

CURRICULUM TEAM LEADERS: INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES TOWARD
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION OF TEACHERS

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

Michael Keith Conley. CURRICULUM TEAM LEADERS: INDIVIDUAL
PERSPECTIVES TOWARD INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION OF TEACHERS.

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Accountability demands on schools are increasingly difficult to meet at the local, state, and national levels. This study examined the perspectives of curriculum team leaders (CTLs) that are one middle school's response to increased accountability and changing student population. The CTLs provide instructional supervision to same-grade, same-subject curriculum teams. Four CTLs were chosen for this case study and data was gathered using focused interviews, observations, open-ended questionnaires, and artifact collection. A discussion of the CTLs' work, recommendations for schools seeking to use teacher leaders to provide instructional supervision, and suggestions for further research is included.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my wife Kelly Conley. She supported me throughout the process. Many times she was the sounding board I needed to jump start ideas, as well as, providing a new perspective toward the work. She worked tirelessly to type everything into the dissertation since I am “old school” and wrote it all longhand. I thank God for her friendship, her love, and the life we have together.

In the beginning of this process my daughter made the statement, “Oh, you will be a doctor just like Dr. Seuss.” I want to thank Makenzi Conley, my special gift from God for her support. She wrote me little notes at times that helped me keep going. I hope this helps her remember that she can do anything in life with God’s help.

There are two other people that played a part in my accomplishment. One is Buford Conley my dad. I cannot remember him ever not solving a problem or finishing a task. He was always the hardest working, smartest man I knew growing up and still is today. The second is my mother, Ruth Conley, who is in heaven praising God at this time. She would have been proud. I grew up thinking that I would go to college. She quietly held that as an expectation for me. I am able to succeed in life because of the examples and love I received from them both.

Lastly, thanks to Clay Hobbs, a godly friend that got me into this mess in the beginning. I value his friendship. It’s because of him I have this “terminal degree;” there is no higher place to go.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS)

Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT)

Curriculum Team Leaders (CTLs)

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

Rosewood County Public Schools (RCPS)

Rosewood Middle School (RMS)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The field of instructional supervision has been struggling to find its role in contemporary leadership because the search for the understanding of what effective instructional leadership is has disregarded the fact that collegial supervision of instruction may be the key underlying factor in improved classroom instruction and student learning.

Glanz, Shulman, & Sullivan, 2007, p. 21

Accountability issues have driven the need for change in today's schools.

Georgia's *A Plus Education Reform Act of 2000*, the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, high stakes testing (state mandated standardized tests), benchmark tests (implemented by the local school systems), and reporting of test results on school report cards have increased the pressure on teachers and administrators for students to achieve at high levels (Holmes & Sielke, 2000). These measures work together to create more accountability demands for administrators and teachers.

The typical hierarchal structure of schools is "principals, assistant principals, teachers, and staff, with the principal expected to provide the great bulk of the leadership" (Lindahl, 2008). Historically the principal's role as instructional leader has emerged as the focus related to providing instructional supervision to teachers (Colantonio, 2005; Lindahl, 2008; Palandra, 2010; Shulman, Sullivan, & Glanz, 2008). In some cases, schools have utilized curriculum coaches to assist the principal (Shulman et al., 2008). In most settings, the principal has the responsibility of curriculum monitoring added to their duties as instructional leader (Brooks, Solloway, & Allen, 2007). As a result principals struggle to balance the evaluation of teachers, the desire to help teachers improve, and the overwhelming responsibilities of school administration (Brooks et

al.,2007; Colantonio, 2005; Williamson & Blackburn, 2009). The focus on instructional supervision of teachers is minimized by the number of demands school administrators have on their time.

In light of these increased demands for time and accountability, proactive schools are searching for ways to meet the needs of diverse student populations. One way schools are meeting these needs is by refining the organization and approach educators use to teach students. Part of the refining process has been to engage teachers as leaders in the school. More specifically, teachers are leading in the instructional supervision of teachers. According to Lindahl (2008) it is “difficult to separate leadership from administration because the hierarchal administrative structure in schools use the same individuals to fulfill both roles.” In light of this difficulty, schools are exploring ways to use these teacher leaders to impact teaching and learning in the classroom and not as administrators. The instructional supervision of teachers is one-way schools can use the expertise of teacher leaders.

Teacher leadership appears in different forms and models. Hobson and Moss (2010) describe three models of teacher leadership: (a) the lead teacher model; (b) the multiple leadership roles model; and (c) the every-teacher-a-leader model. Each of these models emphasizes the instructional supervision of teachers by a teacher leader in some form. A teacher leadership role in these models “implies that teacher leadership involves the proactive involvement of teachers in impacting, enhancing, and preparing the greater community through the focus on education” (Hobson & Moss, 2010, p. 30).

In order to utilize teachers as leaders, schools are changing the organization and approach educators use to teach students. The word community is repeatedly referenced in school reform literature (Dufour, 2004; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Graham, 2007; Hughes & Kristsonis, 2006). Many schools have adopted some form or model of community to better provide instructional supervision to teachers and to have a more positive impact in the areas of accountability and changing school demographics. When exploring the types of school communities being utilized several titles are used, Learning Community, Learning Organization, Professional Learning Community, School Community, Community of Learners, and Professional Communities (Angelle, 2007; Dufour, 2004; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Hobson & Moss, 2010). The varieties of models share the common characteristics of a shared vision, ongoing learning, shared practice, and collaboration (Angelle, 2007; Dufour, 2004; Graham, 2007). In response to the greater demands of accountability, schools utilize these community principles to meet the challenges in schools.

In response to the demands of accountability, many schools have adopted the community principles of professional learning communities (PLCs). Professional learning communities have become one of the most talked about ideas in education today (Thompson, Gregg, & Niska, 2004). School leaders implement the basic principles that define PLCs to meet the needs of students. The basic characteristics of a PLC include supportive and shared leadership, collective learning and application of learning, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice (Dufour, 2004; Graham, 2007; Hord, 1998).

When, Rosewood Middle School (a pseudonym for a large urban middle school in northeast Georgia), began searching for new ways to meet the needs of a changing student population and demanding accountability measures, the school leadership turned to professional learning communities. The research surrounding professional learning communities “demonstrated that professional learning community activities had the potential to achieve significant improvements in teaching effectiveness” (Graham, 2007, p. 6). The PLC principles became a driving force for changing the ability of the school to address the needs of more students from lower socioeconomic levels and a rise in the schools’ minority population.

In large schools like Rosewood, organization is a key element. For the past twelve years the school has been divided into five communities. Each community consisted of approximately 600 students, one assistant principal, one counselor, and one clerk. The school organization concept used at Rosewood was referred to as a school within a school. Leadership in the school included the principal, six assistant principals, one assistant principal exclusively for special education services, and one local school technology coordinator. The assistant principals supervised every duty, responsibility, and committee of the Rosewood Middle School program. Teachers in the school chose areas in which to serve as part of individual committee assignments (see Appendix C for a list).

Rosewood has been serving students’ needs for twelve years. The school has not been hindered by size and continually works to meet the needs of the student population. Entering the 2009-2010 school year Rosewood Middle School reorganized its delivery

model. Due to new school openings in the district, Rosewood's enrollment decreased by approximately 600 students. Reductions in local and state funding allotments resulted in changes in personnel and changes in the delivery of instruction necessary to meet student needs. The school now operates with grade level academies instead of communities.

Three of the five wings of the school each contain one grade level. One additional wing houses both seventh grade and eighth grade students. Each grade level wing has approximately 760 students. The last wing contains connections teachers who teach a variety of courses across grade levels. The special education teachers are housed on the grade level wing that contains their assigned student caseload. Each grade level retains one assistant principal, one counselor and one clerk. There are two additional assistant principals: one administrator of special education services and one administrator of testing and scheduling. Each of these administrators, as well as the principal, works with a curriculum team and curriculum team leader to plan instruction.

Statement of the Problem

Rosewood Middle School has spent the past years working to implement professional learning community principles. Richard Dufour (2004), originator of PLCs, stated that "to create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold yourself accountable for results" (p. 6). The administrative team focused on the basics of developing a collaborative community model based on professional learning community principles. These PLC basics formed the beginning of Rosewood Middle School's change to a learning community in an effort to meet the needs of students.

Rosewood Middle School created same grade level and same subject curriculum teams as part of using PLC principles. The purpose of the collaborative academic team was to focus on planning instruction and how well students are learning. Curriculum Team Leaders (CTLs), who serve as teachers in the same grade level and subject, lead the teams of teachers. The CTLs lead the weekly curriculum team meetings. CTLs also work as part of the school leadership team (one principal, five assistant principals, and CTLs from each grade level and each subject.) An assistant principal is assigned to each curriculum team and works with each CTL to support teachers' work implementing best practices. Using a case study approach, I examined the work of these CTLs as they provided instructional supervision to the curriculum teams.

Purpose of the Study

This dissertation examined the work of a school committed to becoming a learning community based on professional learning community principles. Specifically, the study examined a middle school's collaborative model and the perspectives of specific instructional leaders as they participate in the instructional supervision of teachers.

The instructional leaders, known as curriculum team leaders, lead teams of teachers to focus on planning and instruction. Collaboration occurs among teachers as well as, between the curriculum team leaders and school administrators. The collaborative model and the instructional leaders who provide instructional supervision to the team are this school's response to a changing student population and greater demands of accountability. This dissertation sought to determine the perspectives of the curriculum

team leaders as they provided instructional supervision to teachers. The curriculum team leaders fill a leadership role that principals are struggling to fulfill. The case study provided a view into the leadership activities of curriculum team leaders as they provide instructional supervision. Additionally, the case study provided insights into the supportive structure needed to enable curriculum team leaders to provide instructional supervision to teachers.

Significance of the Study

The dissertation examined the perspectives of the CTLs work in instructional supervision. There have been studies assessing the models used in professional learning communities and their success (Graham, 2007; Hord, 1997, 1998; Thompson et al., 2004). Additionally, high school department chairs and their perspectives on instructional supervision have been studied (Kruskamp, 2003; Zepeda & Kruskamp, 2007). Several researchers examined a varied number of learning community models and the roles of leaders in those models (Angelle, 2007; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Hobson & Moss, 2010). These studies have not addressed the work of specific instructional leaders in learning community models at the middle school level. The case study examining the perspectives of curriculum team leaders providing instructional supervision in a middle school learning community will add a new strand to instructional supervision and learning community research.

Research Questions

The dissertation focused on the work of CTLs as it pertained to instructional supervision of classroom teachers. The study examined the perspectives of a group of

CTLs as they provide instructional supervision within a middle school using PLC principled practices. The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a change in student population?
2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

Research Plan

The research was conducted using a qualitative design approach. The case study design was chosen because it provided an emphasis on “understanding why the individual does what he or she does” and “how behavior changes” in response to their environment (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006). The goal of the case study was to examine the individual perspectives of a group of CTLs as they provide instructional supervision within a middle school using PLC principles. I used the case study as a lens to explore the “whole individual in the totality of that individual’s environment” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 457). The case study allows research that provides insights to an “in-depth description of a specific unit” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 456) that will enable others to apply supportive data to their own professional learning community practices. School leaders that are searching for ways to improve teaching and learning can use the research to determine the role of the curriculum team leader within their individual professional learning community model and other individual collaborative models.

Operational Definitions

Before discussing the specific details of the study, it is important to define some key terms that will be used frequently over the course of this dissertation:

Curriculum Team Leaders (CTL)-is a teacher that guides specific curriculum teams in the collaborative practices of a professional learning community. The CTL is part of the leadership team of the middle school and uses professional learning community principles to meet student needs.

Collaborative Curriculum Teams-is a group of teachers interacting within a same-grade, same-subject curriculum team that implement professional learning community practices to improve instruction. The teams work in the curriculum areas of math, language arts, science, social studies, and connections.

Instructional supervision-is a proactive, ongoing set of processes and procedures with the purpose of improving classroom instruction (Zepeda, 2005). It is formative, not evaluative. The aim of instructional supervision is “to promote growth, development, interaction, fault free problem solving, and a commitment to building capacity in teachers” (Zepeda, 2007, p. 29). These processes are designed to affect the approaches that allow teachers to learn from other teaching professionals by analyzing and reflecting on their classroom practices (Zepeda & Mayers, 2004).

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)-a work approach used by schools to increase the effective practices of schooling. The school staff is required to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and

hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement (Dufour, 2004).

Symbolic Interactionism-a methodological framework that examines how people attach meaning to their interactions with other people.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of the case study was to understand the perspectives of curriculum team leaders (CTLs) as they provided instructional supervision to a team of same-subject, same-grade middle school teachers. The CTL's work as leaders in instructional supervision is an effort by the school to meet the accountability demands in meeting student needs. The foundation for the study was based in three areas of related literature encompassing learning communities, leadership, and instructional supervision. Using a qualitative approach, interviews of CTLs were conducted to determine their perspectives. The core research questions that guided the study were:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a changing student population?
2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

Theoretical Framework

The methodological framework used to guide the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the case study is symbolic interactionism (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Silverman, 2000). The research focused on recording the perspectives of curriculum team leaders as they provided instructional supervision to middle school teachers. The

symbolic interactionism framework, “which focuses on how we attach symbolic meanings to interpersonal relations” (Silverman, 2000, p. 77), provided a lens to use in obtaining the real-life experiences of the people being studied. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), people in a given situation develop common definitions or share perspectives since they regularly interact. The interactions lead individuals to develop the self, which is the “definition people create (through interacting with others) of who they are” (2007, p. 29).

The development of self directly influences the role of individuals when interacting in an organization. The construct of role theory aids the analysis of interpersonal behaviors of people in an organization. In the book *Organizational Behavior in Education: Adaptive Leadership and School Reform*, the authors Owens and Valesky (2007) compare how real-life and a play on a stage are related. The analogy states that

People in organizations have definite roles to perform, and many interactive factors help to determine precisely what kind of “performance” each role will receive. Each “actor” must interpret his or her role, and this interpretation depends to some extent on what the individual brings on the stage – is influenced to some extent by dynamic interplay with other people: other actors and the audience.

(Owens & Valesky, 2007, p. 130)

The role performance analogy emphasizes the importance of expectations set forth by onlookers and by the person occupying the role (Owens & Valesky, 2007). These influences work to shape an individual’s interpretation of the role within the organization.

The symbolic interactionism framework, including the construct of role theory, is applicable to the proposed study of CTL's perspectives providing instructional supervision. The social interactions that CTLs experience, while providing instructional supervision to teams of teachers, has a direct relation to the roles and meanings CTLs have developed. The case study sought to determine the perspectives CTLs have toward their role in providing instructional supervision.

Learning Communities

The idea of improving schools by developing collaborative approaches is an approach schools use to meet the needs of students (Angelle, 2007; Dufour, 2004; Hobson & Moss, 2010; Nelson, Deuel, Slavit, & Kennedy, 2010). Collaborative learning groups can be manifested under a variety of titles, such as professional learning community, learning community, communities of practice, or knowledge communities (Angelle, 2007; Dufour, 2004; Hobson et. al., 2010; Gates & Watkins, 2010). Angelle (2007) suggests that given the scope of federal and district mandates that fall upon schools, school wide learning and the development of learning communities are essential.

Research indicates professional learning community approaches produce positive outcomes for both staff and students (Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Graham, 2007; Hord, 1997; 1998). Many schools that desire to improve their effectiveness are using the learning community models to improve teacher instruction and student achievement. Teacher leaders are important to schools using learning community principles and are the focus of the dissertation research. The review of literature included studies related to varied learning community models and their effect on schools and instruction.

Richard Dufour is considered an expert on the concept of Professional Learning Communities. Schools desiring to meet the needs of students use similar concepts of learning communities. As mentioned previously in this chapter, the learning community may have several names, but share the same values.

Senge (1990) developed the concept of a learning community in his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. Although a business focused book the learning organization model he espoused has been integrated into the education community. Senge (1990) identified five keys to develop in a learning organization. The five keys are:

1. Personal Mastery – continual learning to expand one’s personal capacity
2. Mental Models – reflecting, clarifying, and improving personal beliefs and attitudes
3. Shared Vision – building a shared vision with principles and guided practices
4. Team Learning – transforming collective thinking skills so that people can develop intelligence and ability greater than their own.
5. Systems Thinking – understanding the system as a whole. (pp. 7-10)

Senge’s five attributes are similar to the basic Professional Learning Communities attributes (Dufour, 2004). In particular both learning communities espouse building a shared vision among the stakeholders involved. Secondly, an important habit is using the collective thinking skills and creativity in order to improve. When schools are focusing on the people in the organization to improve outcomes, using the collective expertise of stakeholders can promote success in the learning community. A third item that the two

learning communities share is in the shared personal practice and mental models approach. Schools that desire to improve their instruction, thus the positive impact on the outcomes, must reflect on personal practice and seek ways to improve from others. Part of this involves continually learning to expand knowledge and thus one's capacity to improve. Lastly, learning communities must focus on the organization as a whole. This requires less focus on individual parts and more focus on the end goal. In a school that is a focus on teaching and learning. Additionally, this requires supportive relationships among the leaders in the learning organization. When stakeholders share the same vision, focus on the outcomes, and share in the responsibility for the results, a learning organization can "promote teacher and student learning in schools" (Liebman, Maldonado, Lacey, & Thompson, 2005, p. 5).

Communities, regardless of the nomenclature, have an impact on teachers, students, and school success. The collaborative habits fostered by learning communities contribute to success. Researchers have explored the concept. Lieberman & Mace (2009) examined "how people learn from their own practice" and "how they contribute to . . . teacher leadership." The researchers found that accomplished teachers were able to open themselves up to the process of inquiry into their own practice" (Lieberman & Mace, 2009, p. 469). The teachers were able then to examine their own practices. The result is an enlisting of other teachers to participate in the examination. In the learning community this is a significant event that leads to collaboration. An essential part of the learning community is the team learning and shared personal practice (Dufour, 2004; Senge, 1990,

2000). The collaboration among stakeholders is key to developing the collaborative environment necessary to improve upon the instructional practices in schools.

Learning communities are organizations that develop open, collaborative dialogue among teachers (Lieberman & Mace, 2009; Hughes & Kristsonis, 2006; Nelson et al., 2010). The teachers are able to break down barriers of isolation to focus on teaching and learning. The learning community has an impact on students through this “collaborative work is expanded or limited by the nature of teachers’ conversations” (Nelson et al. 2010, p. 175). Importantly, peers then become a source of support, knowledge partners, and colleagues in a quest to know more and do more (Lieberman & Mace, 2009). The teachers, through the collaborative work, can become colleagues focused on their shared visions.

When exploring the concept of professional learning communities, three basic core values are found. Dufour (2004) stated that to create a professional learning community schools must focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and be accountable for the results. In addition, there are five attributes of a professional learning community: supportive and shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice (Hughes et al., 2006). Schools that develop a focus on these basic beliefs can be called professional learning communities.

The reform era, the excellence in education movement, and the business sector have led educational leaders to explore the idea of schools as professional learning communities (Hughes et al., 2006). When using the learning community principles,

schools can change the culture to impact achievement outcomes. For the purpose of this dissertation, the attributes of a PLC are examined to develop an understanding of learning community principles in action.

Imposed visions and top-down styled leadership are not part of PLC practices. The development of shared leadership and values are important to ensure collective success in the PLC school (Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Hord, 1997; 1998; Hughes et al., 2006). Administrators work to develop a collaborative culture where educators can work together to achieve the shared goals developed by all stakeholders. Hord (1997) describes this type of shared leadership as collegial leadership, the purpose of which is to promote a collective commitment to the shared vision the stakeholders developed.

In the school organization, teachers work collaboratively and continually to learn together and apply their learning for the benefit of all students (Hord, 1988). A PLC relies heavily on conversations held between teachers to improve practice. The practice of reflective dialogue among teachers allows problems to be identified and provides an opportunity to collectively apply new ideas (Gordon, 2008; Hord 1997). In the PLC, the idea of collective creativity is an important aspect of reaching common goals.

The professional learning community core characteristics are “not simply to ensure that students are taught, but to ensure that they learn” (Dufour, 2004, p. 6). The focus on learning is developed through collaborative teams of teachers who work together to achieve common goals for which they are accountable (Dufour & Marzano, 2009). The collaboration is focused on improving classroom practice. This shared vision is used as a “guidepost in decision making” in the school (Hord, 1997).

The development of a PLC in schools is a fundamental change in the function of school as we have known it. The concept of a shared leadership, collective inquiry, and a shared vision requires a different type of leadership from the school administration. Developing conditions that support the PLC contain both physical elements and professional characteristics (Hord, 1998). In the literature concerning schools using PLC principles, teacher isolation, lack of meeting time, and staff proximity are listed as barriers to developing the collaborative culture necessary to create a PLC (Dufour, 2004; Hord, 1997; 1998). Administrators working with teachers can overcome these barriers. Scheduling and school organization can be used to provide times and places for teachers to meet and reflect on teaching practices. The professional elements may be harder to address. Teachers in a PLC must be willing to accept help from other teachers and work to improve (Hord, 1997). Faculty must stop making excuses for failing to collaborate (Dufour, 2004). Keys to addressing these issues are developing positive, caring relationships among teachers, administrators, and students (Hord, 1998; Hughes & Kritsonis, 2006).

The ultimate goal for developing professional learning community practices is to ensure students learn. One last key to accomplishing this goal found in the literature involves shared personal practice (Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2004; Hord, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006). The collaborative culture of the PLC allows the development of a shared vision and a shared value system. Ultimately the daily work in the school must focus on student learning (Dufour, 2004). In the PLC school, teachers meet regularly to reflect on classroom practices and student learning (Dufour, 2004; Hughes et al., 2006).

The teachers that meet are organized into same grade; same subject teams that strive to put the goals of the school ahead of personal goals. In addition to reflective discussions about teaching, teachers in a PLC also observe other teachers teaching (Hord, 1998). The emphasis on teacher collaboration is central to the PLC.

When schools employ PLC principles, the traditional organization of the school changes. The PLC offers a way of working together that affects teaching and student learning. When a school can use shared leadership for decision making, collective learning among staff members, shared values, physical and human supports, and shared personal practice among teachers; school improvements can meet the needs of students (Dufour, 2004; Hord, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006).

Benefits of professional learning communities. Research indicates schools that employ PLC principles produce positive outcomes for both staff and students (Graham, 2007; Hord 1997; Hughes & Kristsonis, 2006). Implementing PLC principles changes the organizational structure of schools. The results are a focus on student learning, which becomes the normal approach taken by teachers to meet student needs (Hughes & Kristsonis, 2006).

Several student benefits are evident as a result of teachers engaging in PLC practices. Students are more engaged in high intellectual learning tasks and achievement gaps between students of different backgrounds are smaller within the schools using these practices (Lee, Smith & Croninger, 1995). The teachers using PLC principles work collaboratively and have a shared collective responsibility for the total development of students and their success.

The collective responsibility used in the collaborative PLC setting empowers teachers to take risks, reflect, and improve teaching. These activities lead to more engaging lesson plans and a more caring environment for students. The research indicates decreased dropout rates, fewer classes “cut,” and lower rates of absenteeism as a result of higher student engagement and responsibility (Hord, 1997).

