Allen’s staff advisor is Dr. Judith Repman in the Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department at Georgia Southern University (912-681-5394).

Participation by the media specialist is entirely voluntary. The participating media specialist can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. Participants can ask to have information related to them returned to them, removed from the research records, or destroyed. The researcher has explained that the purpose of her research is to examine the perceptions of ESLMSs as total educators (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), including the ESLMS’s purpose, the ESLMS as a person, the organizational context the ESLMS works in and the culture of the ESLMS’s school. I understand that the researcher uses the term ESLMS interchangeably with National Board Certified SLMS. The benefit the school may expect from the media specialist participating in this study is that the media specialist may gain a better understanding of their beliefs, values, motivations and perceptions of their role and development as well as a deeper understanding of the organizational context and culture of the school. The researcher will have no direct contact with any students and all data collection will take place outside of the ESLMS’s normal workday.

The procedures are as follows:

- 1) The ESLMS will be asked to fill out an initial questionnaire containing thirty-five fill in the blank and short answer questions. The questionnaire should take about thirty minutes to complete.
- 2) The ESLMS will be asked to answer thirty-four open-ended questions in an interview. The interview should take one and a half hours to complete and will be recorded on audiocassette tapes. The audiocassette tapes will be stored in a locked office cabinet and will immediately be erased upon transcription no more than one week after the interview.

- 3) The ESLMS will be asked to log onto a Google Group online discussion forum at least once a week for two months. The ESLMS will be asked to post topics and reply to the other participants' postings as often as possible but not to reveal any personal information or information that could be used to identify them or their schools. It is estimated that the ESLMS will spend approximately four hours actively involved with the discussion group. The amount of time actually spent on the online discussion board will depend on the extent of the ESLMS's postings.
- 4) The ESLMS will be asked to provide the following artifacts, if available: a copy of a collection analysis of the media center, copies of the media center rules and procedures or a media center handbook, copies of lesson plans and/or schedule books, copies of syllabi and/or handouts for any professional development courses or trainings that the ESLMS has conducted, a copy of the school improvement plan, copies of any flyers or newsletters that the ESLMS produced for staff or the public, copies of minutes from meetings that the ESLMS led or participated in, and a copy of the media center Web site.

The results of this participation will be confidential, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without prior consent, unless otherwise required by law. The data resulting from this study will be kept for up to two years in secure office storage for purposes of data analysis. No risks are foreseen in this study although there is potential for discomfort or stress when participants are asked to reflect on their practices and feelings. The potential for this discomfort and stress is minimal since these ESLMSs have engaged in similar reflections in order to have successfully completed the National Board Certification process.

The researcher or her advisor will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project. The researcher, Melissa Allen, can be reached by phone at (912) 265-0577; via mail at 116 Eagle Crest Drive Brunswick, GA 31525; or via email at [melissa\\_allen2002@yahoo.com](mailto:melissa_allen2002@yahoo.com). The researcher's advisor, Dr. Judith Repman, can be reached by phone at (912) 681-5394; via mail at Georgia Southern University, Leadership, Technology and Human Development Department, P.O. Box 8131 Statesboro, GA 30460-8131; or via email at [jrepman@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:jrepman@georgiasouthern.edu). If you have questions about the rights of a research participant, contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at (912) 486-7758, or [ovrsight@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:ovrsight@georgiasouthern.edu).

I understand that I must write a statement of approval, including the researcher's name and title of project, on official school letterhead in order to give authorization for this project.

**APPENDIX D**  
**SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**National Board Certified Media Specialist's Questionnaire**

- 1) What is the highest degree you have earned?  
\_\_\_\_\_ M.Ed. or M.S.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Ed.S  
\_\_\_\_\_ Ed.D/Ph.D
  
- 2) When was your highest degree earned?  
\_\_\_\_\_ within the last five years  
\_\_\_\_\_ six to ten years ago  
\_\_\_\_\_ eleven to fifteen years ago  
\_\_\_\_\_ sixteen to twenty years ago  
\_\_\_\_\_ twenty-one to thirty years ago
  
- 3) Why did you pursue an advanced degree (i.e. to fulfill the requirements for employment for your position as a media specialist, for a salary raise, etc.)?
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) Counting this year, how many years have you been a media specialist?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How many years have you been the media specialist in this school?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 5) If you have been a media specialist in another school(s), was that school(s) also a high school(s)? YES/NO  
If not, what level(s) was the school(s)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 6) If you were at another level, why did you switch?

Which level do you prefer and why?