Teachers reap benefits from the implementation of PLC principles in the culture of the school. The habits that PLC schools exhibit are both collaborative and reflective. Teachers collaborate with others who teach the same subject and grade levels which breaks down teacher isolation (Graham, 2007; Hord, 1997). When teachers are organized into teams in which they work together to achieve common goals, individual and collective accountability increases (Dufour & Marzano, 2009). The shared visions drive teachers to rely on each other’s input to reach the desired outcomes.

Success is not guaranteed by using the PLC principles, yet reduction of teacher isolation and increased teacher collaboration are observable positive traits. The school organization must use the principles to focus on student learning, work collaboratively, and hold itself accountable (Dufour, 2004). Using PLC practices results in a higher likelihood that teachers will be professionally renewed, higher morale, significant advances into making teaching adaptations for students, a commitment to lasting changes in practices, and a higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental, systemic change are a few of the teacher benefits found in the literature (Dufour, 2004; Dufour et al., 2009; Graham, 2007; Hord, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006).

The curriculum team leaders of Rosewood Middle School provided instructional supervision to curriculum team teachers using professional learning community principles daily. An example of using these principles is CTLs leading small groups of teachers who work together to focus on how students are learning. In addition, the team works collectively to ensure teachers are using best practices to addressing student learning.

The leadership factor. One factor of the PLC that is mentioned repeatedly in the literature is the need for leadership (Graham, 2007; Hord, 1997, 1998; Thompson et al., 2004; Zepeda, 2004). Zepeda (2004) stated that learning communities couldn't exist without leadership that facilitates teacher growth. In the research of Cottonwood School professional learning communities, Hord (1998) observed the work of the principal. The principal encouraged collective learning, which indicated expectations were high (Hord, 1998). Additionally, the principal maximized resources and gave freedom for teachers to make decisions. In a study of Central Middle School, a school in a large southeastern district, Graham (2007) found that leadership emerged as one of the most important factors underlying perceived success (Graham, 2007). Some teachers spoke specifically of the role that the principal played in the school (Graham, 2007). Additionally, the research offers descriptions of individual models that current professional learning communities have used. Most of these involve a collaborative group of teachers that work to develop the best teaching practices to meet the specific learning needs of students. These teachers lead same grade-level, subject-area groups that are part of middle school professional learning communities (Graham, 2007; Hord, 1998). Schools

seeking the foundational guidelines for developing a professional learning community will easily find direction.

A review of learning community literature indicates there is much learned and written on the models used in schools. The most prevalent research surrounds professional learning communities. Evidence in the literature suggests that schools may not have the title professional learning community as coined by Dufour (2004), yet implement professional learning community principles. The research indicates schools use different models, but identify with the basic principles of a learning community. The titles found in the research, professional learning community, learning community, communities of practice, or knowledge communities, support the idea that the development of a learning community is one way to meet student needs (Angelle, 2007; Dufour, 2004; Gates & Watkins, 2010; Hobson & Moss, 2010). Studies also give insight into approaches taken to become a learning community. The dissertation examined the perspectives of curriculum team leaders as they provide instructional supervision for collaborative academic teams within a middle school using learning community principles.

Teacher Leadership

The need for teacher leaders who will be committed to action and converted into agents of change is recognized (Thompson et al., 2004). Teacher leadership is defined in the literature several ways. Reeves (2008) states that a teacher leader is one who is willing to learn and is always asking “How can I make next year better?” the one who is revisiting everything, the one who is willing to share, the one who routinely brings best

practices, and the one who is powered by day-by-day sharing of what works (Kinney, 2008; Reeves, 2008). Cortez-Ford (2009) defines teacher leadership as an “ambiguous concept” that “principal and teachers must create a shared understanding for their school” (para. 2).

Cangelosi (2009) created her own definition while developing a leadership model as principal of an elementary school. She stated a teacher leader is one who exhibits a willingness to collaborate, promotes organizational vision in others, and has a desire to change for the betterment of the organization. The definition shares elements with other definitions in the literature. Key words used when defining the teacher leader are willingness and collaboration. Effective teacher leaders are willing to take on more responsibility and to influence others practices by collaborating (Barth, 2001; Berg, 2005; Cangelosi, 2009; Kinney, 2008; Reeves, 2008; Thornton, 2010). Others define teacher leadership as working with colleagues so that teaching and learning improve (Patterson & Patterson, 2004). Willing teacher leaders can have an impact on the work of colleagues.

Teachers actively participate in many leadership roles (Cortez-Ford, 2009). Teachers participate as instructional leaders while leading school teams; shaping curriculum; designing staff development; choosing textbooks; collaborating with teachers and administrators; and serving on school, state, and national advisory groups (Barth, 2001; Harrison & Killion, 2007; Wynne, 2001). Simply put, teachers are actively involved in every element of the schooling process. When teachers are actively involved in the school process, they become an integral part of the leadership in that organization. These teachers bring an enormous wealth of experience and influence on the leadership

practices of the school (Kinney, 2008). For the purpose of this study of CTLs perspectives of instructional supervision, Reeves' (2008) definition of teacher leadership is useful. He states simply, teacher leadership is not "positional authority, but rather the ability to influence the professional practices of other teachers" (Kinney, 2008, p. 21).

Intent of teacher leadership. The intent of teacher leadership must be examined to understand the influence on professional practice. In the era of increased accountability, "teacher leaders assume a wide range of roles to support school and student success" (Harrison & Killion, 2007, p. 74). Teacher leadership is cultivated to influence the professional practices of teachers, affect teaching and learning, and allow teachers to participant in the school improvement process (Barth, 2001; Phelps, 2008; Zepeda & Mayers, 2002). The form of teacher leadership discussed is a collegial, collaborative concept where teacher leaders seek ways to continue learning, collaborate with colleagues to improve instruction, and in the final analysis improve student learning (Barth, 2001; Bezzina, 2006; Kinney, 2008; Zepeda & Mayers, 2002). Principals and teacher leaders share a common focus of improved instructional practice and increased student achievement.

The teacher leader is a crucial part of all schools becoming places in which all children are learning (Barth, 2001). The roles of leadership that teachers participate in are often focused on classroom instructional practices. The literature reflects purposeful efforts by principals to use teacher leaders to impact colleagues in the classroom, students in the classroom, and improvements in student achievement (Birky et al., 2006;

Cangelosi, 2009; Phelps, 2008; Thornton, 2010). In the era of increased accountability, principals are intent on adding teacher leaders to aid in reaching the goals of the school.

Benefits of teacher leadership. The students, teachers, schools, and principals all reap rewards from active teacher leadership. Barth (2001) delineates specific benefits of teacher leadership. First, when teachers lead, they enlist student leadership to amplify their own. Additionally, decision-making and leadership are more democratic. Third, the school benefits from teacher leadership. When teachers lead, they assume responsibility for something they “care desperately about and great learning takes place” (Barth, 2001). Fourth, teachers benefit as they lead by experiencing new energy and enrichment when they actively pursue leadership opportunities. Teachers that lead have greater influence and standing in the school. Lastly, Barth (2001) states that principal’s benefit from the work and resources provided by teacher leaders. Principals are able to reach further and influence more areas through the many teacher leaders. The success of schools is dependent on the influence of teacher leadership on a day-by-day basis.

The day-by-day influence of teacher leaders is found inside the classroom. According to Thornton (2010), the actions taken by teacher leaders allow excellent teachers to positively impact the teaching practices of colleagues and of student achievement in the classroom. The avenues teacher leaders work through often extends their influence beyond their own classroom. As they work in the school, teacher leaders develop skills that increase their leadership capacity. According to Phelps, (2008) when teachers feel they can safely share ideas, raise questions, and seek answers, their leadership skills improve.

Encouraging teacher leadership. The quality and practice of leadership at every level have a demonstrable impact on organizational health in general and on student achievement in particular (Reeves, 2008, p. 10). An examination of the leadership of principals reveals that administrative tasks and the high-stakes work environment found in schools hinder the principal's leadership ability (Barth, 2001; Bezzina, 2006; Donaldson, 2007; Reeves, 2008). The influence of principals is key to developing teacher leaders.

Principals are spending more time on organizational and managerial tasks, which equates to less time on curriculum or instructional leadership and supervision (Barth, 2001). Now more than ever before, "teacher-leaders may be in a more logical position to take on this role" (Bezzina, 2006, p. 166). Phelps (2008) notes the challenge for administrator is supporting these teachers in leadership roles.

One way that principals have tried to support teacher leadership is by implementing shared leadership practices (Birky et al., 2006; Lindahl, 2008; Thornton 2010). In traditional school organizations principals are typically expected to provide the leadership (Lindahl, 2008). As greater demands hinder the principal in addressing all areas of leadership well, administrators must make connections with many entities to ensure success in the school organization (Green & Cypress, 2009). Principals recognize the importance of cultivating teacher leadership to create school success.

Principals focus on teacher leader support to encourage teacher leaders in different ways. The literature surrounding teacher leaders is rich with examples of collaboration between principals and the teacher leaders (Birky et al., 2006; Cangelosi,

2009; Green & Cypress, 2009; Phelps, 2008; Thornton, 2010). Birky et al. (2006) found that high school administrators influence teachers in both positive and negative ways. As discussed earlier, participating in teacher leadership roles increases the meaning teachers obtain from their jobs (Barth, 2001). Similarly, teachers in high schools found meaning and personal rewards from leadership roles (Birky et al., 2006). More specifically verbal and visual appreciation for teachers work is one of the main motivational forces. Birky et al.'s (2006) findings demonstrate the importance of positive affirmations to encourage leadership among staff.

Another avenue principals can use to support teacher leaders is collaboration. The collaboration includes asking for opinions on major decisions, being open to answering teacher questions, and administrator participation in meetings (Birky et al., 2006; Cangelosi, 2009). Principals influence greater teacher leader participation in leadership activities when teachers feel they are working with administrators on meaningful tasks.

Although impediments to teacher leadership will be explored later in this literature review, the work of Birky et al. (2006) addresses the negative influence principals can have on teacher leadership. In the life of a teacher, verbal support and appreciation are encouragement to what is commonly an underappreciated profession. Discouragement arises when principals consistently provide a lack of verbal appreciation and other meaningful support (Birky et al., 2008). Support is not limited to only verbal support. Teacher leaders can experience support in the administrators' availability to participate in collaboration as well. When principals ask teachers to lead, the

administration must find ways to offer support that provides encouragement and continued leadership participation.

Leadership empowerment. An important trait of administrative support for teachers in leadership roles is empowerment (Barth, 2001; Bezzina, 2006; Donaldson, 2007; Zepeda & Mayers, 2002). Empowerment is central to leadership. When teachers are empowered by school administration, they can emerge as leaders (Zepeda & Mayers, 2002). Principals can implement strategies to empower teachers to lead. Zepeda (2002) stated that principals who empower teachers by tapping into their expertise and experience multiply themselves by creating new leaders. The principal can elicit this expertise by inviting teachers to address problems before, not after the principal has determined a solution (Barth, 2001). Teacher leaders will then have an avenue to participate in the decision making process of the school.

In his book, *Reframing Teacher Leadership to Improve Your School*, Douglas B. Reeves (2008) offers four specific strategies administrators can use to elicit the leadership potential of teachers and to empower these teacher leaders to act. First, creating short-term wins that have meaningful objectives, that are attainable, and that provide immediate feedback to reinforce effective practice and modify ineffective practice is important. Second, administrators can recognize effective practices simply, clearly, and regularly. These practices are living documents, updated to provide a regular focal point for celebrating best practices. Next, an emphasis on the effectiveness of teachers, not popularity, is needed to address any change in the school culture. Lastly, Reeves (2008) suggests making the case for change compelling and associating it with moral

imperatives rather than compliance with external authority. The teacher leadership discussed here is a change in typical schools' top-down hierarchy. Allowing teachers to attach leadership activities to deeper desires or moral imperatives creates empowerment to lead.

Empowerment to lead is closely related to motivation. The teaching profession is often referred to as a calling and teachers may feel a moral obligation to act. The moral imperative position can serve as motivation for teachers to become leaders. Margolis and Deuel (2009) found the moral imperative as one of three reasons teachers are motivated to take on a leadership role. First, teachers perceived a larger moral imperative to create better learning environments for both teachers and students. Secondly, concerns for professional growth as teachers played a part. Finally, personal reasons growing out of life situations, desire for recognition and validation, as well as, desires for money. The reasons represent both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for leading. Examining the structures that motivate and support teacher leaders is one way to empower teachers to lead. Attaching personal goals, professional aspirations, and moral imperatives can be used simultaneously to motivate teachers to lead (Margolis & Deuel, 2009). Supporting and sustaining the teacher leader is paramount to the ultimate goal of improving instructional practices and student achievement.

Barth (2001) provides additional strategies for sustaining teachers in their quest to lead. He outlines nine actions that principals can use to “inspire a culture of teacher leadership within their schools” (Barth, 2001, p. 448). He stated principals that support leadership,

1. Expect. Believe it is a central purpose of the school.
2. Relinquish. Give authority to teachers to unlock the creative powers of teachers.
3. Trust. Support teachers when the going gets rough.
4. Empower. Invite teachers to develop solutions for problems that arise.
5. Include. Match issues with teachers who feel passionately about that issue.
6. Protect. Run interference and protect these members from the assaults of their fellows.
7. Recognize. Highlight the efforts of teachers leading schools.
8. Share responsibility for failure. Stand with the teacher if failure occurs.
9. Give credit for success. Share responsibility for success with teacher leaders. (Barth, 2001)

The strategies principals use to empower teachers are essential to developing teacher leadership. By inviting teachers to examine challenges the school faces, develop solutions for those challenges, and taking care to share either victory or failure with teachers, principals extend the influence of teacher leaders. When teachers recognize that leading increases their overall difference-making ability, they will be more inclined to seize the chance to serve in a leadership capacity (Phelps, 2008).

Impediments to teacher leadership. In the age of increased accountability through high-stakes testing, teachers feel pressured to do more for students to ensure

achievement and school success. Leadership then becomes one more thing in which a teacher must choose to participate. When teachers lead, principals extend their own capacity, students enjoy a more democratic community of learners, and schools benefit from better decisions (Barth, 2001). These benefits of teacher leadership can be the catalyst to move schools forward. Several common impediments that arise to derail the development of teacher leaders include time, additional teacher responsibilities, testing policies, and colleagues (Barth, 2001; Phelps, 2008; Reeves, 2008).

Phelps (2008) suggests three areas that impede teacher leader development: time, heavy responsibilities, and colleagues. The time and heavy responsibilities, as previously mentioned, are a result of the increased accountability environment in which educators work. Additionally, teachers that take actions to lead find colleagues that will oppose new ideas, hamper enthusiasm, block discussions, and discourage problem solving (Phelps, 2008). Teacher leaders that overcome these hindrances can increase the collegiality and success teacher's experience.

Barth (2001) addresses four impediments that stand in the way of building a community of leaders in school. First, teachers have a full plate. Responsibilities beyond the classroom are continuing to be added to teacher workloads. Teachers view leadership within the school as more responsibility that interferes with their passion of teaching. Understandably, when the choice must be made between teaching and leadership many teachers choose to teach. Secondly is the issue of time. Teachers feel there is not enough time to do all the things asked of them well. Additions to the workload beyond planning instruction and teaching students are seen as a distraction to the real purpose of teaching

students. Also, many teachers may desire compensation for additional leadership functions. Next, Barth lists the tests as an impediment. The accountability measures, that include standardized tests, push schools to compare and scrutinize scores of grade levels, teachers, schools, districts, states, and the nation. Accountability issues increase the feeling in schools that standardized tests are the focus. There is no room or time for anything else.

Lastly, as with others in leadership literature, Barth (2001) raised the issue of colleagues hampering the progress of teachers leading outside the classroom. The teacher desiring to lead finds opposition in inertia, as well as caution and insecurity. Fellow teachers resist because their place is teaching and leading is dangerous. A more active resistance comes in the form of “unfriendliness and ostracism” (Barth, 2001, p. 446). Another passive resistance is observed in the fact teachers “lack the personal, interpersonal, and group skills essential to the successful exercise of leadership” (Barth, 2001, p. 446). When talking, sharing, observing, and encouraging others success is absent, these impediments overwhelm many teacher leaders and may cause a failure to lead. Teacher leadership requires teachers to persistently rely on the original intent of their actions to influence the teaching, learning, and achievement in schools to achieve their goal of teacher leadership.

In chapter five of the book, *Reframing Teacher Leadership to Improve Your School*, Reeves (2008) discussed impediments to developing teacher leadership. Reeves called these barriers the three B’s: *blame*, *bureaucracy*, and *baloney*. Blame and efficacy are opposites that can affect an individual’s actions. First, Reeves states that when

teachers blame present or prospective failures on conditions teachers cannot influence, and then efficacy is forfeited and replaced with the status of a victim. One example is attributing student achievement results to student characteristics instead of teaching and leadership. The second barrier, bureaucracy, is embedded in the hierarchical organization of schools. Schools have clear lines of authority that can hinder teacher leadership development. Teachers that have great ideas are not always allowed to “share that great idea unless it goes through proper channels” (Kinney, 2008, p. 23). Last is the barrier of baloney. The definition of *baloney* is “pretentious nonsense” (Reeves, 2008, p. 68). In light of barriers to teacher leadership, baloney is the “unappetizing combination of ingredients including superstition, prejudice, and deeply held convictions all unburdened by evidence” (Reeves, 2008, p. 68). Teacher leadership requires evidence to support efforts. Teachers can be persuaded to lead and other teachers will follow in the presence of evidence to support the process and outcomes.

Most teachers can lead, and schools need their ideas, invention, energy, and leadership (Barth, 2001). Overcoming obstacles that limit leadership and empowering teachers to take risks in leadership are essential to the success of teacher leaders.

Summary. Persons involved in school leadership have the daunting task of meeting greater accountability demands and changing student populations. The typical “hierarchical structure” of schools is changing (Lindahl, 2008). Administrators are finding ways to encourage teachers to become leaders in the school. Teacher leaders participate in many roles in schools (Barth, 2001). In order for the teachers to have an impact principals must create a supportive environment to sustain teacher participation in

leadership roles (Margolis & Deuel, 2009; Reeves, 2008). When teachers participate in the leadership of the school, colleagues and students benefit. The literature examined in this review found examples of teachers impacting positively both instructional practices and student achievement (Birky et al., 2006; Cangelosi, 2009; Margolis & Deuel, 2009; Thornton 2010). In the literature, principals were found to have a profound effect on teacher leadership. The principal's influence on teacher leaders is an integral part of the successful use of teacher leaders. Teachers seem poised to have a greater influence on teachers and student achievement.

Instructional Supervision

The term *instructional supervision* was found to be interchangeable with the term instructional leader in the literature. The purpose of this case study is to examine the perspectives of curriculum team leaders in their work as instructional supervisors of collaborative curriculum teams in a middle school using professional learning community principles. The search of literature to date has not yielded a single study that examines the instructional supervisor role in this particular teacher leadership capacity. The majority of the instructional supervision literature focused on the role of the principal (Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Hoerr 2008; Jenkins, 2009; Lashway, 2003).

The hierarchical organization of schools has appointed the principal primarily responsible for the instructional leadership or instructional supervision of the school. In recent years, that has begun to change. Schools have moved to more collaborative models of leadership, known as professional learning communities, learning communities, communities of practice, or knowledge communities, that include teacher

leaders to carry out the instructional supervision needs of the school (Donaldson, 2007; Duffy, 1999; Dufour, 2004; Jenkins, 2009; Kruskamp, 2003; Lashway, 2003). In light of the movement towards expanding the leadership roles of teachers, the proposed study of CTLs is significant and timely. Defining instructional supervision, as well as examining the intent and collegiality necessary to build effective supervisory practices is critical to the research. Surveying the views of instructional supervision and its purpose in education builds a foundation for the instructional supervisory role in which CTLs participate.

Defining instructional supervision. In a review of educational literature, the definitions of instructional supervision were varied and ambiguous. As mentioned previously, the term instructional supervision and instructional leadership were seen as interchangeable and defined similarly. The words and phrases used when defining instructional supervision included collegial and collaborative, classroom instruction, provided specific direction, focused on instruction and improved performance (Palandra, 2010; Rous, 2004; Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). At times the discussions found in the literature were reduced to a checklist for defining instructional supervision.

Defining instructional supervision is dependent on the desired outcomes. The desired outcome is usually related to improved instruction and student achievement. Palandra (2010) explains that instructional supervision provided a way for her district to link together all the elements that comprise effective instruction. The school district used the definition of Olivia and Pawlas (2004) that defined instructional supervision as a collegial, collaborative way of offering help to improve instruction. The definition was

used as the standard to evaluate the link between instructional supervision and change in the school. The definition is one way of describing how instructional supervision can be defined to reflect changes in practice.

After evaluating the definitions of instructional supervision, there are three common threads throughout the discussion. First, improving instruction and student achievement is a focus (Brooks et al., 2007; Palandra, 2010; Rous, 2004). Second, the supervision is a collaborative effort among the participants (Palandra, 2010; Rous, 2004; Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). Lastly, the literature is replete with discussions of instructional supervision as a function of the school principal, not a teacher (Blasé & Blasé, 2002; Brooks et al., 2007; Duffy, 1999; Palandra, 2010; Rous 2004; Shulman et al., 2008; Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). The lack of research concerning teacher leaders participating as the instructional supervisors of fellow teachers uncovers a void in educational research.

Instructional supervision, as defined for this study, is a change from a primary focus on the principal to a more shared responsibility among teacher leaders. In the literature both instructional supervision and instructional leadership are used to describe the same individual role. Jenkins (2009) offers the National Association of Elementary School Principals' (NAESP) definition of leadership as leading learning communities, in which staff meet on a regular basis to discuss their work, collaborate to solve problems, reflect on their jobs, and take responsibility for what students learn. The definition is comprehensive and reflects the principles of professional learning communities, learning communities, communities of practice, and knowledge communities (Duffy, 1999;

Dufour, 2004; Jenkins, 2009). The NAESP definition reflects a more collegial, collaborative culture than is found in the historical hierarchy organization of schools. Other definitions found in the literature reflect the same collaborative culture developing in schools. In the book, *Supervision across the Content Areas*, Zepeda and Mayers (2004) states that instructional supervision is a habit in which administrators and all other educators continually examine instructional practices and the effects of instruction on student learning. The examination of practices and outcomes can be done individually, but is more powerful in a collaborative setting.

History, intent and collegiality. Discussion concerning instructional supervision has at its heart collaborative, democratic work among educators to improve instruction and school success (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001; Palandra, 2010; Rous, 2004; Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). Historically the building principal or assistant principal has performed the function of supervision (Shulman et al., 2008). The principal, working in this capacity is not part of a collaborative role. Instead the principal's role in instructional supervision is clinical in nature and limited to judgment of classroom instruction (Duffy, 1999; Gordon, 2008; Rous, 2004; Zepeda & Ponticelli, 1998). The clinical model of instructional supervision is limited in its scope. The clinical model of instructional supervision is one supervisor interacting with one teacher at a time, then moving on to the next teacher (Duffy, 1999). The judging of classroom instruction can be easily misunderstood. The instructional supervision provided by the principal is difficult to separate from evaluation that is designed to determine continued employment (Shulman et al., 2008; Zepeda & Ponticelli, 1998). Instructional supervision

for continued employment is often seen as a checklist of items, either demonstrated or not demonstrated, in an observed lesson (Zepeda & Ponticelli, 1998). The dominant paradigm in schools is supervision as a performance evaluation (Duffy, 1999).

Discussions of instructional supervision research focused on how to best implement instructional supervision. Wanzare and da Costa (2000) discussed instructional supervision as part of a school's staff development. The researchers emphasized that instructional supervision training was implemented to focus on examining instruction, emphasizing teacher collegiality, improving teaching, and the ability to meet students' needs (Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). Researchers found instructional leadership was used in the same context as instructional supervision in the discussions. Rous (2004) explored the interactions between instructional leaders and teachers discovering that instructional leaders delegate responsibility to teachers in the classroom and provide specific direction and support to enhance success.

Using teacher leaders to actively provide instructional supervision has resulted from the increased job demands on school principals (Brooks et al., 2007; Colantonio, 2005; Shulman et al., 2008). Glanz, Shulman, and Sullivan (2007) found strong teachers could become part of collaborative supervision and support processes. In order to create change in the way instructional supervision is provided, people need to be put into a "new organizational context, which imposes new roles, responsibilities, and relationships on them" (Duffy, 1999, p. 128). The use of teachers in the role of providing instructional supervision is a new paradigm in education. The study of curriculum team leaders' perspectives gives a view into the work of teachers providing instructional supervision.

Instructional leadership is an important component of schools with the increasing importance placed on academic standards and the need for schools to be held accountable (Jenkins, 2009, p. 34). The general consensus in the literature is that instructional supervision has the goal of improving practice, improving student learning and achievement, reflection, and improving the overall school (Donaldson, 2007; Gordon, 2008; Jenkins, 2009; Yost, Vogel, & Rosenberg, 2009). These goals can be achieved when teachers learn with and from one another (Harrison & Killion, 2007).

One of the themes discovered in the instructional supervision literature is the need for a collegial or collaborative culture. Teachers “draw on their relationships and their strong sense of purpose to help colleagues explore, share, and improve practices” (Donaldson, 2007, p. 29). When teachers learn with and from one another, they can focus on what most directly improves learning (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Teachers can learn and share within “collaborative teams of teachers as they engage in collective inquiry and build shared knowledge” (Dufour & Marzano, 2009, p. 63).

In a cross-case comparison of four schools and their instructional supervision programs, Gordon (2008) found the schools integrated a variety of processes within instructional supervision. These activities included curriculum development, peer observation, and ongoing data gathering and analysis. Additionally, Gordon (2008) observed the development of collective supervision, a collegial culture, and improved teaching and learning.

The characteristics of instructional supervision discussed thus far are focused on improving teacher instructional practices and greater student achievement. Researchers

and practitioners agree that talking together about students, curriculum, data, and teaching and learning develops teacher leaders who are involved with instructional supervision, which leads to school improvement (Donaldson, 2007; Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Gordon, 2008; Hoerr, 2008; Lee, 1991; Yost et al., 2009).

Summary. Instructional supervision has been undergoing growing pains as it relates to who can best provide it to teachers. Historically principals have worked to provide teachers instructional support amid the myriad of tasks already on the administrative workload. Recently, other school leaders are being used to implement instructional supervision. In the literature, there are varied approaches to providing the instructional supervision necessary to improve teacher instruction (Duffy, 1999; Gordon, 2008; Jenkins, 2009; Rous, 2004; Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). At its best, instructional supervision should improve teacher instruction and student learning (Donaldson, 2007; Harrison & Killion, 2007). No matter how the instructional supervision is provided the end result of improved teaching and learning is the desired outcome. Schools desiring to provide an avenue for teacher collaboration and teacher reflection on practices are looking for other leaders to provide the instructional supervision (Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Gordon, 2008; Hoerr, 2008). Willing teachers are in a position to impact teacher instruction and student learning.

Summary of Research

Research surrounding instructional supervision usually centers on the role of the principal. However, in schools implementing professional learning community principals, teachers become more responsible for leadership of collegial academic teams

of teachers. These teacher leaders participate in an important role as instructional supervisors when placed as leaders of same-grade, same-subject collaborative groups. When focusing on improving instructional practices that lead to school improvements, teachers build a culture of collaboration (Dufour & Marzano, 2009). Professionals refer to this model of leadership or supervision as “collegial and peer-mediated supervision” (Zepeda, 2004, p. 150). Effective instructional supervisory practices promote growth, development, interaction, fault-free problem solving, and a commitment to build capacity and resiliency in teachers (Zepeda & Mayers, 2004). In the era of increased accountability and the high-stakes environment found in schools, continued examination of instructional practices is necessary.

The use of curriculum teams and teacher leaders involved in instructional supervision within same-subject same-grade level curriculum teams is one way schools are addressing improving instruction and meeting accountability demands. The work is based on a collective goal to improve instruction and student achievement based on increased and continuous collegiality (Gordon, 2008). In the context of the case study, curriculum team leaders (CTLs) exist to provide instructional supervision to small, collaborative groups of teachers. Evaluation is not part of the supervisory practices used by the curriculum team leaders. The study examined a different approach to instructional supervision that has developed over several years as a way to achieve instructional supervision without the shackles of evaluation.

The study is poised to uncover the perspectives of the CTLs as they “act out” instructional supervision of the collaborative teams of teachers. The perspectives fill a niche for research concerning instructional supervision. The case study examining the perspectives of CTLs who provide instructional supervision contributes to the professional discussion of both teacher leadership and instructional supervision.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

The dissertation examined the perspectives of a group of Curriculum Team Leaders as they provided instructional supervision within a middle school using Professional Learning Community principles. These CTLs and their work with curriculum teams is an effort by one school to meet greater accountability demands. A review of the literature revealed no study that focuses on the instructional leader within a collaborative organizational framework in middle schools. I sought, through a qualitative case study approach, to determine the perspectives of the four CTLs as they provided instructional supervision to teachers in Rosewood Middle School.

Research Questions

The study examined the perspectives of a group of CTLs as they provide instructional supervision within a middle school using PLC principled practices. The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a changing student population?
2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

Research Design

A qualitative case study approach was used to examine the perspectives of Curriculum Team Leaders that provide instructional supervision. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), qualitative researchers are concerned with capturing perspectives accurately. A case study allows depth in the research, is anchored in real life, and can provide rich detailed accounts of phenomena (Ary et al., 2006). Using focused interviews, observations, and open-ended questionnaires, the I sought to achieve an in depth look at the work of CTLs in this particular middle school setting. The data collected provided a view into the perspectives of CTLs as they carried out their work with the curriculum team teachers.

In their book, *Qualitative Research for Education*, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) set forth five features of qualitative research:

1. Naturalistic. Qualitative researchers go to the particular setting under study because they are concerned with context.
2. Descriptive Data. The data collected take the form of words or pictures rather than numbers.
3. Concern with Process. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply outcomes or products.
4. Inductive. Qualitative researchers do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses; rather, abstractions are built as the particulars are gathered.

5. Meaning. Researchers who use a qualitative approach are interested in how different people make sense of their lives (2007, p. 407).

These five features guided the case study. I was able collect data within the setting through interviews, observations, and questionnaires. A picture of the CTLs work was developed through interviews and observations. The questionnaires provided an additional view of the CTLs work from both school administrators and colleagues. The data was analyzed inductively as it was collected not “to prove or disprove a hypotheses,” but to construct meaning in the work of the CTLs (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 6). The advantage of being able to “understand the whole individual in the totality of that individual’s environment” is essential to the case study of curriculum team leaders (Ary et al., 2006, p. 457).

Profile of Rosewood County Schools

The study took place in Rosewood County, an urban county located in Northeast Georgia, approximately 20 miles east of a large city. Rosewood County serves over 161,000 students. Rosewood County Schools serve the 161,000 students at 130 school sites – 73 elementary schools, 25 middle schools, 18 high schools, 1 alternative high school devoted to vocational education, and 2 high schools serving non-traditional students. The system has built and opened 19 new schools between 2002 and 2007 to meet growth needs.

Context of the research site. Rosewood Middle School, where the research took place, opened in the fall of 1996. The school replaced a school that had been in existence for twenty-five years. The staff, along with additional hires, moved to the new school. It

is a 276,000 square foot facility on 46 acres. When the new school opened, the school was organized using the school within a school concept. Rosewood operated under this concept through the 2008-2009 school year. The new school year, 2009-2010, brought several changes in enrollment and organization.

The building includes 113 classrooms, 19 special education classrooms, 7 computer labs, 2 family and consumer science labs, 2 technical education labs, 2 gymnasiums, a two-story media center, and a cafeteria that seats up to 500 students.

Rosewood Middle School had 2296 students in grades 6, 7, and 8, representing 54 countries, enrolled for the 2009-2010 school year. The student body described in Table 1, reflected a diverse community of learners with 37% of students reported to be White, 24% Black, 13% Asian, 21% Hispanic, 4% Multi-racial, and .6% American Indian.

Table 1

Student Ethnicity

Ethnicity	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-racial
Percentages	.6%	13%	24%	21%	37%	4%

A certified staff of 158 implements the educational program at Rosewood Middle School. The staff reported 35% hold Bachelor degrees, 39% hold Masters degrees, 20% hold Specialist degrees, and 6% hold Doctorate degrees. The administrative team

included one principal, five assistant principals, and one local school technology coordinator. Appendix C outlines the staff support provided by the administrative team.

Rosewood Middle School had experienced a change in demographics over the past six years. In the 2002-2003 school year students were reported to be 70% White, 12% Black, 10% Asian, 6% Hispanic, and 2% other. Additionally, the percentage of students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program increased from 10% in 2002-2003 to 42% during the 2009-2010 school year. The English Language Learners population had increased from 2% in 2002-2003 to 4% in 2009-2010. Students receiving special education services increased slightly from 12% to 12.3% over the same time period.

The grade levels are organized into teams of teachers. Each grade level teaching team contained four members. There were four teams, containing four teachers each, that teach only students identified as gifted by state and federal guidelines. The special education model included both small resource classes for specific subjects and inclusion, where a special education teacher teams with the regular education teacher to deliver student services. The class schedule included six 55-minute class periods and one 40-minute class of extended learning time for extension, remediation, and lunch. Two of the class periods daily were connections (PE, technology, foreign language, band orchestra, etc.) classes. These two periods served as planning periods for teachers.

Setting. In order to examine any part of Rosewood, an understanding of its diverse culture is necessary. Rosewood Middle School, (RMS) is part of Rosie County Public Schools (RCPS). Rosewood serves 2296 students in grades 6-8. It has achieved

many top state awards, including the Georgia School of Excellence Award and most recently, the 2006 Georgia Schools Platinum Award for meeting and exceeding standardized test goals.

During the past six years, Rosewood Middle Schools population has experienced a change. The changes are seen in the ethnicity of the student population, the instructional areas served, and the increased number of free and reduced lunch students served (Appendix A). The organizational changes that have been implemented for the 2009-2010 school year are further evidence of changes at Rosewood Middle School. The restructuring is the schools response to meet changing student needs.

The school is highly regarded in the local community and school system. In a county that has twenty-four middle schools. Rosewood Middle School has consistently ranked in the top half of RCPS schools in many areas. Parental support is high for the school. The PTA is large and has earned awards for their overall activity.

The state of Georgia, like many states, requires schools to create an Accountability Report each year. The Accountability Report includes a detailed breakdown of required state and national tests. It also relates the data to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) compliance criteria. RCPS has developed a Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES). The RBES system measures a school's progress and evaluates that schools' performance. RMS most recent Accountability Report published fall of 2008 provided consolidated information on the school's effectiveness. When the Rosewood Middle School report was examined, the percentage of students scoring well on

standardized assessments continues to represent the majority of students at RMS.

Appendix B contains details from the report card.

Subjects

The study sought to examine the perspectives of CTLs as they provide instructional supervision. Purposive sampling with a set of criteria was employed to identify participants who gave in-depth descriptions of their CTL experiences through interviews, observations, and artifact examination.

Ary et al. (2006) states that qualitative researchers select purposive samples believed to be sufficient to provide maximum insight. The case study pool of participants was the CTLs working in Rosewood Middle School. The group of participants included in the study work at one school in the same capacity of CTL, providing instructional supervision to teachers. Rosewood Middle School's CTLs work in each grade level, in all subjects, and specialties to provide instructional supervision to all teachers. Table 2 provides a description of the research participants.

Participant profiles. The CTLs at Rosewood Middle School represent a wide range of degrees and experience. Fourteen teachers serve in the CTL role. There are twelve females and two males. Thirteen of the CTLs were Caucasian, with one African American.

The experience in education ranged from four to twenty-two years. Experience at Rosewood Middle School spanned four to twelve years. The number of years in the CTL role was not as wide, between two and five years. The length of service was low since Rosewood began using the collaborative PLC principles by utilizing CTLs six years ago.

The educational background includes various degree levels and subject areas. Four CTLs had bachelor’s degrees in science, math, and social studies. Masters degrees were held by seven CTLs in language arts, math, science, and social studies. Two CTLs held specialist degrees in Language Arts and Physical Education. One recently completed a doctoral program in Language Arts. The CTLs that were chosen to participate provided perspectives into instructional supervision.

Table 2

Research Participant Profiles

Participant	Teaching Experience	Number of years at RMS	Number of years as CTL	Subject Grade	Degree Held	Teaching Field
Paula Smith	12	10	2	Gifted Language Arts/7	Ed. D	Middle school ed.
Joe Beck	12	4	3	Social Studies/6	BS ed.	Middle school ed.
Ann Lee	6	4	2	Gifted Science/6	MS ed.	Middle school ed.
Abbey Jones	5	5	3	Math/7	BS ed.	Middle school ed.

In order to choose the CTLs willing to participate in the case study, I used convenience sampling among the pool of CTLs. The curriculum team leaders were chosen based on the following criteria; the CTL must have been employed as a teacher in the school for a minimum of five years; and worked in the CTL position for a minimum of two years. The number of teachers under each CTLs supervision is provided in Table 3. I am also employed as a teacher at the same middle school and thus had easy access to the participants.

Table 3

Curriculum Team Totals

Curriculum Team Leader	Regular education teachers total	Special ed. teachers total	Curriculum team total
Paula Smith	10	2	12
Joe Beck	8	2	10
Ann Lee	6	2	8
Abbey Jones	9	2	11

Additionally, I had worked, three years prior, as a CTL in the same building with the participants. Researcher familiarity and rapport with the participants may have provided an advantage. Additionally, due to over familiarity it is a source of concern for possible

researcher bias. Safeguards were built into the study design for bias protection.

Appendix D provides a profile of the subjects.

Procedures

Participants in the case study were contacted to confirm participation in the study. The purpose of the study, procedures, and potential risks and benefits were explained in a detailed introductory letter (see Appendix O). Consent forms accompanied these details and provided information concerning voluntary participation, confidentiality, and participants rights (see Appendix O). The consent form outlined how interviews and observations would be recorded, transcribed, and kept in my possession in a secure location. Appendix N contains the Principal Consent Form provided to the building level administrator granting permission to complete the study. Appendix Q contains the budget data for the research costs related to the case study.

Data Collection

The case study examined the perspectives of CTLs in a middle school using PLC principles. Understanding what the CTLs do in the particular setting was the research goal. To achieve understanding, I collected data through focused interviews, observations, open-ended questionnaires, and artifact collection. The order in which the research was completed is provided in Table 4.

Data was collected using a focused interview of individual CTLs. According to Ary et al. (2006), a focused interview is flexible and open in form. A focused interview allows for participants to answer in their own words. The interviews were conducted

Table 4

Order of Research

Sequenced Data Collection Procedures

Introductory letter with consent forms completed and collected.

Interview number one completed onsite with each participant.

Transcription and initial analysis of first interview completed.

Interview number two completed onsite with each participant.

Transcription and initial analysis of second interview completed and combined with interview one data.

Interview number three completed onsite with each participant.

Transcription and initial analysis of third interview completed and all interview data combined.

All interview data analyzed. Common themes are developed using coding categories from analyses.

Principal/assistant principal questionnaires and curriculum team questionnaires given to appropriate entities.

Questionnaires collected, data categorized, and compared among each group.

Artifacts requested and collected from participants. Principal and assistant principal artifacts also collected.

Observation of each CTL completed using the observation template and a CTL journal reflection collected.

Constant comparative analysis was implemented throughout the process.

as three structured, hour-long sessions with the participating CTLs. The focused interviews were completed by me onsite at Rosewood Middle School. Interviews were audio and video taped. The audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, and the videotape viewed to create observation notes regarding body language and other visual aspects of this process.

Interview questions were created to focus me during the conversations (see Appendices E and F). These were flexible and allowed me freedom to pursue other unexpected threads as they arose during the interview. Participating CTLs were given a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, procedures, and appropriate consent forms. The explanation included how interviews would be recorded (i.e., audio taped), transcribed, and secured by me.

CTLs work with the school curriculum teachers. Additionally, each CTL works closely with a Rosewood Middle School assistant principal. These two groups provided data as to the work of each CTL. I provided an open-ended questionnaire to the curriculum team members and the school administrators to analyze CTLs expectations (see Appendices I and J). The data collected was analyzed with all field notes and transcriptions.

The assistant principals, who directly interact and guide the CTLs, were asked to provide their view of the CTLs' work. I asked the assistant principals to provide a narrative description of the expectations held for CTLs under their direct supervision (Appendix J). Additionally, the assistant principals were asked to describe the expectations of the CTL. The Rosewood Middle School principal was asked to provide

input. The principal, who supervises both the assistant principals and the CTLs, was asked to write a narrative description of CTLs work and expectations.

I used observations of the CTLs' work firsthand. All observations took place in person, in the actual setting where CTLs work. During these observations, two-column memoing was used. I recorded the "rich data" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 122) in events as they occurred in one column and his subjective thoughts were recorded in the second column. The field notes were paired with the interview transcriptions for analysis and to develop follow-up questions. The two items together allowed me to track perspectives and insights of the CTLs' work.

CTLs were asked to write a journal response after each curriculum meeting (Appendix I). These journals reflect a personal account from the CTL of what occurred in the meeting. The journal responses provided an opportunity for me to note insights and observations to be used in analysis. The responses, transcriptions, and field notes of I collected provided a diverse view of each individual event.

Face validity. Face validity of interview questions and questionnaires was achieved by creating questions based on pertinent research in the fields of professional learning communities, leadership, and instructional supervision. Because schools have used PLC principles as a response to the need for school improvement, five of the questions were focused on those practices (Dufour, 2004; Graham, 2007; Hord, 1998). The questions center around defining a professional learning community and explaining the supervisory practices used to meet the accountability demands of schools today (see Appendix E and F).

PLC principled schools use shared leadership for the purpose of collaboration and improving student achievement (Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Thompson et al., 2004). Nine of the interview questions focused on the topic of leadership roles, a key aspect of creating collaborative curriculum teams and curriculum team leaders (Donaldson, 2007; Yost et al., 2009). The proposed study is focused on the curriculum team leader who leads collaborative teams of teachers. The interview questions were designed to solicit the leadership practices that the CTLs implement while supervising the curriculum teams. The literature surrounding teacher leaders reveals the unique and significant influence teachers have on other teachers (Jenkins, 2009; Reeves, 2008; Yost et al., 2009). Given the opportunity to lead or supervise, more experienced teachers can support learning through collaboration and interaction (Zepeda, 2006).

Curriculum Team Leaders are involved in instructional supervision therefore eleven questions are related to the area of instructional supervision. The questions focus on two areas: defining instructional supervision, and relating personal practices to supervision. School leadership or supervisory roles have shifted in recent years from the principal to a more shared leadership among teachers (Harrison & Killion, 2007; Jenkins, 2009). The interview questions ask the CTLs to reflect on personal supervisory practices. The literature supports that teachers involved in collaborative practices impact instructional supervision, which leads to school improvement (Donaldson, 2007; Dufour & Marzano, 2009; Gordon, 2008; Hoerr, 2008; Lee, 1991; Yost et al., 2009; Zepeda, 2004).

Document collection. Materials such as memos, minutes from meetings, and meeting agendas were analyzed in conjunction with interviews and observations. Historical memos were an additional piece of data collected. The documents, memos, minutes, and agendas vary in quality (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I analyzed these documents to assess how the CTLs and others view their work.

Feedback. Professional collaboration regarding interview questions and questionnaires was employed. Content validity was achieved by having teachers outside of this study read the questions and respond. For the proposed study, two teachers reviewed the interview questions and the questionnaire questions to “judge whether they are appropriate for measuring what they are supposed to measure” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 440).

The teachers were chosen based upon their familiarity of teachers as instructional supervisors and their expertise of the research process using qualitative techniques. The first is a local school technology coordinator with past experience as a Curriculum Team Leader. Recently, she was doctoral candidate who successfully defended. The second is a teacher who has expertise in qualitative research through the completion of his own doctoral dissertation. Both teachers read the proposed questions and provided feedback independently of each other. Modifications to the interview questions and questionnaire questions were made where appropriate. Appendix E contains the initial questions and the reviewers’ comments. The final set of questions is included in Appendix F.

Teacher two had extensive expertise in the coding process and was asked to review the coding process. Reviews and feedback provided by outside sources are

designed to reduce researcher bias, a source of invalidity in qualitative studies (Ary et al., 2006). The feedback will provide a means to achieve a measure of dependability by reducing the likelihood that personal attitude, preferences, and feelings affect the interpretation of data (Ary et al., 2006; Silverman, 2000).

The Researcher's Role

I had worked at the same school as the participants for the past eight years. In relation to the participants, his tenure at the school has been longer. Additionally, I had worked in the same capacity as curriculum team leader three years prior to conducting the case study. In some cases I also served on school committees with two of the study participants. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling, more explicitly they are a homogeneous sample of four curriculum team leaders within the same middle school. Qualitative researchers believe purposive samples to be “sufficient to provide maximum insight and understanding of what they are studying” (Ary et al., 2006). The limitations of purposive sampling, in particular the use of my judgment to choose the sample were taken into consideration.

I believe that my familiarity with these teachers, as well as my own experience as CTL, allowed them to answer openly and freely when giving their perspectives of instructional supervision as CTL. On the other hand, the closeness I experienced with the participants can create a concern for possible researcher bias. Member checks and triangulation were implemented to address bias and other limitations. These limitations are discussed later in this chapter.

Data Analysis

Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable parts, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Case study data of CTLs' perspectives as they provided instructional supervision within a middle school model were gathered primarily through focused interviews. Additional data was gathered through questionnaires, observations and document analysis.

Coding procedures. As the transcripts from interviews and observations were read, a coding system was developed to classify and cluster common findings. Dissection of all data collected was a refining process as the interviews proceeded and responses were catalogued. The constant refining analysis allowed specific questions to be developed for later interviews. Questionnaires were part of the analysis in order to compare threads of data within the transcriptions and recordings. As the process unfolded, the constant comparison allowed me to construct meanings from the data and develop a picture of the CTL's work in instructional supervision.

Constant comparative method. The constant comparative method of analysis allowed me to "examine each new unit of meaning to determine its distinctive characteristics" and then "group them with similar categories" (Ary et al., 2006, p. 499). Data analysis in qualitative research is often done concurrently or simultaneously with data collection (Ary et al., 2006, p. 490). The data for this case study of CTLs perspectives toward instructional supervision were collected primarily through three focused interviews with additional data collected through questionnaires, observations,

and document analysis. The analysis of interview data required constant comparison of the data. I implemented an open-coding system to identify common themes in the data (see Appendix H). The method of developing codes required me to search for “regularities and patterns as well as for topics our data cover, and then you write down words and phrases” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 173). These words and phrases were the coding categories. As these initial codes are developing, I continued to break apart the data and rearrange it into categories that facilitate comparisons (Ary et al., 2006, p. 493). The coding process of analyses was constant as the interview data was continuously collected. The process is best described as occurring in a pulsating fashion; first the interview, then the analysis and theory development; another interview, then more analysis; and so on (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Data was analyzed by: First, reading transcripts, field notes, questionnaires and artifacts; second, a coding system was created to allow the classification of common findings, themes; and last the process was repeated to allow for new data to emerge and to delimit data.