- 7) How many years (if any) did you teach before becoming a media specialist?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What grade level(s) (if any) did you teach before becoming a media specialist?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What subject(s) (if any) did you teach before becoming a media specialist?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 8) What are your areas of certification and what are your strengths in terms of subjects and grade levels?
- 9) Please list all other personnel positions that are employed in your media center (i.e. another media specialist, technology specialist, media clerk). State if they are full or part time.
- 10) Is the schedule in your current media center fixed, flexible, or a combination of the two? \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) Is your school on block or traditional scheduling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many periods make up the normal school day? \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) Is the type of instruction in your school predominantly direct instruction, project-based instruction, or a mixture of the two? \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) When you teach lessons in the media center are they predominately teacher-centered or student-centered?

\_\_\_\_\_

How often (i.e. hours per week) do you teach?

\_\_\_\_\_

- 14) How do you rate your familiarity with the four roles of a media specialist as defined in *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (i.e. teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, program administrator)? Please highlight one:

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not familiar

- 15) In order of how much time you spend (on average) in each role, please rate the following:

1=spend most of my time in this role

2=spend the second most amount of my time in this role

3=spend the third most amount of my time in this role

4=spend the least amount of my time in this role

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Instructional Partner

\_\_\_\_\_ Information Specialist

\_\_\_\_\_ Program Administrator

- 16) Do you feel you successfully implement the four roles in your job? YES/NO  
If not, what are the barriers that you perceive as keeping you from fully implementing the four roles?

17) Do you teach staff development courses or trainings in your school? YES/NO  
If so, what kinds?

18) How many days are you contracted for (i.e. same as teachers 190, extended for 200, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you work extended hours? YES/NO  
If so, how many extended hours per week do you work? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, is it required or voluntary? REQUIRED/VOLUNTARY  
Are you supplemented financially for working the hours? YES/NO

19) Do you keep a plan book? YES/NO  
If so, what do you include in your plan book (i.e. time classes are scheduled, literacy skills covered, meetings with vendors, goals, etc.)?

20) Are you required to hand in schedules or lesson plans to a supervisor? YES/NO  
If yes, how often (i.e. daily, weekly, monthly, yearly)?

21) Who is your direct supervisor (i.e. the person who completes your yearly evaluation and that you report to with problems or issues related to the media program)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ principal
- \_\_\_\_\_ assistant principal
- \_\_\_\_\_ head media specialist at your school
- \_\_\_\_\_ district media or instructional technology coordinator
- \_\_\_\_\_ other. Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

22) Describe the role of this direct supervisor in the media program and daily activities of your media center.

23) What duties outside of the media center (i.e. bus duty, cafeteria duty, etc.) are you required to do and how often (i.e. the average time spent out of the media center each work week)?

24) Do you ever take work home? YES/NO  
If so, what kind of things and approximately how much time per week is spent on school work at home?

25) What committees are you a member of?

Is membership a requirement or voluntary? REQUIREMENT/VOLUNTARY

26) Do you participate in any reading promotion at your school? YES/NO  
Please explain.

27) Do you think it is important to implement technology into your school? YES/NO  
Please explain.

Does the staff think technology is important in your school? YES/NO  
Please explain.

28) Does your school have a Web site? YES/NO  
If so, who is responsible for creating and maintaining the site?

29) Have you received any personal or professional benefits (financial or otherwise) as a result of achieving National Board Certification? YES/NO  
Please explain.

30) Besides National Board Certification, what awards or accomplishments (if any) have you been recognized for?

31) Would you consider moving to another school that was classified as low performing in order to obtain the 10% salary associated with National Board in the state of Georgia? YES/NO  
Please explain, why or why not?

32) Have you mentored any teachers for National Board Certification? YES/NO  
If so, how many and in what subjects?  
\_\_\_\_\_

33) Have you mentored any media specialists for National Board Certification? YES/NO If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

34) Do you hold Teacher Support Specialist certification? YES/NO  
If so, what year did you obtain this certification? \_\_\_\_\_

35) Have you ever supervised a student teacher or mentored another teacher new to your school? YES/NO  
If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX E**  
**SAMPLE INTERVIEW**



## Total Development as an ESLMS Interview

All interview questions will be categorized as:

**Purpose:** These items relate to the purpose of your position

**As a Person:** These items relate to who you are as a person and how that relates to your position as an ESLMS

**Organizational Context of the School:** These items relate to the organizational context of your school

**Culture of School:** These items relate to the culture (value, norms, etc.) of your school

- 1) **Purpose:** Identify your purposes as a SLMS.
- 2) **Purpose:** As an ESLMS, how do you perceive yourself contributing to student achievement in your school?
- 3) **Organizational Context:** How important is your role as an ESLMS to the daily functioning of the school? Please explain your answer.
- 4) **Organizational Context:** If you were to describe your role in your school as a metaphor or simile, what would your role be described as/like, and why?
- 5) **As a Person:** Why did you choose to become a SLMS?
- 6) **As a Person:** Do you view your position as a SLMS as a lifelong career? Please explain your answer.
- 7) **Purpose:** What do you think needs to be done to encourage more people to come into the field of library media?  
  