Once data are completely analyzed my goal was to “extract meanings and insights” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 499). Generalizations were made based on common themes found in the coding process. Interpretation of the data was unique to the research skills I possessed. Theoretical orientation, background, knowledge, and perspectives of I adhered to impacted the quality of interpretation (Ary et al., 2006). Qualitative research guides do not offer a set of rules to use in interpreting qualitative research (Ary et al., 2006; Bogdan et al., 2007; Silverman, 2000). The absence of a clear set of rules and the personal nature of interpretation did not provide me permission to rely on personal

feelings to complete the interpretation. Data was used to support the interpretations. The research must provide the basis to draw conclusions, and abstracting important understandings (Ary, 2006; Silverman, 2000). According to Miles and Huberman (1984), qualitative researchers use data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions together to interpret the data. The data analysis is improved by utilizing a “steadily more narrow focus” to examine “how these elements are linked together” (Silverman, 2000, p. 143). The case study of CTLs provided data to be organized, analyzed, and interpreted. I diligently worked to constantly collect, compare, and draw conclusions from the data collected.

Data triangulation. In the field of qualitative research, case studies can provide rich details and descriptions of the setting be studied. The very strength of detail in qualitative studies can be seen as its greatest weakness (Silverman, 2000). Researchers use several methods to combat the perceived weakness. Making valid inferences from data and the consistency of the data are important issues to address in qualitative research (Ary et al., 2006).

One method used in qualitative research to address bias, validity, and dependability is triangulation (Ary et al., 2006; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Silverman, 2000). Triangulation has at its heart the use of many sources of data because “multiple sources lead to a fuller understanding of the phenomena you are studying” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 115). Qualitative researchers also define triangulation as using multiple methods of data collection, inferred to as methodological triangulation (Silverman, 2000).

To reduce bias and to increase reliability, multiple subjects provided data, and multiple methods were used to collect the data. The subjects included four CTLs, the five assistant principals directly supervising the CTLs and the curriculum team teachers. Data was collected from these multiple sources on the same topic, instructional supervision. The data-collecting techniques included; transcriptions of interviews, questionnaires, observations, field notes, and artifact collection. The multiple sources and multiple data-collection methods increased the likelihood that the focus of the study is being understood from various points of view (Ary et al., 2006).

Member checks. Silverman (2000) asserts that validity is another word for truth. Both qualitative research and quantitative research must address issues of validity. The focus may not be on the instruments used but on the “interpretation and meaning” of data gathered (Ary et al, 2006, p. 243). Qualitative researchers must convince their audience that the findings are based on “critical investigation of all their data” and not on the “few well-chosen examples” (Silverman, 2006, p. 176). One way researchers can validate the data collected is to allow participant or member checks (Ary et al, 2006). After transcription and analysis, I provided the opportunity for participants to respond. The participants responded two ways: first, the participants were given the transcripts to read, verify, and elaborate upon the recorded data; and second, the participants were given the initial analysis and interpretation of the data to confirm. The member checks provide additional insights or call attention to something I may have overlooked (Ary et al., 2006).

Significance of the Study

The study sought to determine the CTL's perspectives on instructional supervision. The possibility exists that the data gives new insight into the role of CTLs within the models using professional learning community principles. As stated in the review of literature, no research was found that studied individual pieces of the professional learning community models. The study increases the knowledge and adds a new strand of data to the literature surrounding the working pieces of a collaborative model in a school using principles of a professional learning community (Dufour, 2004).

Ethical Considerations

The case study examined the perspectives of CTLs in a middle school using PLC principles. Data was collected through focused interviews, observations, open-ended questionnaires, and artifact collection. A flexible and open focused interview allows participants to answer in their own words (Ary et al., 2006). The interviews were conducted as three structured, hour-long sessions with the participating CTLs. All focused interviews were completed by me onsite at Rosewood Middle School. Interviews were audio and video taped. The audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, and the videotape viewed to create observation notes regarding body language and other visual aspects of this process. The transcriptionist and I were the only people to see the raw data prior to the interviews being recorded (i.e., audio taped), transcribed, and secured by me in a locked filing cabinet. Participating CTLs were given a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, procedures, and appropriate consent forms.

Limitations

The study of CTL's perspectives on instructional supervision, because of its small size, is difficult to generalize to other situations. The findings are situated in the context of one middle school and within the curriculum teams in which the CTLs worked. As a result, generalizability is not appropriate. Broad assumptions should not be applied across populations other than those studied – four curriculum team leaders in one middle school in northeast Georgia.

Research Schedule

To carry out the research design, a specific plan of action was followed. Permission was obtained from the local school principal since the research involved a single local school site (see Appendix N). The subjects were the curriculum team leaders (CTLs) of Rosewood Middle School, which is part of Rosewood County Schools. The research project, using human subjects, was submitted to the Institutional Review Board of Liberty University for approval in January 2010. After receiving approval, the research began in late March 2010 and concluded in May 2010. The first interviews were held in late March 2010, the second interviews in April 2010, and the final interviews occurred in May 2010.

Additional data was collected concurrently with the interviews through open-ended questionnaires and observations of CTLs. I completed the observations of curriculum team meetings, led by the CTLs, each week from late March thru the end of May. Journal responses were collected each week from the CTLs that are observed. During the first week of April, the open-ended questionnaires were given to the principal

and assistant principals to be completed and returned over a five day period. The analysis of data was completed concurrently with the data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of a group of Curriculum Team Leaders (CTLs). These CTLs provide instructional supervision to collaborative curriculum team teachers within a middle school collaborative model using professional learning community principles. This research was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a changing student population?
2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

The study conducted in 2010, included three individual interviews, two questionnaires, four individual observations, and relevant artifact collection, with four CTLs beginning in March 2010 and ending in May 2010. Through the interviews, questionnaires, observations, and artifact analysis data reflected the perspectives of the four Curriculum Team Leaders and their beliefs concerning instructional supervision.

This chapter reports the findings first across the four cases identifying the coding categories and secondly reporting the identified themes derived from the coding categories. The findings were categorized and themes drawn from the CTLs definition of instructional supervision, the role descriptions provided, and the forces that affect the

CTLs when supervising their respective curriculum teams. Each theme was developed as it related to the research questions. The participant profiles and the context of the research site presented in Chapter 3 provided insight during the analysis of data from each case. A brief review of the context of the study is provided in this chapter to prepare the reader for the presentation of findings and analysis.

Profile of Rosewood County

The study took place in Rosewood County, an urban school system, located in Northeast Georgia. The Rosewood County Schools has twenty-five middle schools, which are part of one hundred and thirty school sites in the county. Between 2002 and 2007 Rosewood County opened nineteen new schools.

Context of the Research Site

Rosewood Middle School (RMS) was the site where the research took place. Rosewood Middle School opened in 1996 to replace a school that had been serving students for twenty-five years. RMS was organized using the school within a school concept. Entering the 2009-2010 school year, the school's organizational plans changed. Grade levels were created so that each grade was housed in its own hallway or wing. One hall contains both seventh and eighth grades. Each grade level has teams of teachers that contain four members. Each grade level follows similar schedules with six fifty-five minute classes and one forty-minute class of extended learning time for extension, remediation, and lunch. Two class periods are for connections classes (P.E., technology, foreign language, band, etc.). The special education model uses resource classes and inclusion classes to deliver student services. RMS serves 2296 students with 158 certified

staff. In recent years RMS student population has changed. These changes are reflected in student ethnicity data, and socioeconomic data, and students receiving special education services. Table 5 provides the data related to these changes.

Table 5

Student Population

	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade	Total
Number of students by grade level	745	774	777	2296
Gifted	180	152	170	502
Special Education				281
ESOL				47
Monitored ESOL				31
Free Lunch				767
Reduced Lunch				199
Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percentage of Population		
Asian	277	12%		
African American	548	24%		
Hispanic	413	18%		
American Indian	5	.2%		
Multi-Racial	108	5%		
White	936	41%		

The structure of the administrative team at RMS includes one principal, five assistant principals, and one local school technology coordinator. The assistant principals perform many duties, including the supervising of each curriculum area. One assistant principal supervises special education services. The other four assistant principals are assigned each curriculum area of math, science, language arts, and social studies. These administrators work closely with the Curriculum Team Leaders to support their efforts toward instructional supervision of the same grade level and same subject curriculum teams. The CTLs lead the curriculum teams as they plan instruction. As leaders of the curriculum team, the CTLs supervision does not include evaluation.

The participants for this case study were chosen using a type of purposive sampling (Ary et al., 2006). I used convenience sampling based on the following criteria; each curriculum team leader (CTL) was employed as a teacher at Rosewood Middle School for a minimum of five years; and worked as CTL for a minimum of two years. These criteria led to four suitable CTL participants. Four methods of gathering data were employed to produce a large volume of rich data, including three lengthy focused interviews, two questionnaires, observations, and artifact collection.

The interviews took place onsite in each CTL's school classroom. In addition, after the interviews were completed, each participant was observed once leading a curriculum team meeting. The observations varied in length between 30 and 45 minutes. Due to the time of year, March 2010 through May 2010, that the research was conducted, only one observation could be completed due to calendar constraints. Simultaneously, two questionnaires were distributed and collected over a four-week period. One

questionnaire allowed data concerning the CTLs work to be gathered from the school leadership. The principal and assistant principals involved in supervision of CTLs completed the questionnaires. Additionally, the curriculum team of teachers supervised by each participating CTL completed a questionnaire concerning the work of their subject area CTLs. Finally, artifacts concerning the CTLs vision and expectations were collected, as well as, documents that represented the curriculum team meeting activities.

Interviews

The interviews were audio-recorded with each initial interview lasting approximately 30 minutes and each of the two follow-up interviews lasting approximately one hour. The recordings were transcribed verbatim between each interview. The transcriptions were analyzed prior to the next interview and constantly compared to additional interview data as it was gathered. The participants were allowed to address the questions without editing from me. Interviews were coded as they were analyzed to identify emergent themes. The themes aided in developing additional interview questions. The interviews resulted in approximately 15 hours of taped conversations concerning instructional supervision, the role of CTLs, and the freedom to supervise curriculum team teachers. These hours of interviews produced over 120 double spaced pages of data. This information is contained in Appendix G.

Questionnaires

The questionnaires provided a view of the curriculum team leaders work from two different perspectives. The first perspective was of the CTLs direct supervisors, the principal and assistant principals. The administrators provided expectations that were

held for teach participating CTL when acting as the instructional supervisor for each curriculum team. A second questionnaire provided insight of how the curriculum team teachers viewed the instructional supervision being provided by the CTL. The questionnaires were free-response styled documents and were anonymous for the curriculum team members. Since each principal or assistant principal works with a specific curriculum area, anonymity was not possible. Each principal and assistant principal returned a questionnaire. The curriculum team member questionnaire return rate was 40% (16 of 40). The data provided additional insight as part of the triangulated approach to data gathering. Questionnaire responses are presented in Appendix I and J.

Observations

The curriculum team meeting observations provided the unique opportunity to see the CTL practicing the role of instructional supervisor (see Appendix L). The meetings were conducted in both the CTLs' classroom, as well as, other curriculum team teachers' classrooms. The work and atmosphere in each of the participants' meeting was relaxed, informal, and collegial. The meetings provided answers to curriculum team questions, and provided opportunities to collaborate on common work tasks. Three of the four CTLs provided feedback in a reflection. The reflection confirmed that the observed meetings were typical of the work conducted weekly by the curriculum team leader and the individual curriculum team members. More observations could have confirmed the CTLs assessment. Yet, I noted a consistency between interview responses concerning curriculum team meetings, the activities observed, and the CTLs reflections.

Artifact Collection

Artifacts were collected at the end of the research time period. After analyzing the data, themes began developing concerning the expectations of CTLs. Artifacts related to both vision and expectations of a curriculum team leader were gathered from both administrators charged with CTLs supervision and the CTLs personally (see Appendix M). I noted that the participating CTLs and the principal or assistant principals did not view the expectations similarly. The data suggests that the CTLs expectations as instructional supervisors were not communicated clearly or held as the standard consistently.

Individual Participants

Paula Smith. Paula Smith, a teacher for eleven years at Rosewood Middle School, has served as seventh grade language arts CTL for two years. Ms. Smith supervises ten full-time language arts teachers, including two special education teachers. During her tenure at RMS, Ms. Smith completed her doctorate in educational leadership. Paula Smith's and each individual's teacher profile is provided in Table 6.

When discussing professional learning community (PLC) characteristics, Ms. Smith stated, "It's not like we're saying we are a professional learning community. . . we are acting like one." She continued to say, "I really see seventh grade at this school acting as this (PLC)." The idea of RMS acting with PLC principles is based on her explanation of the characteristics in a PLC. She stated, "A PLC is where teachers are engaged together toward I would say a common purpose."

Table 6

Teacher Profiles

Participant	Teaching Experience	Number of years at RMS	Subject/Grade	Degree Held	Teaching Field
Paula Smith	12	10	Gifted Language Arts/7	Doctorate	Middle school ed.
Joe Beck	12	4	Social Studies/6	Bachelors	Middle school ed.
Ann Lee	6	4	Gifted Science/6	Masters	Middle school ed.
Abbey Jones	5	5	Math/7	Bachelors	Middle school ed.

Ms. Smith holds two views of instructional supervision. She stated that “. . . ideally it would be there is a point person that people can go to, whether it’s in their subject area or not, for guidance with instruction.” Elaborating on the ideal view of instructional supervision Ms. Smith continued, “If this person was in and out of classrooms constantly, not as a spy, but as someone who is just around and there to offer input.”

The second view of instructional supervision related more closely to the actual role of CTL. Ms. Smith summarized her role in supervision in the following way:

I see my job in instructional supervision as taking what I have learned or additional classes that I've taken and spreading that knowledge throughout and you know sharing it. I don't see it as being superior, I just see myself as I can be the liaison, I can help. . . my job is to go help you figure it out."

Ms. Smith used terms such as "guidance," "support," "liaison," and "sharing" to describe how she believed teachers should experience instructional supervision.

When discussing her view of instructional supervision, Ms. Smith made a point to describe her work with new teachers. She stated "I really spent the first nine weeks checking in with them (new language arts teacher) just on a weekly basis so they could feel comfortable talking to me." The purpose of this "checking in" according to Ms. Smith was to develop a relationship where teachers that "have a concern" can "come to me and express it." She expressed again that she wanted to be that "vocal voice for them when working with administration."

Joe Beck. Joe Beck is a veteran teacher of 13 years, the last five at Rosewood Middle School. Mr. Beck has served as the sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader for three years. He supervises ten full-time teachers, eight regular education teachers and two special education teachers. Mr. Beck holds the degree of Specialist in Educational Leadership.

When discussing the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community, Mr. Beck stated, "For me a PLC is just relying on your neighbors, your teammates; talking, discussing what ideas work, what ideas don't." He continued to explain that all of those things open up a "forum for communication."

As the CTL for sixth grade social studies at Rosewood Middle School, Mr. Beck clearly stated his definition of instructional supervision. He states:

The two words that stand out are messenger and organizer. The messenger is just relaying information from my teachers to the administration, from the administration to the teachers. The organizer. . . you have to organize the meetings and organize your teachers in a way to make sure they are on scope and sequence.

Mr. Beck stressed that staying on scope and sequence was a “big thing,” and that it is a big “part of the job.” As he continued to discuss instructional supervision, he stated, “Sometimes you have to prod and push to get them (teachers) to move a little faster.”

Mr. Beck explained that he perceived the role of instructional supervision as a “leadership position” that required the right “personality” and a leader “to be flexible.” He continued that especially with collaboration you must be “flexible” and “listen to both sides of the story.” Mr. Beck used the terms “organizer,” “communicator,” “leader,” and “personality” repeatedly when discussing instructional supervision.

Ann Lee. Ann Lee has been an educator for six years at Rosewood Middle School. She came to education as a second career. Ms. Lee has served as sixth grade science curriculum team leader the past four years. As CTL, she supervises eight sixth grade science teachers, two of which are special education teachers. Ms. Lee holds a master’s degree in Community Systems and Planning.

Ms. Lee described the characteristics of a professional learning community as “sharing with your fellow teammates.” She continued that the sharing “happens a lot” among her curriculum team.

Ms. Lee, as curriculum team leader for sixth grade science at RMS, defined instructional supervision as

I think it is a general guidance of, you know we’re given the county scope and sequence so I just make sure that we’re on course with the counties’ prescribed scope and sequence. It changes. Now the instructional supervision is very different than what it was those first couple of years that I was CTL.

She elaborated that sixth grade got a new subject area two years ago and that she “didn’t guide the planning process and kept them on track.” Ms. Lee continued to discuss how the instructional supervision changed since the new scope and sequence was introduced. In the beginning, she guided the “unpacking of the standards” where the curriculum team worked to determine what the standards “mean” and develop “lessons” for teachers to use. She stated that now instructional supervision is

It is a very different thing. It is not a push to understand the content, to understand the AKS, not a push to put the sequence in. That has really disappeared. It is more of a, my role is really quite different now. Now it is more of just a colleague sharing.

Ms. Lee pointed out that now it is “a lot less me and more of the group.”

Abbey Jones. Abbey Jones began her teaching career six years ago at Rosewood Middle School. The past three years Ms. Jones has served as CTL for the seventh grade

math curriculum team at RMS. Ms. Jones supervises nine full-time teachers, two of which are special education teachers. Ms. Jones holds a bachelor degree in education. When asked to explain the characteristics of a professional learning community, Ms. Jones stated that she understood it to be “Teachers who are professionals working together collaboratively to plan everything that they’re going to be doing in the classroom, to extend what they know about teaching.” She pointed out there are “contributions from different sources” when “working together.” Ms. Jones states she believed “together we become a greater whole” when working “collaboratively.”

In her role as CTL, Ms. Jones defined instructional supervision as

I kind of feel that my role is to kind of facilitate when we have collaborative planning and when we meet I’m the one that they can go to as their immediate point of contact. Not really their boss but more of a facilitator, making sure the math curriculum is being implemented successfully.”

Ms. Jones used phrases such as “what we’re teaching,” “when we’re teaching (it),” and “how we’re teaching” when describing instructional supervision. She also linked instructional supervision closely to the curriculum area scope and sequence.

Relating Research Questions to Themes

The research was conducted to examine the perspectives of a group of four curriculum team leaders as they provided instructional supervision to teachers in specific curriculum teams in a middle school using professional learning community principles. After conducting an analysis of many pages of interviews, transcripts, questionnaire

responses, classroom observation notes, and collected artifacts, I sought to answer three important questions. The guiding research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a changing student population?
2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

After the data was collected, organized, and coded, several themes began to emerge related to the research questions guiding the research study. Some themes were found to overlap multiple research questions. For example, the fact that teachers and CTLs experienced increased collaboration is a theme in both question number two and three. In the next section, the emergent themes and the relationship to the research questions will be discussed.

Themes

After the data was collected and coded, five themes emerged. These themes consistently recurred in the interviews, with the four participants. The themes were reinforced in the questionnaires responses, the curriculum team meeting, the observations and the artifacts collected in response to the coding categories. The themes are as follows:

1. Collaboration: Working on the Work
2. Role of CTLs: Individually Developed

3. Collaboration: Collegial Culture with Teachers
4. Autonomy: Freedom to Lead
5. Shared Leadership: Fact or Fiction

By grouping responses into these themed categories, the perspectives of curriculum team leaders (CTLs) could be studied thoroughly. In alignment with the coding process, these themes repeatedly surfaced in the interviews, questionnaires, observations, and the collected artifacts during the research process. Findings are prioritized by the three research questions. Representative quotations from each study participant were selected that are indicative of the common themes.

Collaboration: Working on the Work

For all study participants, being accountable to themselves, students, and peer curriculum teachers was an important part of providing instructional supervision. When discussing their perspectives, the curriculum team leaders (CTLs) focused on the work that each participated in as the CTL. The vocabulary used reflected similar actions that each used while working as CTLs. The words “guide,” “organizer,” “guidance,” “facilitator,” “liaison,” and “messenger” were used many times during the interview process.

Guide. The participants were comfortable in the role of guide and avoided the use of supervisor in any form. In describing her perspectives, Paula Smith stated “I see my job in that, instructional supervision as being taking what I have learned, or additional classes that I’ve taken and spreading that knowledge throughout and sharing it.” Ms. Smith pointed to the fact that with all language arts teachers she was there for “guidance

with instruction.” As part of that process, she meets with the language arts curriculum on a weekly basis to “support them.” The support includes, but is not limited to “checking in with them,” “plan with them,” and “sharing.” Ann Lee stated it simply, “I guide the planning.” In Mr. Beck’s conversation concerning instructional supervision, he referred to himself as “just one of the team.” He stated “I’m just a team leader that’s trying to guide us through our meetings and guide us through adversity or decisions that need to be made.” For all of the participants, the weekly meetings provided the forum to guide teachers when collaborating. The weekly meetings were a specific time to work on the work of teaching students.

Organization. Joe Beck, the sixth grade social studies CTL, emphasized being an “organizer” as an important part of providing instructional supervision. Mr. Beck related the organizational aspect of instructional supervision on two levels. He stated “one you have to organize the meetings;” second, you must “organize your teachers in a way to make sure they’re on scope and sequence.” Mr. Beck used words such as “team leader,” “guide,” “flexible,” and “organizer of information.” when discussing instructional supervision. Beck spoke about the CTL being a “leadership position.” In that position he stressed the need to “hear both sides of the story” and being “able to collaborate” with the team. He saw this as “part of his job.”

The work of organization within the work of the curriculum team was persistent across the cases. For Ann Lee “guiding the sixth grade science teachers” was her main focus. Lee stated, “I guide the planning” and “make sure we (the curriculum team teachers) are on course with the county’s prescribed scope and sequence.” Abbey Jones’

perspectives mirrored the collaborative nature found among the CTLs. Ms. Jones in defining instructional supervision as CTL, she stated, “I kind of feel my role is to kind of facilitate when we have collaborative planning and when we meet.” Ms. Jones continued defining instructional supervision not as a “boss,” but as a “facilitator making sure the math curriculum is being implemented successfully.” Jones used the phrase “go to girl” to define her role. She elaborated that teachers can come to her with “questions about content” or “to clarify” concepts. Jones continued that she is the “immediate point of contact” to “facilitate what everyone (math teachers) needs.”

Jones shared that she develops the “big idea” and the “focus of any collaboration” the math teachers “need to do together.” She explained the “math binder” that she organizes with the “scope and sequence” and “more specifically, here’s what we need to be teaching every week.” Ms. Jones summarized instructional supervision as it relates to math as “The scope and sequence, as far as special lesson plans, everything that we’re doing, what we’re teaching, when we’re teaching and how we’re teaching.” The study participants related similar ideas and functions to the organization each completed while providing instructional supervision.