What advice would you give someone who is thinking of entering the field?
- 8) **Organizational Context:** In what ways does your school benefit from having you as the SLMS?
- 9) **As a Person:** What are your personal strengths that make you an expert media specialist?
- 10) **Purpose:** What advice would you give other media specialists who want to implement an exemplary media program?
- 11) **As a Person:** What unique skills or experiences do you have that help make your school more effective?
- 12) **Culture of School:** Why did you choose this particular school to work in?

13) **Purpose:** Why did you choose to pursue National Board Certification?

What do you think needs to be done to encourage more people to pursue National Board Certification?

14) **As a Person:** How have you personally changed as a result of going through the National Board Certification process?

15) **Purpose:** How have your professional practices changed as a result of going through the National Board Certification process?

16) **Purpose:** What professional goals have you set for yourself (i.e. what are you aiming to accomplish as an ESLMS)?

17) **As a Person:** What personal goals have you set for yourself (i.e. what are you aiming to accomplish personally in your life)?

18) **Organizational Context:** What are the goals of your school?

How were these goals decided on and by whom?

19) **Purpose:** Do you feel there is a connection between your personal and professional goals and your school's goals? Please explain your answer.

20) **Culture of School:** If you were to describe your school as a metaphor or simile, what would it be described as/like, and why?

21) **Culture of School:** Describe the dominant beliefs and values present in your school.

Describe any connection between your personal beliefs and values and those present in your school.

22) **Purpose:** What do you feel are the rewards and benefits you have received for your exemplary work in your school (i.e. leadership opportunities, intrinsic rewards, monetary, reduced responsibilities, etc.)?

23) **Culture of School:** Do you feel you have a voice in the way the school is run?

Who do you voice your opinions to?

24) **Organizational Context:** Describe your role as a leader in your school.

25) **As a Person:** In what role (i.e. teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator) do you feel most like yourself (in other words the role you are most comfortable in)? Please explain your answer.

26) **As a Person:** In what role (i.e. teacher, instructional partner, information specialist, and program administrator) do you feel least like yourself (in other words the role you are least comfortable in)? Please explain your answer.

27) **Organizational Context:** How are your expectations for performance communicated to you?

What kinds of feedback do you receive about your performance?

28) **Organizational Context:** In what ways does your school administration provide you with support?

In what ways do you provide your school administration with support?

29) **Culture of School:** In what ways does your school's leader empower you and the students at your school? Please explain.

30) **Organizational Context:** When and where does planning between the SLMS and teachers occur?

31) **Culture of School:** Describe the ways in which your school promotes community and collegiality.

32) **As a Person:** How do you plan to continue to grow professionally and personally?

33) **Culture of School:** If I were to ask a student at your school to describe the school culture that is present at your school, what do you think he/she would say?

34) **Culture of School:** If I were to ask a teacher at your school to describe the school culture that is present at your school, what do you think he/she would say?

**APPENDIX F**

**ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM INVESTIGATOR RESPONSES**

## Online Discussion Forum Investigator Responses

1) Here is the first post I would like each of you to respond to: Participant 1 said in the interview, “National Board Certification is really a recognition—nationally and internationally—and people seem to respect your opinion a little bit more when they know you have this certification.” Participant 1, can you provide an example of when this happened? Participants 2 and 3, please comment on if you agree or disagree with this statement through your own personal experiences. If you agree, please provide an example of why you feel this way or an experience where this has proven true.

2) I attended a RESA Media Consortium meeting today. After hearing a presentation on using the Big6, one media specialist asked for advice on how to get teachers to "buy in." A follow-up comment came from a high school media specialist who recognizes the need for collaboration.....but would be happy just to get teachers to give her a heads up on assigned projects so she could have materials ready! I offered the suggestion...."you have to keep chipping away one teacher at the time....The success of one great collaboration will spread." Teachers are always amazed at the difference our contributions (through collaboration) can make! Any other words of wisdom on facilitating collaboration with reluctant teachers?