Expectations. The perspectives expressed thus far by the CTLs reflect the effort and concern each held toward collaboration with fellow curriculum team teachers. In the third set of interviews prior expectations were discussed at length. From the CTLs perspective, expectations were developed individually without guidance from the school administrators. The language arts CTL, Paula Smith stated, “I don’t really feel like we, I have ever been given something formal on a piece of paper saying, you know, you’re a

curriculum team leader and here are the things we expect you to do.” Lee and Jones had similar responses in our discussion. Lee stated, “She was not sure about that (expectations).” She speculated, “I’m assuming that means on instructional leader. . . I don’t know what year I picked that up or just something I assume now.” Similarly Jones stated, “I still have not been specifically told what my expectations are. . . I’ve been doing it for three years.”

Only one of the CTLs referred to expectations being communicated. Joe Beck stated that three things were explained on the day he was asked to participate as CTL; first, “you need to go to certain meetings;” second, “communicate the information from the administration team to teachers;” and last, “you need to organize meetings.” Beck referred to this as a “short meeting” and did not refer to any other guidance after the initial conversation. The other participants did not reference any such meeting in the lead up to becoming CTL.

I recognized a failure in communication might have existed. Evidence was discovered in an artifact extracted from the school principal's directives given to curriculum team leaders. In the document, the CTLs expectations are listed as follows:

CTL Expectations

1. Lead grade level curriculum areas in support of 180 Days of WOW!
(Lesson plans)
2. Focus on creating grade level curriculum (Backward Design) lessons.
3. Focus on five common classroom expectations with an added emphasis on differentiation.

4. Focus on providing instructional leadership.
5. Focus on implementing literacy.
6. Focus on supporting mentoring and peer coaching opportunities.

The document was disseminated during the first leadership team meeting held at the beginning of the 2009-10 school year. None of the participants mentioned this document or specific initiatives named in the wording when discussing the CTLs expectations or the CTLs role in instructional supervision.

Further analysis of the data, in particular the principal/assistant principal questionnaire responses, indicates a similar understanding of the CTLs's role in instructional supervision by the principal, the assistant principals and the CTLs. The assistant principals who work closely with each CTL in a curriculum area were asked to explain the work of CTLs and to delineate the expectations of CTLs. The responses were similar across all questionnaire responses. The principal and assistant principals responded that curriculum team leaders should:

1. Provide instructional support – resources, liaison, strategies, collaboration, mentoring, coaching;
2. Facilitate curriculum team meetings – organize, prepare an agenda, guide collaboration;
3. Insure collaboration in meetings – share, plan lessons, plan common assessments, study data.

The responses include similarities with the study participants. In particular, the use of vocabulary such as, support, liaison, facilitate, organize, collaborate, share, and guide

were used by CTLs in discussions concerning their own perspectives and by questionnaire respondents.

Peer view. An additional questionnaire was used to examine the CTLs from a different perspective. Each participant's curriculum team member was asked to complete a questionnaire concerning the work and role of the CTLs from their own observations and interactions. When describing the role of the CTLs among the curriculum team virtually all of the 16 teachers that completed the questionnaire used similar descriptive words such as support, leader, facilitate, organize, collaborate, plan, coordinate, and guidance. The comparison of the three additional perspectives, principal, assistant principals and curriculum team leaders, provided additional perspectives that were consistent with the CTLs perspectives across all involved parties. The comparison of each group's perspective is provided in Table 7.

Role of CTLs: Individually Developed

Virtually all of the participants described the most significant parts of their role in instructional supervision as individually developed. As was discussed earlier in Chapter 4, the CTLs explained that the expectations had never been clearly communicated. As a result each CTL pieced together the role of instructional supervisor from the interactions with other teachers and administrators. The symbolic interactionism framework utilized in the case study allowed me to examine the resulting role of curriculum team leader by examining the interactions and how those interactions impacted each individual's role development.

Table 7

Role Explanations

Similarities among:	CTL Interview	Principal/Assistant Principal Questionnaire	Curriculum Team Member Questionnaire
	Support	Support	Support
	Liaison	Liaison	Leader
	Facilitator	Facilitate	Facilitate
	Organizer	Organize	Organize
	Collaborate	Collaborate	Collaborate
	Plan	Planning	Plan
	Sharing	Share	Coordinate
	Guide	Guide	Guidance
	Messenger		
	Leader		
	Communicate		

Team meetings. Instructional supervision among the participants looked very similar. Paula Smith pointed out that she was there for “guidance with instruction.” As part of that “guidance,” she meets on a “weekly basis with the language arts curriculum team of teachers.” The nature of the meetings was urgent and consistent; however, the CTLs were aware of the personality and needs of the curriculum team.

The general agreement among the participants was that each one was responsible for the curriculum team planning and implementing the school scope and sequence. The curriculum team meetings were seen as an integral part of achieving that goal. Lee states, “I focus their attention. I facilitate the meetings, which is big.” Although each CTL meets weekly with the curriculum team to facilitate and guide planning, there were variations found in how the meetings were conducted. Smith and Jones both pointed out that one week is a meeting with all the teachers to “check-in” and then to work in “collaborative planning.” Smith described the second weekly meeting as “small group meetings. . . every other week where they’re working with maybe three other teachers or two.” Likewise, Ms. Jones stated, “We have a meeting every week, but one week it’s just to check and make sure everyone’s doing okay. Then we break into small groups to do collaborative planning.” The other two participants’ approach varied slightly. Both Mr. Beck and Ms. Lee explained the same meeting schedule with whole group each week, but alternating the meeting room to see another teachers’ environment. The curriculum teams of Beck and Lee utilized small groups within the large group meetings to accomplish the goals of the team. Participants used different approaches based on the individual’s assessment of what the specific curriculum team needed.

Support. For the study participants, being a support for the curriculum team of teachers was an ideal on which to focus. The support came in different forms according to the CTLs. In describing the supportive role of a CTL, Joe Beck used phrases such as “trying to guide us through” and “guiding us through the scope and sequence.” Following that idea Ann Lee also stated, “I think I’m expected to guide instruction.”

Jones idea of her support role was “to pretty much take care of the seventh grade teachers. . . whatever they need in order to teach.” Beck recognized that the sixth grade social studies curriculum teacher “doesn’t need to be told what to do,” and that “they don’t want that.” He continued, “I’m just going to gently remind them that they need to be where they’re at before the end of the nine weeks or to gently remind (them) each meeting.” Ms. Smith referred to support as a “part of the position (CTL)” that “I am developing.” Support among the curriculum teams of teachers was received from the CTLs in the differentiated ways that each developed.

Collaboration: Collegial Culture with Teachers

The participants continually emphasized the importance of guiding or facilitating the planning process within the curriculum team of teachers. The planning activities discussed included planning day-to-day lessons, common assessments, and long-term yearly planning. All of the participants mentioned sharing of knowledge, strategies, and activities that were part of both the large group and small group curriculum team meeting process.

Team member. For all of the participants, being a member of the team was repeatedly emphasized. The curriculum team leaders pointed out the equality of being part of the team, which provided a collaborative, collegial working relationship. Joe Beck stated, “I’m just a member of the team, and I’m kind of guiding them.” Ann Lee added, “You know we are just teachers of science. . . I just think that I guided the planning process.” In these statements, the desire to remain part of the team and to work with the team is evident.

The participants provided examples that delineated how as CTL, they remain an integral part of the curriculum team. Ms. Smith provided compelling evidence that she has an equal team relationship within the language arts curriculum team. She stated, “I collaborated a month ago with two other teachers, the lesson bombed, bombed. I was like, what on Earth. But luckily I stopped half way through, went down and said you need to take me through step by step.” Ann Lee, sixth grade science CTLs, added an explanation of two activities the sixth grade science curriculum team participated in equally. First, Lee arranged for the curriculum team teachers to take a “CTL led fieldtrip” looking for fossils on a school workday. A second activity that supported the “sharing and modeling” and team membership occurred in the curriculum team meetings. Ms. Lee guided the curriculum team in the building of “models for class use.” In the examples given by study participants, the CTLs actively participated as curriculum team members. The participants each reflected on how equal participation in the team contributes to the collaborative nature of the CTLs role.

Not supervision. Throughout the interview process one of the most interesting discussions centered on the use of the word supervision. In Chapter 2, the literature concerning instructional supervision was examined. A consensus of the literature was the expectation that an educator should be in charge of supervising the instruction received by students. The principal generally fulfills the role, but certainly other competent teaching professionals were found in the research providing instructional supervision. The study participants represent one-way teacher leaders can be used to instructionally supervise peer teachers. The research data discussed to this point is evidence of CTLs

providing instructional supervision to teachers. When the participants began to discuss their role in instructional supervision, each was uncomfortable with the use of the word supervision. The CTLs never used the word supervision when describing their perspectives or any significant themes concerning the work which each participated.

Ms. Smith, when asked if she liked the term instructional supervisor responded, “I think it’s more instructional leader. In my brain, instructional supervisor is not a teacher.” Beck, who previously described his style as “laid back” and “loosy-goosy,” was animate in discussions that he was “not up on a high pedestal.” He continued by stating that he was not comfortable with the term leader either. He shared that he likes, “organizer, I feel more comfortable with that.”

As discussed earlier in this chapter, all participants reported being part of the team as very important. Two of the study participants, Ms. Jones and Ms. Lee, gave very insightful perspectives in regards to the phrase instructional supervision. Ms. Jones was deliberate in her assertion that she is not a supervisor. She stated, “I feel like I’m part of the team, I’m part of the group.” As she elaborated upon supervisor versus leader, Jones stated,

A leader kind of helps to make sure the group is going in the right direction, where as a supervisor almost, it almost feels like it has negative connotation of there’s an evaluation element to a supervisor. I’m not here to judge my peers I’m simply here to make sure we are all going in the right direction.

Lee continued in with a similar explanation. Ms. Lee was animated in stating her belief that she is not an instructional supervisor. She stated,

I don't see myself as a supervisor at all. I don't think that's what I am and I don't think that's what I'm supposed to be. I suppose curriculum team leader is a better actual term when they say CTL. I like that better, in no way do I feel or have I ever felt like I'm anybody's supervisor. Curriculum team leader is a little bit better.

Lee continued by describing her leadership style as that of a facilitator. She stated, "my role is facilitating others to be the leaders. . . to have others, to keep getting people to take turns leading is a much better, effective way." Abbey Jones summarizes the participants' view of supervision best, "I want us to be able to work together as a team" and "leader is for me, better."

Evaluation. In education, supervision is usually related to evaluation. The curriculum team leaders that participated in this study do not take part in any evaluation process. The participants recognize that supervision commonly leads to evaluation. As discussed in the previous section, the CTLs steer clear of using the word supervisor. Joe Beck explained, "When you say leader or supervisor there is just a lot of weight with both of those." He continued, "You feel like if you are a supervisor you should be able to fire people." Ms. Jones viewed it similarly, she stated, "a supervisor, almost, it almost feels like it has a negative connotation of there is an evaluation element to a supervisor." Ms. Smith stated, "bringing the right leadership" was important to being the CTL. Again, the idea of being part of the curriculum team of teachers pervades how participants view instructional supervision. Jones reflected that, "I'm just part of the group. . . it doesn't ostracize me from the group." The idea expressed here was true for all participants. For

each CTL, supervision was too closely related to negative consequences. The participants felt strongly that the collaboration was enhanced without supervision, evaluation emphasis.

Collegiality. The participants were encouraged by the ability of the curriculum teams to work together. Beck pointed out that, “I have like an open forum, I just kind guide the discussion. . . you know we’ll all work together to decide who is going to do what.” He continued, “the most collaboration (in the school) is right here with the teachers.” Each study participant pointed out the collaborative work among the teachers. Ms. Smith emphasized the collaboration grew within the curriculum team. She stated, “people are sharing lessons, people are sharing ideas, people are sharing concerns, and you have a small group you can go to (for help).” Ann Lee offered an explanation of how her group “unpacked the standards” during the curriculum meetings. She stated, “we made documents for every nine weeks.” Ms. Jones also expressed the idea of collaboration productively with the curriculum team. Reflecting on the math curriculum team’s work she stated, “we have all benefited from, you know, other people’s ideas as far as ways to present instructions, different assessments to use, tools to use, software programs. . . because we all feel comfortable enough to share.” The study participants felt the teams of teachers experienced an increase in collegial, collaborative actions, which is a significant expression of CTL leadership.

Autonomy: Freedom to Lead

It was established early in the interviews with the four participants that no guidance or expectations were given as a prescribed way to provide instructional

supervision to curriculum team teachers. The CTLs expressed that they felt freedom to lead with little initial guidance. Each CTL created their role individually according to the needs of the particular curriculum team. Paula Smith stated,

I think that both the assistant principals that have been over Language Arts the last two years. . . I feel like they both had a strong faith and belief in me. And so that let me be comfortable to just come in and do what I needed to do. I didn't feel like I had to prove myself.

The key phrase, "that let me be comfortable to just come in and do what I needed to do" is evidence of a freedom to supervise.

Additionally, Lee reported the school provided opportunities for her to attend professional conferences. She stated, "I really had a lot of opportunity to be exposed to really good lessons" and she brought "it all back" to "share it with my people." Ann Lee praised the support received from the assistant principal supervising the science curriculum.

Relationships. Although similar reasons were found among the CTLs responses for the freedom to supervise, there were differences among the individual participants. Abbey Jones asserted that being a part of the curriculum team as a teacher "prior to becoming the leader," gave her freedom in her CTL role. She continued, "having a feel for how the curriculum works and having a feel with my peers, who they are and where their strengths lie and maybe where they needed more support." On the other hand, Mr. Beck contributed his freedom to supervise to his "laid back, easy going" personality. He indicated that has helped his working relationship with teachers because "they are a fairly

independent group to some extent.” Stressing an effort to build “relationships” as important with curriculum teachers, Ms. Smith experienced freedom to “lead” the team. Although each participant built relationships differently, the impact on the instructional supervision provided was evident.

Testing influence. For all the curriculum team leader participants, high-stakes testing had an influence on the leadership choices. The major influence dealt with the push to cover the prescribed objectives of the county and state. Concerning testing Ms. Lee stated, “Testing is something we feel the pressure of more in terms of getting the materials covered than score.” Likewise, Beck shared that “We talked about that (testing) from the first meeting we had in August.” Beck and Jones both recognized the importance of keeping up with the county’s scope and sequence. Jones stated, “so with (testing) that’s kind of where I feel I have to, I like to make sure we are all staying together.” Ms. Smith echoed the other participants by making sure the “teachers are aware of their scope and sequence.” When discussing the high-stakes tests, it was evident the CTLs had extensive working knowledge of the test objectives, the test format, and the data surrounding the curriculum area test scores. Smith shared that “understanding what students need to know” is a guiding principle within the math curriculum “that we’re engaging it in our practices,” and “that their lessons reflect that.” Jones explained how the composition of the test influences the “instructional calendar” the team develops. She went on to indicate that the curriculum team “plans with the accurate amount of time in relation to the percentages” found on the required tests.

All of the participants lamented on the overarching influence testing have on the teacher's practices. The words "pressure" and "stressful" were used in the discussions of the testing influence. An interesting and refreshing view that the CTLs held related to trying to remember that learning is more than testing. Smith made a point of stressing the test, "it's not the only thing we're talking about." Joe Beck recognized it as a push factor that caused the team to "come together," "to work as a group," and to "collaborate" as preparation for each nine weeks. The most revealing statement came from Ms. Lee. She stated, "testing doesn't bother me; it's not what's important. It is the student learning and excitement for what they're learning. I mean if we are doing our job every week, then the rest will take care of itself." The study participants each relayed Ms. Lee's sentiment in their own way.

Shared Leadership: Fact or Fiction

The group of study participants considered themselves leaders within the grade level curriculum team. At several points during the initial interviews, the curriculum team leaders (CTLs) referred to being a part of a school leadership team. The mention of the leadership team prompted me to ask the participants about their role in the leadership of the school. For all of the participants, the leadership team was seen negatively.

Communication. According to the Ms. Jones understanding, the leadership team of principals, assistant principals, and CTLs was designed to communicate items to teacher through the CTLs. She stated, "it did not feel as if that was truly the purpose of those anymore." The study participants lamented that the meetings were to be held monthly, but that most had been cancelled. Lee stated, "We haven't met that many times.

I don't even remember what they're about." Beck also complained, "This year I say half of them have gotten canceled and there hasn't been any e-mail about them. So the communication has been really lacking." The CTLs each had similar responses concerning the lack of communication related to the leadership meetings and the lack of meeting consistency.

Quality of guidance. Ultimately, the CTLs participating in the research saw their role as part of the leadership team as unfulfilling. One of the CTLs, Ms. Smith, described the collaboration between CTLs and the administration, as "we are off on our own." She continued, "Ultimately for me. . . I really don't feel like the administration cares." When the discussion continued in the interviews, the CTLs expressed disappointment in the collaboration and guidance received. According to Ms. Lee, "it's not a situation where we have any input, just kind of sitting there." Similarly, Smith described the meetings as "you sit down, you were told things, and that's it." The CTLs appeared to want a more collaborative type of interaction similar to the curriculum team. Beck reported, "collaboration breaks down" within the leadership team causing a "level of distrust." The study participants saw the lack of collaboration as a missing vision and lack of guidance from the administrative team.

The CTLs were asked during the interviews to describe the impact the leadership meetings had provided to improve their work as CTL. The CTLs responses reflected the negative view of the leadership team. Lee viewed the meetings as "not that important." Jones relayed, "I have not felt like I have gotten a lot from those levels." In previous discourse, the CTLs discussed the lack of expectations for the role of CTLs. The same

discussion was part of the CTLs view of the leadership team. Beck spoke of receiving “not a lot of guidance or even expectations” from the leadership team participation. Smith felt similarly, “I personally don’t believe that there is a clear goal from the administration of what they expect from us.” The CTLs ascertained that being part of the leadership team afforded them minimal if any benefits. Ms. Smith voiced that she expected the leadership team might be a “forum” for the “CTLs to share concerns of the curriculum area.” The expectation being that collaboration might be possible with the other leaders in the school. Joe Beck felt strongly that the collaboration collapsed among the leadership team when “a view or an idea is different” from what the administrative team wanted. His view is consistent with the lack of input mentioned by other study participants. Although the study participants expressed disappointment in the ability to participate wholly as part of the school leadership, each continued to focus on the work with the curriculum teams of teachers. Lee summarized, “I’m just all about the scope and sequence.” Ms. Smith responded, “because of that, I mean I do what I believe is right and best.” I believe it is important to note that earlier in Chapter 4 the CTLs praised the support and guidance given individually by the assistant principals. The leadership team is a separate, larger group of CTLs, and assistant principals led by the school principal.

Conclusion

The participants in this study act as teacher leaders providing instructional supervision while guiding curriculum area teachers. As they work with peer teachers, they were able work collaboratively to increase the efforts of teachers to meet the ever-changing needs of students. The curriculum team leaders (CTLs) developed their

individual approaches as they interacted within the parameters of the curriculum team. All of the participants relied on their peer relationships, their own desire to provide the best for teachers, and students to guide them. The emphasis here is on the symbolic interaction each used to develop the perspectives and expectations each held for their own curriculum area team of teachers.

Now that the participants have developed their leadership role, each has found themselves as part of a collaborative, collegial group of professionals. Each one stressed the importance of remaining as just part of the team. In addition, the participant curriculum team leaders found themselves guiding, facilitating, and focusing the efforts of the curriculum team. While the leadership each provides would be called instructional supervision in other circles, within the curriculum teams each study participant steers clear of the word supervision with its negative, evaluative connotations.

Although each participant recognized the influence of high-stakes testing on their leadership efforts, there was a premium put on the learning of students. The focus on learning allowed each CTL to freely lead their curriculum team to become effective teachers. When examined, the participants displayed caring, flexible, and focused personalities while leading their teams.

The study participants have already established themselves as leaders among their curriculum team and the school. However, the participants were able to achieve leadership status with little guidance from others. Even though the CTL participants are part of a shared leadership team, they do not reap any benefits from membership in that

team. The majority of the participants would welcome more input and more guidance from the leadership team. Appendix P contains the audit trail of the data collection.

The next and final chapter of this study will summarize and discuss the findings of this research. Included in the final chapter is an examination of the limitations of the study. Recommendations for further research will also be discussed.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The focus of this final chapter of is to answer the research questions that guided this study. A brief summary will be provided, followed by propositions and conclusions that have been drawn from the data in relation to specific research questions. This section will be followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study. Finally, recommendations for further research will be suggested.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of four middle school curriculum team leaders (CTLs) that provide instructional supervision to teachers. Specifically, the research sought to find out how the view held by the curriculum team leaders (CTLs) of instructional supervision increased teachers ability to meet student needs. In addition, I was interested in the role each CTL developed and work tasks employed by each CTL when providing instructional supervision to the curriculum team of teachers. Another key aspect that I desired to uncover was concerned with the freedom experienced by CTLs to supervise effectively. In order to address these issues, this study examined the perspectives toward instructional supervision and the work related themes associated with providing instructional supervision. The guiding research questions developed to address these areas are:

1. To what extent are the perspectives of instructional leaders associated with increased accountability regarding a changing student population?

2. What are the most significant themes in instructional supervision described by curriculum team leaders?
3. To what extent are the curriculum team leaders able to supervise teachers within learning communities for maximum effectiveness?

Research design. A qualitative case study approach was used which included interviews with each of the four CTLs. Additional data were gathered using open-ended questionnaires, observation, and artifact collection. The case study is designed to provide rich detailed accounts of phenomena (Ary et al., 2006). Using this approach I sought to uncover the perspectives of CTLs concerning their experiences with instructional supervision. I also desired to determine “how different people make sense of their lives” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Additionally, Ary et al. (2006) states that qualitative researchers are seeking to understand the whole individual. Thus, the case study qualitative approach would most likely provide the individual perspectives desired.

Research framework. Symbolic interactionism was the methodological framework used to guide the research and to guide my interpretation of the findings. According to Bodgan and Biklen (2007), “through interaction the individual constructs meaning.” I utilized this part of symbolic interactionism to analyze the perspectives of the CTLs as they performed their role in instructional supervision within their curriculum teams.

Literature. The literature review for this study sought to find various perspectives researcher’s held related to learning communities, teacher leaders, and instructional supervision. Sources included scholarly articles that discussed the varied

ways schools implement learning community principles. Additional sources followed the multiple ways that teacher leaders are developed within individual schools or school systems. There was a clear need demonstrated for teacher leaders. An ambiguity was evident in the many perspectives on how to best utilize teacher leaders among a willing teacher work force. The teacher leadership literature review revealed a clear lack of data on the perspectives of teacher leaders toward the leadership role in which each participated. More specifically, there was a lack of information concerning teacher leaders providing instructional supervision to colleagues or teams of teachers in the middle school. This study, therefore, sought to examine closely the perspectives of a group of curriculum team leaders providing instructional supervision in a middle school using learning community principles.

Participants. Participants of the study were purposively chosen. Through common work experiences prior to the study, I knew all of the teachers. All participants had varying lengths of experience as teachers in the school. Each participant had served as a curriculum team leader for a minimum of two years. A common thread found among all participants was the desire to improve their instructional skills, their colleagues' instructional skills, and subsequently their students learning.

Collection of data. Data for this study was conducted four ways. First, each participant was interviewed three times for an approximate total of three hours. I used both a prepared set of questions and questions developed from emergent themes found during the coding process. Second, the school administrative team and the curriculum team teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire related to the CTLs work. In

addition to interviews and questionnaires, I completed one observation for each participant. Finally, I collected artifacts related to the directives given to each participant and the work each conducted while fulfilling the tasks of curriculum team leader. The varied data collection methods provided an in-depth view of the study participants in their own environment.

Following the interviews, questionnaires, observations, and artifact collection I used the constant comparative method to identify emergent and common themes that were reported in the findings. Individual case analyses were completed initially, followed by analyses across the four case studies. From these analyses emergent themes were identified leading to three propositions related to the three research questions used to guide this study.

Discussion

Two levels of findings were discussed in Chapter 4, individual case findings and across case themes. The purpose of this section is to discuss the major finds in the context of the research questions set forth in Chapter 1 and the literature in Chapter 2. Each of the following sections includes a proposition, discussion, and the relationship of the proposition to the questions and literature. The propositions drawn from the findings of this study include:

1. The curriculum team leaders do not define their role as a supervisor when providing instructional supervision;
2. Instructional supervision for the individual curriculum team leaders was a self-described and differentiated approach;

3. The curriculum team leaders experienced a lack of guidance and collaboration from the school administration.

Proposition 1: The curriculum team leaders (CTLs) do not define their role as supervisor when providing instructional supervision. The four CTLs that participated in this study emphasized that any use of the word supervision was an inaccurate description of their role. The CTLs described themselves as leaders or facilitators of the curriculum team. Each one made a key distinction that the CTLs were part of the team and not over the team in a supervisor's capacity. The CTLs indicated they have no administrative power to make decisions. The power to make decisions outside of the curriculum area is with the principal and assistant principals exclusively.

The curriculum team leaders (CTLs) described themselves as leaders, but never referenced the vision or expectations document set forth by the local school administrator. Instructional leadership was listed as a function of the CTLs position within that document. The four participants in the study pointed out they had never been given a definitive description of their responsibilities as a CTL. The CTLs were unaware of the document containing the CTL expectations. Each CTL instead discussed how they developed their own role expectations while working in the capacity of CTL.

Describing the role of the CTL in instructional supervision was dependent on each CTLs personal development of their role. Smith explained, "Instructional leader means if you're doing anything in Language Arts, I am a good resource." Joe Beck believed he is "just one of the team. You're just an organizer of the team and you're just a team member like the rest of them." Ann Lee reported, "I don't ever feel like I'm ever a

supervisor though. I think facilitator is the better word.” The fourth participant, Abbey Jones, related to the term supervisor in the following way, “I’m not here to judge my peers. I’m simply here to make sure we are all going in the right direction.”

Proposition 2: Instructional supervision for the individual curriculum leaders was a self-described and differentiated approach. The curriculum team leaders (CTLs) at Rosewood Middle School were chosen by the school principal to lead their respective curriculum teams. In order to enact the role of instructional supervisor, the participants were compelled to create their own role. The CTLs developed their role by following previous CTLs examples, trial and error, and using knowledge from previous experiences in leadership. Prior to the 2009-2010 school year the CTLs had no formal expectations or direction from the school administration. At the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, a formal written copy of the CTLs vision and expectations was given to the curriculum team leaders by the principal. The four CTLs failed to reference the vision and expectations during any of the discussions concerning the role of the CTLs. Smith reported, “I don’t really feel like we, I have ever been given something formal on a piece of paper saying here are the things we expect of you to do.” Likewise Abbey Jones stated, “As far as the expectations, I still have not been specifically told what my expectations are.” Ann Lee referred to her past experiences in developing her role. Lee stated, “I think that comes from my background. I don’t think I received any direction.” One participant, Joe Beck, referenced a short meeting when he was chosen to become CTL. According to Beck, the principal stated the expectations as “one or two little things. You need to go to certain meetings, you need to communicate the

information from the administration to the teachers, you need to organize meetings.” CTLs had to develop their own role and meaning as part of fulfilling their responsibility as CTL, which created some apprehension and ambiguity among the study participants. Additionally, participants mentioned the assistant principal that directly oversees their particular curriculum area. The four CTLs referenced the involvement of the assistant principal positively when addressing curriculum questions or direction was needed for curriculum team needs.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), people in a given situation often develop common definitions or shared perspectives in terms of symbolic interactionism. The four study participants exhibited shared perspectives when developing their roles as CTLs. The CTLs used their own experiences to develop their role as curriculum team leaders. In light of this fact, it is interesting to note that each CTL developed common jobs and roles. Each CTL used the different adjectives liaison, organizer, facilitator, and leader when defining their roles, yet three common threads were found in the discussion. First, all CTLs encouraged collaboration among their own curriculum teams. Each CTL pointed out an increase in collaboration. Second, the CTLs used the school’s scope and sequence to drive their organizing and facilitating of meetings. The CTLs pushed the curriculum team teachers to cover the objectives found in the scope and sequence. Last, the four CTLs communicated mandates and directives from the administration to the teachers. More explicitly, the CTLs ensured that the teachers carried out the tasks. Two of the common themes are related to improving instruction. According to Gordon (2008), improved instruction is based on increased and continuous collegiality. The

CTLs are participating in instructional supervision when they encourage collaboration and push the scope and sequence. The CTLs and the curriculum team collaboration is one-way educators continually examine instructional practices and the effects on student learning (Zepeda, 2004).

Proposition 3: The curriculum team leaders experience a lack of guidance and collaboration from the school administration. In Rosewood Middle School, the four-curriculum team leaders (CTLs) lead a group of same grade, same subject curriculum teams. As discussed previously, these CTLs do not view their role as supervision, but as leader or facilitator. Barth (2001) points out that teacher leaders are a crucial part of all schools. In addition to leading the curriculum teams, the CTLs are part of the school's leadership team. The leadership team consists of the principal, each assistant principal, and each CTL. After discussions with the CTLs, the purpose of the leadership team was to meet monthly to "check in" and to communicate more effectively with every department. According to the participants in the study, the CTLs work with the leadership team is almost non-existent. When CTLs were asked to explain their part in the school leadership team, each reported the meetings were cancelled most of the time. Three study participants pointed to a lack of communication from the administration regarding the leadership team meetings. Paula Smith stated, "Sometimes the communication from the administration to us is not always good." Beck reported, "The communication is really lacking." Ann Lee had a similar comment, she stated, "We didn't know it was happening." The lack of communication created less interaction between the administrators and CTLs. The CTLs experienced frustration over the lack of

guidance. Additionally, the CTLs felt collaboration was not happening between both the administration and CTLs or among the group of CTLs. Smith reported, “I feel like we are off on our own.” Joe Beck’s view was that, “the most collaboration is right here with the teachers. But the decisions that seem to impact the teachers most, there was no collaboration.” The other CTLs, Lee and Jones described the collaboration as “It’s not a situation where we have any input.” And “there’s hit and misses as far as guidance for the CTLs.”

From the discussions with the study participants there is little benefit from being part of the school leadership team. The CTLs frustrations are related to the non-collaborative manner that pervades the meetings when they do occur. According to the study participants, the meetings deteriorated into “just sitting there” or being cancelled. The quality and practice of leadership can have a positive impact on organizational health (Reeves, 2008). The CTLs in this study have not been given the opportunity to improve their work through collaboration with other CTLs or administrators. The administrative support structure for developing teachers in leadership roles is present, but the actual implementation falls short. The administrators could develop the CTLs into a force for improving instruction by tapping into their expertise and experience (Zepeda, 2002).

Limitations

The research sought to examine the perspectives of a group of four curriculum team leaders (CTLs) as they provided instructional supervision within a middle school. A qualitative case study approach was used. The case study examines in-depth a particular participant in a specific setting. There were several limitations to this study. First, the

participants are all from one single middle school in the state of Georgia. The middle school was situated in a northeast Georgia urban setting and provided a snapshot of a group of teachers acting as leaders providing instructional supervision to teams of teachers within that particular school. Adding to this limitation was the lack of diversity, with three of the four participants being female, and all participants being Caucasian. The group numbers were consistent with the total group of teachers serving as curriculum team leaders, which are mostly female and Caucasian. As a result, the ability to achieve generalizability is limited. There was no effort to generalize results for other settings.

Qualitative research provides an avenue for a few other limitations. I participated in the same leadership position with the study participants two years prior to the case study of CTLs. As a result, certain biases may have had an influence on the findings of the study. My intent was to allow the participants to share, without interference, their perspectives and experiences.

Qualitative case studies have the purpose of trying to “understand the human and social behavior. . . as it is lived by participants in a particular setting” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 449). The participants were allowed to tell the story of their experiences. My goal was to use each participant’s story to provide a depth of understanding for outsiders. The research findings may not be generalized to other contexts, but may be of value to researchers, teachers, and administrators. The findings of this study may be useful for administrators desiring to use teacher leaders to provide instructional supervision. Teacher leaders may use the findings to better understand leadership roles.

Suggestions for Future Research

The implications of the research on the perspectives of middle school curriculum team leaders and the practices concerning instructional supervision include suggestions for further research. The study findings are for one urban middle school in northeast Georgia. As a result, implications for leadership training and administrative support in middle schools are discussed. However, implications for leadership support from the local school systems are appropriate and will be discussed in relation to the findings of this study.

Implications for middle schools. From this study it was evident that teacher collaboration was expected by the organization of the teachers into same-grade, same-subject teams led by a curriculum team leader (CTL). Yet, in the three face-to-face interviews held with the participants, no evidence of teacher training in instructional supervision was mentioned. The participants had “feelings” and “thoughts” concerning the expectations held for their position as CTL, but no definitive understanding of the path they should follow. Furthermore, the CTLs that participated in the study experienced more collaboration within the curriculum teams than with other CTLs or the school administration. The CTLs were designated as part of the school leadership team; yet felt that they had no input into any decision-making process.

Based on the findings of this study, curriculum team leaders are not familiar with or comfortable with the term instructional supervision. The local school administration could address this issue by clearly delineating the vision and expectations of the curriculum team leaders. The expectations could be taught through a local school

training effort with current CTLs involvement. Since the teachers that work as CTLs can change, the training provided should be revisited regularly to ensure continuity among the CTLs. The training would provide CTLs a baseline for fulfilling their role in providing instructional supervision. As evidenced by this study, CTLs intuitively developed their own job description without explicitly developing instructional supervision practices. The administrative team in middle schools would benefit by assisting the curriculum team leaders to define their roles as CTLs and instructional supervision.

From the perspectives of the participants of this study, curriculum team leaders do not receive administrative support through a collaborative, collegial relationship. The CTLs were designated as part of the school leadership team. Initially, the leadership team was to meet once a month to collaborate on school issues. After just a few meetings this fell apart. The meetings that were held evolved into “sit and get” type of meetings. The CTLs would sit down, get information, and were expected to disseminate the mandates back to the curriculum teams. All of the study participants lamented upon the lack of collaboration between both the CTLs and administration, as well as among the other CTLs. Local schools would serve their CTLs, curriculum teams, and administrators better by creating an avenue for collaboration among the leadership team members. The study participants discussed the desire to collaborate with other CTLs and in an effort to improve their leadership capabilities related to instructional supervision of their curriculum team teachers. The monthly leadership team meetings could be organized to meet that desire. By failing to give the curriculum team leaders a voice or failing to

promote collaboration, the school administration is not utilizing the expertise of its teacher leaders in this setting.

Implications for local systems. The present study did not set out to uncover any implications for local school systems. However, the findings of this study indicate the need for teachers to be supported. The support can be two-fold, involving both the individual middle school and the local school system. Efforts to be more collaborative in schools and to elicit teacher leadership require training. In an effort to increase collaboration, which could lead to better instruction, local systems can provide support for leadership training monetarily and by utilizing the knowledge and experience found in the people of the system.

In summary, curriculum team leaders might have a greater impact if more local school support was provided. The continued instruction and support of teacher leaders in the practices of instructional supervision might be a positive step toward improving instruction and ultimately improving student learning.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of four curriculum team leaders as they provided instructional supervision to teams of teachers. Their role is unique to the middle school learning community model. As a result, the study fills a void in the research literature related to teacher leaders guiding curriculum teams. Studies related to high school department chairs, grade level chairs, and lead teachers are found in the leadership literature, but are different roles from that of middle school curriculum team leader. These CTLs provide instructional supervision to same-subject same-grade

curriculum teams. In particular the study investigated how each participant defined instructional supervision and what the practice of instructional supervision looked like in the middle school. Using a case study design, I presented the middle school curriculum team leaders perspectives as they provided instructional supervision. Data were collected and reported from the CTLs perspective.

As related in Chapter 1, the study was limited to one middle school in northeast Georgia. However, the findings of this study indicated that curriculum team leaders in middle schools lack training to provide instructional supervision and adequate local school support is missing. Teachers that are instructional leaders in middle schools are not studied and represented well in the body of instructional supervision literature. The lack of research on the perspectives of curriculum team leaders in a middle school setting offers opportunities for future research. This study can provide baseline data for future research with a larger number of middle school curriculum team leaders. This study provides a new strand of data when learning communities, teacher leadership, and instructional supervision is examined.

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APPENDIX A: STUDENT STAFF POPULATION DATA

	6 th grade	7 th grade	8 th grade	Total
Number of students by grade level	767	747	787	2301
Gifted	165	179	152	496
Special Education				257
ESOL				67
Monitored ESOL				27
Free Lunch				752
Reduced Lunch				236
Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percentage of Population		
Asian	296	13%		
African American	566	24%		
Hispanic	485	21%		
American Indian	13	.6%		
Multi-Racial	101	4%		
White	864	37%		
Staff				Totals
Certified Faculty				158
6 th				28
7 th grade teachers				28
8 th grade teachers				28
Special Education Teachers				27
Connections Teachers				29
Counselors				3
Additional Support				9

APPENDIX B: KEY RESULTS FROM 2010-2011 LOCAL SCHOOL PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

7th grade results: Seventh graders were required to meet grade-level expectations in four areas of the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). On the state's CRCT the following percentages of 7th grade students met or exceeded standards: 7th Grade: reading, 94.9%; English/language arts 96.5%; and mathematics, 94.1%. The 2010-11 results on the Georgia Middle Grades Writing Assessment/8th Grade Gateway: 8th grade writing, 92% of the students passed the 8th Grade Gateway writing test on the first try; 100% after retests.

Writing continues to be strength for students at Rosewood Middle. Rosewood's 8th graders performed above the county averages. This is of particular significance, because 8th grade students were required to pass this assessment in order to be promoted to the 9th grade. Writing continues to be an instructional focus in all curriculum areas at all grade levels.

2010-11 Results: State Promotion Requirements

Rosie County's middle schools measure student learning of RCPS' Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) curriculum in multiple ways to ensure students are prepared for the next grade. In addition, the state has established promotion requirements for selected grade-levels. The table reflects the percentage of Rosewood Middle students who met grade-level expectations on Georgia's Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) to earn promotion.

Eighth Grade Promotion Tests

Test	Rosewood Middle School	RCPS	State
8 th Grade Reading CRCT	96	95	95
8 th Grade Math CRCT	86	83	74

Schools earn Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status by meeting a series of performance goals that every school system and the state as a whole must achieve under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. In Georgia, AYP for middle schools is determined Reading/English, language arts and mathematics. These tests measure the knowledge and reading/English, language arts and mathematics. These tests measure the knowledge and skills of students by assessing how students have learned the state’s curriculum content standards. To make AYP, middle schools must meet state-set student achievement goals and attendance standards for all students, and for all subgroups that have 40 or more students or 10% of the students in grades 6-8, whichever is greater (with a 75-student cap). In addition, schools must test 95% of all students and of all subgroups with 40 or more students. Georgia reports achievement scores for every minimum number of students in determining a school’s AYP status.

Rosewood Middle School students continue to do well on the CRCT, with percentages of students meeting and exceeding standards above system averages in both reading/English language arts and mathematics. The school made AYP, meeting all the state’s academic goals, testing participation requirements, and attendance standards.

AYP Results

	AYP Categories			
	Math Participation	Math Performance	Reading/ELA Participation	Reading/ELA Participation
All Students	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Asian/Pacific Island	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Black	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Hispanic	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
American Indian/Alaskan	*	*	*	*
White	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Multiracial	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Students with Disabilities	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Limited English Proficient	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved
Economically Disadvantaged	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved

APPENDIX C: FACULTY AND STAFF SUPPORT

Faculty and Staff Support

After-School Care
Rosewood Faculty Advisory Committee Mentor Program
SMILE Steering Committee
Wellness
Social
SMILE Class Participants

Student Support

Eagle Eye Newsletter
Relay for Life Student Club
Public Relations
Relay for Life
School Council
Art Club
Basketball
Beta Club
Book Club
Builders Club
Cheerleading Choral Extra Curricular Activities
Rosewood Chamber Orchestra
Core Care Team
Drama Club Soccer Club
Special Olympics
Spelling Bee
Step Team
Student Council
Technology Managers
Technology Committee
Technology Student Association
Welcome Wings
Writing Center
Advisor/Advisee
AR Council
Student Recognition
Crisis Intervention Team
First Responder Team
Rosie Clean & Beautiful
Peer Mediation
PTA Representatives
Business Partnerships

**APPENDIX D: ROSEWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM TEAM
LEADER PROFILE**

CTL Name _____

Subject area _____

Total number of years in education _____

Work experiences before becoming a teacher _____

Total number years as CTL at Rosewood Middle School _____

Total number of years as teacher at Rosewood Middle School prior to assuming
the CTL position _____

Other leadership experiences at this or other schools _____

Number of years teaching at other schools (in or out of district) _____

Were you a CTL at another school before Rosewood Middle School? _____

If yes, how many years? _____ Highest degree completed _____

Number of full-time teachers in the collaborative curriculum team _____

Number of part-time teachers _____ Special Education teachers _____ Para-pros _____

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Interview One

“Thank you for agreeing to this interview and allowing me to audiotape and video record it for later review.”

(Prompts: “Tell me more. . .,” “Can you elaborate on that. . .,” “Why do you think. . .,” “Why did you state. . .,” “Earlier you stated. . .”)

The researcher will get demographic data in the beginning of the interview (name, years of experience, years at the school, years in the leadership role, etc.)

1. Explain what you believe a professional learning community to be.
2. Explain what you believe instructional supervision to be.

Interview Two

“Thank you for your time and allowing me to audiotape and video record this interview for later review.”

(Prompts: “In our last interview you stated. . .,” “Can you revisit. . .,” “Have you changed your view. . .”)

1. Explain your role as CTL.
2. Are your expectations as CTL clearly communicated to you? What are the top five things you are expected to do?
3. What do you believe teachers think the role of CTL is all about?
4. Explain your supervisory practices.
5. Is there a connection between supervision and high stakes practices?
6. Track your CTL practices in light of the high stakes environment in which you work. What are the top five things you think you should be doing?

Interview Three

“Thank you for your time and allowing me to audiotape and video record this interview for later review.”

(Prompts: “In the past interviews you stated. . .,” “Can you revisit. . .,” “Have you changed your view. . .”)

1. As CTL, what role do you play in instructional supervision?
2. What has helped you most to be successful in the CTL position?
3. What does supervision look like for the teachers in your department?
4. Tell me about your thoughts about instructional supervision and its impact on teachers since we last talked.
5. What obstacles do you face providing instructional supervision for your teachers? How could these obstacles be eliminated?
6. Does the high stakes environment affect supervision? Explain this to me.
7. Elaborate on any supervisory procedures or practices that you have implemented in the past year. What caused you to implement these changes? Were they effective?

APPENDIX F: INITIAL QUESTIONS/REVIEWER COMMENTS

Initial Questions	Reviewer Comments
1. Explain what you believe a professional learning community to be.	Teacher 1: Good questions. They progress nicely. You should get some great data. (This was the comment for all questions.) Teacher 2: Will you give a set of principles that define a learning community?
2. Explain what you believe instructional supervision to be.	Teacher 2: Instructional supervision can be formative and/or summative. Are you thinking that an open-ended question will flesh this out?
3. Explain your role as CTL.	Teacher 2: It is here that I would have them re-address first responses in the first interview.
4. Are your expectations as CTL clearly communicated to you? What are the top five things you are expected to do?	Teacher 2: Introduce expectations and have them rank.
5. What do you believe teachers think the role of CTL is all about?	Teacher 2:
6. Explain your supervisory practices.	Teacher 2: Restate the question. What experience have you had in last year that clearly demonstrate your role as a supervisor/CTL?
7. Is there a connection between supervision and high stakes practices?	Teacher 2: Define high stakes practices prior to asking this question.
8. Track your CTL practices in light of the high stakes environment in which you work. What are the top five things you think you should be doing?	Teacher 2: I like!
9. As CTL, what role do you play in instructional supervision?	Teacher 2: The last time we spoke you defined instructional supervision as. . . could you expand upon this?
10. What has helped you most to be successful in the CTL position?	Teacher 2: What has hindered your success?
11. What does supervision look like for the teachers in your department?	Teacher 2: Shouldn't the teachers provide this information?

Initial Questions	Reviewer Comments
12. Tell me about your thoughts about instructional supervision and its impact on teachers since we last talked.	Teacher 2: Yes! I would go back and look at previous responses. The last time we spoke. . . Can you recreate this answer and spoke. . . Can you recreate this answer and rephrase it for me?
13. What obstacles do you face providing instructional supervision for your teachers? How could these obstacles be eliminated?	Teacher 2: Yes!
14. Does the high stakes environment affect supervision? Explain this to me.	Teacher 2: How does this affect what you do to get teachers to use writing in the classroom?
15. Elaborate on any supervisory procedures or practices that you have implemented in the past year. What caused you to implement these changes? Were they effective?	Teacher 2:
16. Describe the role/job of the CTL, as you have observed it.	Teacher 2: I think these are good questions. They are in line with the interview questions. (This was the feedback given for the rest of the questions.)
17. Describe the working relationship you have with the CTL?	
18. Describe the work of the collaborative curriculum team in which you participate, in particular the CTLs role in that team.	
19. In regards to the Curriculum Team Leaders and curriculum teams, what is your supervisory role?	
20. List the top five things CTLs should be doing.	
21. In narrative form, explain the work/role of the Curriculum Team Leader and your expectations of the teacher in that leadership position.	Teacher 2: Yes, this is good.

APPENDIX G: MAIN STUDY INTERVIEWS

Interview with Paula, seventh grade language arts curriculum team leader

Researcher: *You are the Language Arts CTL for seventh grade?*

Paula: I think that is the only number I didn't fill out and so I've got to do that.

Researcher: *How many, the number of people in your group?*

Paula: Yeah I've got to do that.

Researcher: *Okay well we can go ahead, I'll, I can get that a little later. So you've been CTL for at least two years. And how long have you been at Rosewood?*

Paula: This has been my eleventh year.

Researcher: *Eleventh year and you have been teaching?*

Paula: Eleven years, yeah (laughing)

Researcher: *And so, what we're going to do is I just have a couple of questions for today and that will kind of get us started. The study, you've read about it, is about the perspectives of CTL's and toward instructional supervision. And here at our school well about 5 or 6 years ago we began to change how we did our planning and instruction, and worked on some different ideas first on the communities and what kind of instructional supervision ideas and planning and that sort of thing. And so, one of the things I just wanted to ask as CTL could you explain what the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community are as you understand it?*

Paula: Um, well I think that a Professional Learning Community is where

teachers are engaged together toward I would say a common purpose. There might be a particular focus for the year, maybe it's for the subject area, maybe it's for the grade level area, but you have professionals working together learning from each other coming together, kind of united. And then to me, a Professional Learning Community means that you are not forced into it, that it's, you have teacher buy-in, in the sense that the teachers that want to be involved are involved and if their excited about it then maybe other teachers who might have been on the fence might decide to come in too.