3) Participant 2, Thank you for posting. I hope everyone will see this group as a way to ask advice, express your opinion, vent, etc. The first question was posted to 'test the waters' to make sure everyone could log on and send an email. I see we are up and running so I hope to get a discussion of relevant topics going that is free flowing to cover and topics of concern to you as well as to comment on the findings and conclusions of this study.

I agree that collaboration is a real problem and I think the media specialist's relationship with teachers comes into play here. Participant 3 discussed during the interview that the other media specialist in her/his school has been in the school longer than she/he so she/he often feels that teachers will walk right by her/him to collaborate with the other media specialist just because they have more of a relationship there (having spent more time with the other media specialist). I know Participant 2 is in a similar situation having come in after the other media specialist. What are some ways to overcome this "newbie" effect without stepping on the toes of the "senior" media specialist?

4) Participant 3 quoted Ruby Payne in the interview stating "to have significant learning there must be a significant relationship." This was in reference to media specialists forming relationships with the students in their schools. All three of you stated the importance of relationships with students. What can be done to improve media specialists' relationships in the school--with students, teachers, and administrators? Do you think people you work with (other media specialists, teachers, administrators) respect your knowledge more because you are National Board Certified, even if you are newer to the school, or does it hinder you in some way (they could think you feel like you are better than them, they could be jealous—feeling they could not accomplish the same thing or because you get a pay raise, etc.)? I look forward to hearing what everyone has to say.

5) Considering all the obstacles in education today do you remain passionate about the media profession? If so, why do you remain passionate?

6) Sorry this is a long post. I am paraphrasing your responses so please correct me if I am not conveying your thoughts.

During the interview when I asked how you perceive yourself contributing to student achievement in your school, all three of you answered that you contribute in some ways but you all stated it would be hard to make a correlation directly to achievement such as a rise in standardized test scores or an increase in grades received in class. For example, Participant 1 stated that contributions are made by purchasing needed resources to enhance learning and purchasing resources to assist with test preparation such as online graduation test preparation software. Also contributions are made by teaching information literacy skills and encouraging voluntary reading. Participant 1 felt if there was not a knowledgeable media specialist in the school doing all of these things then they would not get done and student achievement would be negatively effected. My question is do you feel the need to link what you are doing on a daily basis to student achievement or do you feel teachers need to focus on student achievement and media specialists need to focus on assisting the teachers in any way necessary to help them accomplish their duty of increasing student achievement (i.e. purchase resources, teach information skills lesson, etc.)? Meaning that do you feel the scores on standardized tests and grades in class are really out of your control and thus not a responsible of the media specialist.

7) In that last post I was looking for—what is the focus of what we, as media specialists, should be doing? Should our focus be student achievement in the school? Should our focus be something else altogether, and if so what?

8) What experiences, events, or people have inspired you to become an exemplary SLMS? And can you explain how and why this inspired you?

9) Participant 2 said in the interview, “I have been in education a long time and I have done lots of things. I have three graduate degrees but the National Board Certification process, without a doubt, is the most powerful thing I have ever done as a professional educator.” Participants 1 and 3, please comment on if you agree or disagree with this statement through your own personal experiences and why you feel this way.

10) Participant 3 said in the interview “I think when you get to high school you realize that in an elementary school the adults have the power. They are the biggest people and they have physical power and they can dictate the culture. They can establish it. Here [a high school setting] the adolescent culture is in control no matter what.” Participant 1 and 2 can you comment on whether you also support this statement. Are educators in high schools in a “hands are tied” kind of situation as far as their ability to affect culture in the school?

11) Participant 1 said in the interview “The library media specialist is an instructional leader in the school already because they have contact with every student and every

teacher and are administering the media program.” Participant 2 and 3 can you comment on whether you agree or disagree with this statement and why you feel this way.

12) What are the benefits of being a media specialist? What are the disadvantages of being a media specialist?

13) In the interviews all three of you indicated, in different ways, that school climate/culture determines what you are able to do in your school. Can each of you elaborate on why you feel your school culture dictates how you are able to (or not able to) perform your job?

14) Participant 3 stated that contributions at the elementary school level were significant because the students were beginning their educational journey but at high school they were ending their journey and the ones that are achieving would be achieving even if she as a certified, knowledgeable, competent media specialist were there or not. Participant 1 and 2, also being in the high school setting, do you see this in a similar way?

15) Was this discussion group helpful to you in any way (i.e. did it make you look at your personal situation a little different, did you learn something from one of the other participants’ posts that you did not know before, etc.)? If you did benefit in some way, please explain.