Researcher: *Uh huh, well um as a teacher or CTL did you have training about Professional Learning ideas, or how did you develop that?*

Paula: I mean most of, actually most of my learning about it came through my doctorate program.

Researcher: *Okay*

Paula: Because I feel that like some of the stuff that they tried to do here like I could see what they were trying to do in the beginning, but most of what I understand about it really comes from my doctorate education and the classes that I took.

Researcher: *Okay, Now and you said about the purpose, the joining together as a common purpose, what do you see that purpose as in that professional learning community idea. How do teachers join together, as you said?*

Paula: I think to me most of what I see are two ultimate goals: One is to the best

way to engage students in learning so that they're prepared when they leave our classroom not only for the standardized test which have become such a big concern but also for the next level and for beyond and then I think there become issues within that for instances sometimes if there is a common assessment given or any kind assessment sometimes a professional learning community the teachers coming together might be looking at going back. It's not only going forward but looking backwards like you gave this form of assessment and maybe you think it didn't go over as well, so you may talk to other people to get their input, because if you are just isolated then you're not going to get the input. You know what I mean?

Researcher: *Yeah*

Paula: So it um, so then you can kind of talk it through so to me it's more to have it I should be able to feel free if I'm teaching science I can come up to you, you'll give me time to even just talk me through hey Michael I did this lesson the other day I feel like I fell flat on my face or you gave me this great idea and it didn't work how could I have done it differently? And then I think the other issue that we face is especially as middle school teachers, especially as seventh grade teachers face are classroom management issues, because we all know that once they get to seventh grade we see behaviors that others haven't seen before. So I think that now that we have larger class sizes, like I was engaged with a teacher helping

her how does she do group work now because she's got thirty kids in a class and she felt like she couldn't do it. She wasn't able to come up with maybe eight different stations and so I sat down and problem solved with her and helped her figure out hey this is how you could do it and it did work out and it worked out better. But if we did have that repoire to do that then that might not have happened.

Researcher: *and that comes from that idea of professional learning community that?*

Paula: I hope so I mean I feel like now maybe at Rosewood it is just more I think for those of us who have been here a long time it's like we heard we're going to be a professional learning community where as I think the last three years probably anyone whose come on board it's not like we're saying we're a professional learning community cause we're acting as one. Especially I think I really see seventh grade at this school acting as this when I talk to my colleagues who are in sixth grade or eighth grade for whatever reason it seems that seventh grade I think has embraced the idea more easily than the other grade levels you know so that it is just more natural. You know whereas I think at some of the other grade levels it might be more orchestrated.

Researcher: *Okay, that's a good explanation. In your job as CTL in working with other teachers in some of the capacities you just talked about, uh, that is part of instructional supervision. I just wanted to ask if you could explain what you think instructional supervision is? What is it in your view?*

Paula: As a CTL or just what do I think it is?

Researcher: *Well in general and then how is that you see from a CTL's perspective?*

Paula: Well, I guess okay I, in general to me instructional supervision ideally would be there's a point person that people can go to whether it's in their subject area or not for guidance with instruction. Um, and in ideal world that person's job would be solely dedicated to doing that and so anytime a teacher needed assistance wanted assistance if there is a new teacher to the school or if there is a brand new teacher if there is a teacher whose teaching a subject they haven't taught in a while whatever they would have this person there as a guide. And I think it would be great if this person was in and out of classrooms constantly not a as a spy but as someone who is just around and there to offer input. But once again I think the challenge we have with teaching is that some people feel that their being watched even though they're not. So how do you do this so that, so I think that once again it has to be teacher buy-in, you know? Or this person is available that has set functions that they do but then the rest of us know we can go to them. Like you know we have an instructional

coach here and I know I can go to that person when I'm trying to map out something um maybe larger than I've ever done before.

Researcher: *How do you see it then in your CTL role?*

Paula: To me as a CTL that is the part of the position that I feel like I'm developing it's not like someone said you have to this but I think it's just part of my personality. Like for instance this year in seventh grade Language Arts we have one brand new teacher to teaching and then we have one who hasn't taught seventh grade before. And so I really spent the first nine weeks of the year um, checking in with them just on a weekly basis so that they could feel comfortable talking to me and then if they needed anything they could and I would plan with them if they wanted it I just kind of made it a point like every Friday I had a standing appointment with them just to come in and see how they were doing. But and that was just unique just because I think that was the first time in seventh grade in a long time that we in Language Arts we had had people who were kind of new to what we were doing. And then how I see it was I've been fortunate enough to get to go to different conferences and stuff and so I try to when that happens set aside a meeting time where I will teach what it is that I have learned. Or like when we had the depth of knowledge thing the CTL's had a separate meeting afterwards then I took that and I think that I'm the only one that did, but I could be wrong and I had an additional support session for Language Arts teachers. Because sometimes what I

feel happens is we go to this professional learning in one hour you are taught all this stuff but you don't have time to put it into something. So we basically spent that time just putting into something that hopefully the teachers can go back and use. So I can see my job in that instructional supervision as being taking what it is I've learned or additional classes that I've taken and spreading that knowledge throughout and you know sharing it.

Researcher: *Okay. Very good.*

Paula: and then also to be a person where and I feel that we have this, um and I've experienced it where um I feel that all the teachers in seventh grade Language Arts if they have a concern whether it would be a concern with how they are teaching something; whether it be a concern with something that is happening in their classroom; whether it be a concern with what's happening at school, or how do they handle it. They have all at different times come to me and expressed it which I think is great because I feel that I want to be that vocal voice for them when I am working with administration, not that they can't go to them, but if I know well overall that is how the seventh grade Language Arts feel then so then that's kind of how I see it I don't see it as being superior I just see myself as I can be the liaison I can help and if you have something and I can't help you then my job is to go help you figure it out.

Researcher: *Okay. Well that's pretty good. That's really just the opening, as far as the research those are the two big ideas that we'll be exploring more than instructional supervision as we move forward. So we'll stop there and we'll plan for next time and then we'll go a little bit further and definitely I can give you opportunity to maybe think about it between now and next time.*

Paula: Okay

Researcher: *Thank you*

Paula: Thank you

Second interview with Paula, seventh grade language arts curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *Okay, we are here today with Lisa, Dr. Paula, on April 21st, 2010, the second interview in our process. In our first interview we talked about PLC, Professional Learning Community, and you said that the characteristics you thought of a Professional Learning Community were teachers that were engaged toward a common purpose and working together and learning from each other. With that kind of definition in mind, how would you explain your role as CTL, with that in mind?*

Paula: What I think my role is or I mean, I ?

Researcher: *Um, hmm, your position in light of that definition that you gave.*

Paula: Well I think that my role as the CTL is to act as a liaison basically between administration and the, you know, the subject area teachers. And then it is also hopefully, I don't think that CTL necessarily means that you're the best teacher on the planet I think what it means is that, um, one your able to work well with others, two you're able to get things organized and set up, and that three that you do have strong teaching skills, so that when I go to conferences, or when we have something like certain professional learning here. Then it's my job to either share what I've learn when I get to go, or to extend what we're learning here. So I kind of see it as liaison, extending learning, and then I also see myself, I mean kind of like the den mom. (laughing) of the seventh grade Language Arts teachers.

We have, I think, a very, very good rapport. I mean teachers if they are upset know they can come into my classroom and cry and kick and scream. Which I like that, I mean I think I'm a very open person, and I don't use that as a judgment against them, I want them to be able to feel like if they are frustrated or have hit a dead end. You know, we have such a lonely job, um, that if they need to come and vent, that I can hear that without using, you know, using it against them. You know.

Researcher: *being judgmental.*

Paula: Yeah, I'm not judgmental or (whispering). So I see my role you know kind of as that and then, um, you know just to be a speaker for the seventh grade Language Arts teachers. You know.

Researcher: *To the administration?*

Paula: To anyone. I mean if it's to the administration, like if there is a problem, like or a concern. For example this year when, um, there was a lot of issues with grading and Language Arts is so different from the other subject areas and when um, when we had concerns about homework and things that could be counted as homework and things that couldn't. I basically compiled all of our responses and went in as one unit to the assistant principal to talk and express our concerns, and it's not that I don't think these teachers should express theirs', but I do think that everyone time here is so valuable, that if one person could go and present for everyone then that helps. Or to really sometimes you know teachers have

concerns even though they haven't told you. Then I'm able to on my own swing by and say hey, I know that these are concerns. So, yeah...

Researcher: *Now, um, going in as being CTL, do feel like the expectations for your position as CTL, in your role as CTL have been communicated to you. Did you know those ahead of time going in?*

Paula: Um, no. I don't really feel like we, I have ever been given something formal on a piece paper, saying you know, you're a curriculum team leader and here are the things we expect you to do. Um, you know, I followed someone else's footsteps, so I did what they did and I made sure that I communicated with all other CTL's in my subject area to find out what to do. But, to me, I don't think it's been very clearly defined.

Researcher: *Like you said, it wasn't on a piece of paper...*

Paula: No it wasn't, and no one came, here we want you to be CTL and here are the things you need to do.

Researcher: *Did you have.... You had some expectations, but you think that was from the previous CTL that you had worked with?*

Paula: Yeah, I mean, I think everything that I know about doing for this position came from the person who was previously in my position, and then from the people who do, who had been doing it who were in sixth grade or eighth grade. Like that first year we worked really hard together to make sure that either we were on the same page or that if we knew something

that we should be doing we let the others know. And we worked closely on that.

Researcher: *So, with that in mind from those other teachers. Could you list three to five things that you felt like*

Paula: Yeah, that are my. . .

Researcher: *You were expected to do from their modeling or from your experience?*

Paula: Yeah, I mean, I was expected to, um, conduct meetings, whether they be weekly large group meetings or smaller group meetings; and to have an agenda and to have a plan for these meetings. To attend quarterly meetings with the administration and the curriculum team leaders; to be a liaison between administration and the teachers. And then basically to handle a lot of the administrative duties of the Language Arts department. For instance, if we need Language Arts workbooks, it falls on me. So it's kind of like there's a lot of minutia detail and then there is the bigger end stuff. You know, the larger picture stuff.

Researcher: *Yes, okay. Um. What do you think as far as the teachers, the curriculum teachers that you work with, uh, if you were to ask them what do you think they would say your role is?*

Paula: I mean, I think they see our role as, um, planning our meetings um, and as being a liaison between administration and them, and at being a voice for the teachers to administration.

Researcher: *In thinking about your role there, you've given a couple of examples all ready. Could you give us another example of something that happened that demonstrates how you've worked as CTL with your group?*

Paula: Well I mean, I think.

Researcher: *You gave one example with the grading procedures.*

Paula: Yeah, I do, well, I definitely um, I mean I guess if feel I go above and beyond sometimes. But, um, like this year we had three teachers new to seventh grade Languages Arts, whether they be a new teacher or new to seventh grade Language Arts and so I really made it a point for the first half of the year as I set one of my planning periods aside every Friday to work with them. And some days it was just a quick, hey, how are you doing? What can I help you with? Sometimes it was a lesson-planning thing. But, I really, and once I felt like they were comfortable and on their feet, and it's not like I was, it's not like I was spying on them. It was more, I wanted them to be comfortable, I wanted to help them out as much as I could, and um, you know, give them any answers. And then also, currently, a lot of the teachers, for seventh grade Language Arts are working, for, on their RBES (results based evaluation system) goals. So among the things I did when they had to set their goals is I, basically, wrote, I mean, I think at least five different goals that they could basically pick from and turn into their own. And now what I'm doing is I've already met with three teachers individually to help them, it's not like I'm doing

the work for them, I'm just helping them, listen to them as they are writing it up, and does this sound right, and I'm meeting with another teacher tomorrow. So, you know. . .

Researcher: *And this was outside of your regular curriculum meetings, with?*

Paula: Yes. Outside, yes. This is me taking my planning time exclusively just to work with them.

Researcher: *This was not worked on in the curriculum meetings?*

Paula: No. Well, they were able to work on it in small group meetings cause I think this is one of those things where to try to work on it in a large group is too much. But then if they wanted more support than that then, you know, I told them they could let me know, and the great thing is people took me up on the offer. So, you know. . .

Researcher: *You said small group meetings; explain what that is within your group.*

Paula: Well, as seventh grade Languages Arts meets, every other week as a large group and that, we have one meeting where we're all together, and that meeting is really designed for lesson sharing, um, if I've attended a conference, or I want to extend some professional development, I will teach them something, and then, um, any important Language Arts stuff we have to cover, um, maybe making a common assessment, whatever. And then the small group meetings are every other week where their working with, you know, with maybe three other teachers, or two other teachers so that might be three people in a group or four people in a group.

And that's when they can work on developing lessons. They can work on writing their RBES goals, and I meet with each of those. When they meet I drop by each group just to see, you know, do you need any help, um any input. And also plus I feel like sometimes people, it's hard for people to speak up in a big group, but if you meet, you know, in a smaller group they'll talk. And I then I just feel like it's a good thing for rapport, like the hard thing for me is because I'm like seventh grade is on one hallway, because I teach gifted we're on another hallway. I'm not down here, so I want them to know that I'm accessible you can get me at any time. And so I think it just helps to feel like we're united as a team and I'm not just some figurehead that comes in every other week to talk to them. You know, like. . .

Researcher: *Well, how did that come about, as far as, how did it come about that you decide to do a small group one week and a big group the other week?*

Paula: Well, I had been thinking about it. And you know I've been doing seventh grade Language Arts for eleven years and we haven't always done our meetings this way, but I was thinking about it at the end of last year, what I did was, and I can't remember what questions I had, but I had the Language Arts teachers complete, like, a really quick survey. What went well? What didn't go well? And we also did, we've done some voting on it. So they have input I didn't just exclusively make the decision, and it just seemed from either through their input on surveys, or conversations

we've had that having time to work in smaller group was good, and this group of teachers is phenomenal. I even think if I didn't say you're meeting in a small group they would be doing it anyway. Like, I, they just, they're always sharing, they're always working together. So, you know having one time where you did that and then they really wanted to make sure that at our larger group meetings that people, that if you are working on these smaller groups what lesson idea can you bring and share? So that's kind of where. . .

Researcher: *Kind of thinking about the school in general, what we're doing in our day, you know, we are in the middle of what we call CRCT testing, and uh, it's high stakes testing from the stand point the kids have to pass it.*

Paula: To pass the seventh grade, yeah.

Researcher: *to pass the seventh grade especially. Um. And it seems that we always want to be held accountable by others. In thinking about that, and thinking about the CRCT test and accountability for teachers, and in particular your group, what do see is the connection between instructional supervision and those high stakes tests; the connection between your, I don't know if I want to say supervisory role, as CTL, if you feel comfortable with that?*

Paula: Well I definitely think that when I started here eleven years ago, and I think that's when we we're just beginning with the high stakes testing and I remember really feeling very isolated and on my own. And thankfully

because this was a second career and I had learned to be a go-getter. I just went after people to get their help. But, I, I mean I think maybe we met once a month and it was just not very friendly, I think now um, our job is, I mean I don't believe in teaching to the test, and I don't believe in having the test be the almighty god. But what I do believe is that since we have the tests, and we have access to so much data now that um, my role can be one to insure that we're looking at data and results, and what we can do about that. Two that we're working on an common assessment, or benchmark or something that encompasses everything. But then also, it's calm people down, too. Because I mean, at a certain point, um, people become upset and obsessed with all this, and they lose the light, and we forget that these students have to be prepared for more than just a test. So, I think, you know. . .

Researcher: *And as CTL?*

Paula: I think we're kind of like, whatever that term is for the ship that steers things, we kind of steer things. In other word, we may decide, um, you know, to ask everyone to look at their data and then come back to a meeting and let's all talk about our data and what does it mean. Or we may decide to, um, say to the teachers, okay, let's really make sure we know what's going to be on the CRCT and what are something's we can do to help them get ready for it. So I think, kind of our role is to be aware of the tests our students have to take and then we kind of need make sure that

we're engaging it in our practices, but that it's not the only thing we're talking about. But then also like I said, you know, like, the first benchmark that my teachers had to give was messed up, and it came from the county and a third of the questions did not even, were not even on objectives that our students had to know that nine weeks. So you have no ideas how many e-mails, how many crying teachers I had, I mean it was like. So I had to be on the other end fighting for their voices, calming them down, and also like let's look at reality of this whole situation. So I think, I mean basically to sum it, it's kind of, I feel like I have to really be aware, maybe more so than the teachers themselves, of what are the tests that our students have to take and what do they truly have to know. And then I have to walk the line of making sure we're getting them ready, but also making sure that that's not our only goal and focus, so, you know.

Researcher: *That the teachers are working towards that.*

Paula: No, knowing that this, this is part of what we have to do so how can we make this part of our curriculum and what we do.

Researcher: *Okay, and so just to kind of end up here, in talking about all those practices you do as CTL and with the high stakes testing, uh here in our school, and our county and state, uh, could you give me a top five list of what you should be doing. We talked earlier about expectations from...*

Paula: Of what a CTL should do, period,

Researcher: *That's right, what do you think is?*

Paula: like if I had to write the job description?

Researcher: *That does right what would be the top five things you should do?*

Paula: Um, I mean, one build rapport with uh, all of the teachers, who are, who report to you. I think that's number one. Like you have to have, and I just know this, because I know that this is not the case in this school, with every department. And I think it is really, really important, so build rapport. Two, set purposeful meetings so that when the teachers' come, when you're meeting it's valid, worthwhile, and it addresses the needs. Three, be that voice for the teachers to the administration, like you have to be willing sometimes; I have to be willing sometimes to um, maybe not say the most popular things to administration, but I really feel that I'm their voice, and if I'm not willing to take that risk, then what's the point of me this job. But then also, going hand in hand, when there's an expectation from administration for the teachers, I have to be towing that line too, I may now agree with it, but I have to, that's part of my job, I have to tow that line. So, what did I say, now I said, building rapport, setting purposeful meeting, being that voice.

Researcher: *And if you don't come up with five that's fine.*

Paula: I'm trying to look at my list here. I definitely say, think, staying on the cutting edge of your curriculum area is important, you know I need to be up-to-date on what's going on in Language Arts for middle school, you know, um. And then...

Researcher: *And then sharing that with your teachers.*

Paula: Yeah, sharing that, like knowing about it, sharing that and then, um, maybe that's it. (Laughing)

Researcher: *Maybe so.*

Paula: I guess those are big things that a lot of the little things can fall into.

Researcher: *I understand, all right, very well. One last thing that I did want to ask, you talk about being that liaison to the administration, um, do you, as I understand it, you said, quarterly, does that mean once a month meetings with the.*

Paula: Um, it's been actually more like, one, really once a nine-week period.

Researcher: *And you meet with all the CTLs?*

Paula: Yeah, all the CTL's and administration meets.

Researcher: *Okay.*

Paula: And we have an early morning meeting. But then, I will also, you know, we have an AP that's over Language Arts, so if I have a question or concern, um. . .

Researcher: *Is that your first person to go to?*

Paula: Yes, if I have a question or concern, you know, I like to follow the right chain of command that means I should go to her. And then hopefully she is able to bring that to the principal. It might not even need to go that far. You know, but also, you know, it just helps to have one person to always talk to about that type of stuff.

Researcher: *Okay. Well, thank you for your time today. I appreciate you being open and sharing and we'll plan for next time.*

Paula: Okay, cool.

Third interview with Paula, seventh grade language arts curriculum team leader

Researcher: *Okay we're here with, it's April 30th, with, oh, I'll come up with it in a second, with Dr. Paula who is the seventh grade Language Arts CTL. And this is our third interview. And previously when we talked I asked you to define instructional supervision and you described it as being a guide to teachers that need assistance in anyway and spreading or sharing knowledge to teachers so they can use it. And I just wanted to know did you want to add anything to that or do you think that covers your view of instructional supervision.*

Paula: I think it does, yeah.

Researcher: *Um, you also, we'd talked earlier about you said you were kind of the liaison between the administrators and the teachers, and um the organizer of the group as the curriculum team leader, uh would you more closely relate to the word instructional supervisor or leader? Like your title?*

Paula: Oh, wow, that's a good question, um I think maybe instructional leader only because it's not, um, yeah, I think it's more instructional leader, than, in my brain instructional supervisor would have me really dedicated, that's what I'm doing. I'm not a teacher, I'm focused, you know I'm focused on curriculum and I'm there, you know, maybe working a lot more closely with teachers on a more regular basis. Like actually being in their classrooms and stuff like that and helping them. Whereas to me

instructional leaders means more because of my experience, because of what I have learned and what I have accomplished, um, if you're doing anything with Language Arts I am a good resource. Because chances are I've seen it, I've done it, I know about it, I can figure out about it, etc. If that makes sense?

Researcher: *Yeah, it does. Well in your, as the curriculum team leader, which CTL means, um what do you think helped you to be most successful in fulfilling that job?*

Paula: Um, I think two things. One I think that both the assistant principals that have been over Language Arts the last year and the assistant principal um, I feel like they both had a strong faith and belief in me. And so that let me comfortable to just come in and do what I needed to do. I didn't feel like I had to prove myself. Um and then also I think it's part of its my personality. I think that I am naturally, um, well when they do the colors here at school, like I'm a orange and I'm a blue, so blue means that I really care about other people I want to help people succeed. So I think that because of that I, um, I just think it helps me be successful when comes in, at relationships where you have to work with others, but lead them at the same time.

Researcher: *Okay, I understand. Well is there anything that you think is hindered you in anyway, from doing what you do in your CTL job? Outside forces or anything in that way?*

Paula: Um, I think a thing that probably hinders, would be the fact that I personally don't believe that there is always a clear goal from administration of what they expect from us. And because of that, I mean I do what I believe is right and best. But I just, I think there's just not a clear I think vision, and I think that it changes. Sometimes there's a vision that we act this way, then there's a vision that we act that way. So, you know, I think if anything, it's just sometimes the communication from the administration to us is not always good. Is not always described.

Researcher: *To the CTLs?*

Paula: Yeah, you know, it just is, you know, this has not been the most accessible administration for me to work with.

Researcher: *Um hum. Well, we had a different administrator, was it four years ago?*

Paula: Um hum.

Researcher: *We've had this same one for, I think it's four years now.*

Paula: Well, yeah, I mean it starts with the principal, but also with the assistant principals, I just think there's, you know, and I don't know what the reasons why are. There's probably a lot of them.

Researcher: *Okay. Well since being CTL and working with the teachers can you point to a positive impact that the group has had on teacher instruction that you've seen? What are some positive things that you've seen?*

Paula: Yeah, I definitely feel that we collaborate more. I see a lot more collaboration, and a willingness to collaborate. And I can only speak for my subject area. But, actually I think seventh grade as a whole um, does this really well. But there's a lot more collaboration I think on any given day during a planning time where there's not a mandatory meeting, you can go by a teacher's classroom and I think at least fifty percent of the time whether it's a date that's mandated for it or not you will see teachers planning. And um, there's, there's just seems to be more of a willingness of sharing ideas, and let me teach you how we did this, and/or how did you do that, and stuff like that. So I think that that is just huge. And since I started here that is a huge, huge change. Cause I felt like when I first came here there was not a willingness to share. Then Of course this was eleven years ago, but there was not a willingness to share, there was very few meetings, and most of the meetings were just boom, boom, boom, boom here's a checklist and do this. Whereas now, to me I think there great, because people are sharing lessons, people are sharing ideas, people are expressing concerns, um and you have a small group that you can go to so if you're a shy person or you're new and it's hard for you to reach out to people. You know this is a small group that you can talk to and you're going to be meeting at least every other week.

Researcher: *So you think that collaboration grew out of the curriculum team, has spilled that over?*

Paula: I think it did. Yeah, I really, really feel like it did. Cause I've been here a long time. And I have seen, and there have always been, you know, meetings for your subject area and grade area, but not like they are now. And I do remember, when I first started here, I can remember crying because I came from the business world and I was use to people talking to one another. And people didn't and I felt so alone, and so isolated, and it, but because it wasn't, I wasn't like a twenty-two year old I had a lot more confidence. And I just finally kept knocking on doors until someone would share something with me. But you know, it was really tough, and it's not like that now. But, I will not say it is not like that throughout this building, I am very quick to say I think that seventh grade is probably the best grade at doing this.

Researcher: *Okay, well that's very good. Um, well would you say there's been any negative impact on teacher instruction as it related to the curriculum team or what you do?*

Paula: I think the only negative impact could be the, um, if sometimes what I've seen, and I don't really consider this a negative impact, teachers feeling frustrated. Uh, you get like benchmark scores back and it's hard not to compare yourself to others, and like I said, I don't really see that as a negative impact, but that's probably the most negative thing. So

sometimes I've seen teachers get really down on themselves, and I've had to go in and talk to them individually and say look you're doing a great job here's are the reasons why this might have happened, so that to me is a, I mean, so it's just that I think sometimes because we're doing so much sharing um its hard at times not to feel, if something, if a lesson didn't go well in your class. Like I collaborated like a month ago with two other teachers, the lesson bombed, bombed. I was like, what on Earth. But luckily I stopped half way through, went down and said you need to take me through step by step. But you do feel like what's wrong with me? Why can't I do this? Or if your benchmarks come back and the person next door to you scores are better. So I think, like I said I don't think that's a negative thing. I just, but. . .

Researcher: *It's the nature of the job.*

Paula: Exactly, exactly. Once, when you open yourself up to sharing that means that it's not always going to feel good. You're going to maybe learn that someone else taught that lesson better than you. Or that when someone else did a novel their idea, maybe went over better, or maybe their tests scores are better than yours. So that's also a hard thing too.

Researcher: *Yeah, um, well kind of shifting gears. When you hear, we hear lots of talking about high stakes testing and teacher accountability, and student accountability what comes to your mind when you hear high stakes testing and accountability?*

Paula: Uh (laughing). I think the downfall of education. Uh, I am very concerned that the push with high stakes testing, I mean, I think we have to look at them differently but hand in hand. The concern for the student side on high stakes testing is, um, setting them up I think for a world where there will be a multiple-choice test at the end of this and you must do well on this. Um, like almost robotic, and um, when you tie that then into teacher accountability; what I'm concerned that will happen, and it hasn't happened here, but we know it has happened other places, is that teachers will get so concerned with doing well, because people want to do well, that's just human nature, that, um they may not choose to teach critical thinking problem solving lessons or they may spend more time on preparing for tests instead of letting students explore more. And then the other thing becomes, you know, being judged by that, and I think that as a teacher we know that's its more than just your test score and a student is not just a test score. So I think I am very, very concerned. And I get concerned when I hear parents or friends of mine say, oh well this school has a blah, blah, blah, ranking and we know that there's more to the picture than that. So that is my only concern with that is I think it is very stressful for the kids. I think it's very stressful for the teachers. I don't think we're sharing a whole picture, and like if a new teacher starts in this type of thing will they become a more rounded teacher, or will they know, okay we give a test every April, starting in February I must teach to the

test. You know what I'm saying, like will they take a risk of trying a lesson even though it doesn't look like it could help for the test, but in the long run it could really be great thing for the kids. So I worry that we have forgotten about the students, and the most important thing has been left out of the puzzle. What is best for the students? I don't think we have thought about that. (Laughing)

Researcher: *And the test has taken that over, hasn't it?*

Paula: And also, I think in the era of high stakes testing with a subject like Language Arts, it was around teaching reading, writing, grammar, um, vocabulary, etc. research skills, a multiple-choice tests does not accurately show their Language Arts abilities, and so it is just one piece of the puzzle. So I do get frustrated when we have created high stakes tests that only show us part of the puzzle yet put pressure on people that this is the whole thing.

Researcher: *Well, how would you say that impacts your work as CTL? How does that affect you in your leadership role?*

Paula: Um, that's a good question. I think how that affects me is I really am probably, I'm very involved in the small groups and wanting to make sure that the teachers are aware of their scope and sequence. Um, because when I first started here there was no accountability for that. So I can remember being handed ninety-six Language Arts objectives, here get this done, this done, sometime this year. And that was like, oh my gosh, how do I do that.

And because I'm a perfectionist, I went; I got to do each one. Of course there were teachers in the building who are like, well I never get to this one, so who cares. So I think how it has changed for me is one; making sure everyone is aware of the scope and sequence, these are the AKS's and let's make sure we touch it. But I think, what it has also done, is saying this is the level at which we need to be at this, because I think that was the other thing is. To what level do they have to understand compound sentence structure, do they just have to identify it or do they have to also write it? So it has changed in making sure that um, the teachers fully understand what the students need to know, not only for the test, but what are our county objectives, so that their lessons reflect that.

Researcher: *Um hum, okay. Um, kind of going back to something that we talked about earlier, um with expectations from administration, and that sort of thing. What type of guidance or direction would you say you've received from the administrative team? I know that you have some monthly CTL meetings with the administrative team, the AP's and the principal. What would you say that you get from those?*

Paula: I mean, I hate to say this, very little. I'm very, very disappointed. I'm just, um we have, I think maybe we've met three times this year; um it's very little. Um, any guidance I get is based on me going into someone, saying I need assistance here, or what are your expectations for me? Um, and I

would be curious to know if that's how it's supposed to be, maybe the other, maybe that is how it's supposed to be. So, um. . .

Researcher: *How is it? You mean how it's supposed to be between the CTL's or in the framework that we're working with?*

Paula: Exactly. Expectations. I don't really feel like I know. Is administration expectation basically like, hey, you know, run these meetings each week. You know, maybe I'm frustrated but there's really no reason to be. I will say this the assistant principal who was over Language Arts last year, was somewhat a little more accessible, and that did. And I really felt at times, I just felt more of a partnership there, um, and I felt like seventh grade got attention, and I really feel this year that seventh grade Language Arts has gotten very little attention. And it is due to the inaccessibility of the AP. I think they have been very accessible to sixth grade and maybe eighth grade, I'm not really sure, but not to our grade level. And that has been very frustrating to me. Um, so you know, at times because I'm a touchy feely person, I don't really feel like they care about us, or they care about what we're doing, or our impact, or what we could do, and you know, and I feel like we are off on our own. And I don't, I mean, I don't want to be micromanaged I don't think that that's good. But I am such a collaborator, that I just, to me I would have no problem even if it was just once a month be in that AP meeting just to touch base. But I feel like anything like that I have to initiate, I have to make sure it happens, and you know, I guess it

does, like I said, ultimately for me I just don't feel like what I do really matters. Maybe it matters to the teachers, but I really don't feel like the administration cares.

Researcher: *So you feel like there's good collaboration between you and your curriculum team?*

Paula: Right.

Researcher: *but you don't feel that same thing, I say above, but between the administrative team and the CTL's.*

Paula: No, not at all. I mean, like I said, another CTL may have a different experience; if so I hope they can show me, what, maybe I'm doing something wrong, which I will be happy to change, um, but yeah, so.

Researcher: *Well what do you see as the purpose of those, when you say you're supposed to have monthly CTL, administrative meetings?*

Paula: To me I thought the purpose, to me the purpose of the meetings would be a chance, would be a forum, for the CTL's to share concerns of their curriculum area, and then find ways as curriculum leaders that maybe we could work together. And that has not been my experience. They have basically, our meetings were: you sit down, you were told things, and that's it. And if there is a chance to talk, um, your, there's just no, there's no room for you to say anything, unless you're like, wow thank you for putting blank item on the agenda. So, it's, it's really disappointing to me.

Researcher: *So, so you just kind of sit and get. . .*

Paula: Sit and get, and we're not really being taught anything. You know, it's not even something like that, so, I mean it makes me wonder what is administrations view of what they want us to do. Because it doesn't, I mean, if they have a different view? I'm just curious, like I said, if I have something, I will fight for anything that the seventh grade Language Arts teachers need, I will fight for it. And so if there is something I need to bring to their attention, I will do that, but I don't think that any, at least this year, and I don't remember last year, because last year was last year, I don't recall one time the principal coming down and saying anything to me. Not thanking me; not asking me how was seventh grade Language Arts going, and I don't really feel like the AP over it has either. So, now maybe I want something that I shouldn't be getting.

Researcher: *Well, it's like I say, it's your perspective, and that's how you see it.*

Paula: Yeah, it won't stop me from doing it, because I do feel like I'm qualified, I'm doing a good job, and I'm here.

Researcher: *You feel like that's working, your group is working.*

Paula: I feel like my group is working really well. And I really care about them and I want them to be successful. And I do feel that I'm bringing the right leadership to it. So as long as I feel like I'm doing that, I'm happy to stay in that position; even if that means that I don't feel that administration really cares.

Researcher: *I understand, okay. Now just, just one last thing, kind of going back, is there anything that uh, any practices or procedures that you, say, implemented in the last year or so with your curriculum team that, uh, you see made a difference, or worked, or anything?*

Paula: Yeah, I mean I think one of the things that we made a change from last year is um, I think every other week we essentially meet as a small group. And I think what I did this year, and it wasn't because I didn't want them to feel like big brother was watching them or this or that, but um, this year I assigned the groups, I set when they were meeting, and what I added to that, is I drop in on all the groups. And I didn't want them to do that to, I wasn't, I'm not spying on them. Honestly I wanted to be more accessible to them, and I felt like if I'm in your meeting every other week, even though I'm only there for fifteen minutes, I'm here and you can ask me things. And I really think that that has a made a huge, huge, difference. I mean, uh....

Researcher: *In what respect?*

Paula: I think that um, more of them have been able to come to me if they've needed anything. Um, I think the sharing has been open, and I think that I have been able to help them more. Because I'm right there while their meeting, and it's like okay. You know what I mean?

Researcher: *Um hum,*

Paula: So I think that that has been just a really, probably the best change that I made. Cause what I was doing the year before was I let people pick their groups and it was iffy on when they were meeting and how, and this and that. And I think this year I came in more like, hey this is what we're doing. I feel like I came in more as a leader with expectation, and setting things, and so um, I just think that has really, really worked. And then I also think that, um, our meetings maybe not are, like the most laughter meeting, but I feel that we're very, um, I think we get a lot done when we meet as a whole group. I work really hard to stick to an agenda, um and to make sure that any, um, negativity is something that I might go visit, with, I might say hey I'll come and talk to you about that individually, but that our meeting stay focused. And I think because of that that there's a good feeling too, because I think um, when the meetings don't stay focused, when they don't stay on track.

Researcher: *When you say a good feeling, people feel like their time is used wisely?*

Paula: Exactly, exactly, I mean I understand that people need to complain and there might be a time, I'm like good, take five minutes, let's get this out of our system and let's move on. But, I'm, you know, I'm a very strong personality, so I'm just like hey, you know, we had an example in our meeting yesterday, where people, you know, there's always like, oh uh, are the sixth grade teachers really doing their job? And I'm like; we are not even going there, I said as educators we need to be here to support one

another. And so, it's not that I don't want to hear from people, but there's difference between I have a legitimate complaint and concern and a griping session. And griping sessions are good to do a couple of people in one room, but you know, you get a whole group of people in there and you lose track of focus. So I really think two things that I've really tried to stick to, and the only thing I feel bad about is I feel like although I'm a touchy feely person, our meetings have lost some touchy "felines"; is that we come in, we have an agenda, we stick to it. I'm not saying we always get out early, but we accomplish a lot and blah, blah, blah; so, probably if there's a complaint, it'll be like, she doesn't know when my birthday is and I did this, like that. I don't spend time on, I'm like okay, and next year maybe I'll have a time for how to celebrate people. So I feel that, you know, well it's like, you know, you want to do the best job that you can. I'm sure I have a lot to improve on. (Laughing)

Researcher: *Well that sounds good, okay; well we've kind of come to the end now.*

Paula: Okay

First interview with Joe, sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *We are here today on April 15, 2010 with Joe. And you are the sixth grade social studies CTL.*

Joe: Yes, that's correct.

Researcher: *All right and um, you've been teaching for thirteen years, how many here at uh*

Joe: Five years here at Rosewood, and nine years, nine to ten years now, ten years now in Rosewood County Schools.

Researcher: *Okay*

Joe: And two and a half to three years in Japan. Teaching English, but that was with a business.

Researcher: *Okay*

Joe: Not necessarily for a school system.

Researcher: *All right, and um, you've been CTL for two years here at Rosewood. All right, um, now then, a few years ago, so you've been here five years right? About five years ago we uh, looked at how we delivered instruction and how we did planning and everything with, uh, professional learning communities. Were you here when we started that?*

Joe: Uh, there was some talk about that I think in that fifth year or so. Yeah.

Researcher: *With that in mind um, what do you see the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community? What do you see uh, as the big idea*

about that?

Joe: I think it is just communication. You know. I think uh to have teachers able to talk and communicate. The principal says it right all the time. If teachers are talking about learning then learning going to take place and that learning's going to take place and better teaching is going to take place. And so for me a Professional Learning Community is just relying on your neighbors, your team mates; talking, discussing what ideas work, what ideas don't. Uh, how to make classroom behavior or academics better. Um, all those things just basically, are opening up a forum for communication to take place. You know and I think this year putting the academies by grade level, um, has, has done wonders for that. And it will be interesting I think next year with eight grade if they're going to put them all the language arts teachers on the same hall, math teachers, I think that will be an added benefit too, possibly.

Researcher: *And because before when we started talking about Professional Learning Communities and um the sharing and the we were in separate communities with sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, and, uh, that might be a difference there.*

Joe: and I also you know I have been in at a school before that had the communities broken up by grade level and it didn't work. I didn't like it. Part of that was that it was a title 1 school so there were other issues involved. And just uh, the main obstacle was the layout of the school. To

get sixth graders to connections you had to go through the seventh and eighth grade halls. It was on the other side, and you know I didn't like it so I was very leery of the change this year, but I was wrong it has worked out wonderful.

Researcher: *Well, good. Um, Well in thinking about what you do as a CTL and what you've learned over the past few years here at our school. Um, what do you believe instructional supervision to be? What is it, if you had to define it?*

Joe: Well, I mean here at Rosewood it tends to be, or at least in sixth grade social studies, um, the two words that stand out is messenger and organizer. And uh, the messenger is just relaying information, uh, from my teachers to the administration, from the administration to the teachers. Whether it is like a year ago when we started the new lesson plan format. That was put on CTL's. Uh that was put on the CTL's to relay that message to explain how it kind of works and to really sell it. Uh, to, um to sell it to the teachers that is something that is going to help us. And then an organizer I mean, that's on a couple of different levels, one you have to organize the meetings and um, you need to be someone who can run the meetings and not let them run too long whether it be one topic or not. And kind of organize your teachers in a way to make sure their on scope and sequence and uh, that a big thing especially with the benchmarks that the county are putting out now you've got make sure, sometimes you have to

prod and push to get them to move a little bit faster. And, I don't know if that's ideally what the purpose of it is suppose be? I mean that's part of the job, um, I guess ideally to me, I would think you'd maybe have the best possible social studies teacher there is in that position. Uh, I know most of the teachers, all the teachers that I work with have been, I'd say all but one, have been in social studies a long time. So they know the AKS, they know the curriculum. Um, I think you'd ideally want somebody who is that expert teacher. You know that anybody could go to if they needed help, or needed new ideas. Um, if they needed a lesson for a certain standard, but that's not always the case, a lot of the CTL's are there are a few that have haven't been teaching very long. We have some fairly young CTL's and some that have only been in that grade level or subject for a few years.

Researcher: *And that is part of what you see in instructional supervision is being those things?*

Joe: Yeah, they have the personality, and that's the biggest thing, um, I don't know if this is off topic or not, but the biggest thing I think with a CTL and with any leader is the personality. You know we've had CTL's in the past for social studies and they were the great teacher, they knew everything in and out and they had wonderful lessons, but their personality was a little rough the edges. People couldn't stand to go into their room and then have that personality. And there were time when people were

walking out of the room crying. And not, the CTL wasn't very flexible at all, um, and just wanted to almost be like a dictator up there. So, I think the whole reason why I was chosen for CTL is because, you know, I have a pretty easygoing personality and uh, I don't rub people the wrong way. And uh, I get along with everybody and I think maybe that played a part in why I was asked to become CTL. And um,

Researcher: *And you think that being an asset as far as being an instructional supervisor.*

Joe: Yeah, I think with any leadership position now a days, any leadership position you have to be able to be flexible, you have to be able to admit that you're wrong, you have to be able to admit that if the whole, especially with collaboration, you have to be able to collaborate which is to listen to both sides of the story, and if the group chooses to not go your way you've got to be able to swallow and take that. You know.

Researcher: *Yeah, Um, and we'll get more into those things in our future interviews, but uh, I appreciate your input today and uh, we'll stop now and plan on our next meeting.*

Joe: Great.

Researcher: *Thank you.*

Second interview with Joe, sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *All right, we're here April 22, 2010, with Joe. He's the sixth grade CTL here at the school. Last time, Chris, we talked about characteristics of a PLC and one of the things that you said was the main stay of that you felt was simply communication. You said it was talking with teachers and discussing ideas that work or don't work. In light of that definition how would you explain your role as CTL?*

Joe: Uh, well you know, um, my role today as a CTL again is just an organizer, and I think I said that last time, organizer and communicator. You know you're not up on a high pedestal you're just one of the team. You know, you're just kind of like the organizer of the team. The team comes in once a week for your meetings or their, or a teammate comes for help you do what you can. I don't think it's anything overly special you know, um, you're not up on a throne or anything like. You're just an organizer of information, and you're just a team member just like the rest of them. That's how I take it.

Researcher: *And so, as curriculum team leader you take it more as the leader of the leader of the group, necessarily maybe not a supervisor. Is that what you?*

Joe: Yeah, I mean. I'm just. . . you know a. . . I think that's part of my personality I can look at both sides of the story; I can, you know, if I'm wrong I'm willing to admit it. So I'm not like the coach of a team, or the

general. I'm just an team leader that's just trying to guide us through our meetings and guide us through whatever, adversity, or decisions need to be made, or whatever going on.

Researcher: *Okay*

Joe: But, I take it as, you know, and I've been in meetings before where, um, the person in charge their vote counted more than everybody else, but that's not how I take it. If the group wants to go in one direction and I don't, then I'm going with the group.

Researcher: *And, uh, so as CTL in that leadership role there working with your colleagues, um, and as CT. Were your expectations for CTL clearly communicated to you when you took the position?*

Joe: It's been about three years, so, you know, I'm trying to remember back. You know, the meeting when I was asked to be CTL, it wasn't a long drawn out meeting; it was a short little meeting. The explanation why they, why I was chosen and why they needed me was given. And then, you know, the expectation of what you were going to do was pretty simple. It was one or two little things: you need to go to certain meetings, you need to communicate the information from the administrative team to the teachers, you need to organize the meetings, you need to organize some of the things. At the time we were making our own benchmarks we weren't getting them from the county. You know, delegate some issues when things arise, so delegate things. And so that's how it was given to me, that

it wasn't going to take too much of your time or it wouldn't be a big stressful thing. So it was pretty simple it was a simple little meeting it wasn't but ten or fifteen minutes.

Researcher: *And you said there was an explanation offered for why you were chosen, did that hold any insight as to what the CTL position required?*

Joe: Um, yeah, I mean, and I've said like twice, I think already, it's my personality. I think is the reason why. I mean, the group, I was a member of the group for a year or two before, and uh, you know, the meetings were a little rough. People weren't. . . nobody's ever superbly excited to come to curriculum meetings, but before they definitely weren't, you know, feathers were kind of ruffled at times. It seemed more like a dictatorship than a democracy.

Researcher: *Okay.*

Joe: And Uh

Researcher: *So that communication facto. . .*

Joe: Yeah

Researcher: *You think was not a part of that prior to you?*

Joe: And that's just how that lady, you know, that's how that person worked. You know, that's how she ran her classroom and teachers are coming into the classroom, so she thought she needed to teach them something. And she, you know, if you're picking somebody strictly knowledge of curriculum and years taught, then she's the person, you know why she was

picked. But it just ruffled feathers, you know, you had other people who had ten, fifteen years of teaching experience and who have been doing the same thing and they just felt a little put out by being told what to do, instead of, you know, that collaboration aspect.

Researcher: *So would you say being part of the team as a regular teacher prior to becoming CTL. . . did that give you insight? Even though the expectations were given to you in a small way and not specific, did that influence you any? Being on the team before?*

Joe: Well, yeah a little. But then again, you know, I'm not going to try to be somebody that I'm not. And you know, probably, if you ask my administrator she'd probably would wish that I was a little more assertive or maybe a little more organized at times, but, uh, it's kind of like a open range, when we have our meetings, anybody can talk. You know, I'll guide them and say okay we need to end this kind of conversation now and move on to the next topic. I'll push them that way, but I'm a little "loosy goosy" in the way the things are run sometimes. So I'm sure, you know, my administrator would want me to change a little bit and be more rigid, but that's just the way it is. You're not going to get. . . uh. . . you're going to get what you see, kind of.

Researcher: *Okay. Um, well if you asked your teachers, your fellow teachers that you*

work with that are a part of your curriculum team, if you asked them what they thought the role of CTL is, not necessarily, um, just in general. What would they say the role of CTL is?

Joe: Well, you know, I think it depends. If you have, we have one teacher that is first year, social studies, and we've worked together and helped out you know, uh, she might say, you know, to provide lesson plans and experience and you know ideas to the group. Um, I think that most of them have taught for a long time, social studies and sixth grade. So, I think probably that messenger of bad news, they would say, but probably the go-between between administration. You know, probably the number one thing they'd probably say. You know, the guy who brings the news down to them.

Researcher: *And you see that as a big part of it also, of your CTL position that you said, communicating between administration and teachers?*

Joe: Yeah, uh, I try, that's yeah I think that's a big thing. You know we go to the meetings once a month or we get e-mails or I talk with the administrator that's in charge of social studies, that's Ms. Harris.

Researcher: *Now the meetings you're talking about?*

Joe: The CTL meetings.

Researcher: *That's CTLs from all over the school?*

Joe: All over the school.

Researcher: *All grade levels?*

Joe: To meet with the administrative team once, once a month usually. In the summer we meet also and come up with ideas or the administrative team tells us some to their ideas. Sometimes we're asked to go back and get feedback from the teachers. And sometimes we're asked to explain why this decision was made, because teachers don't always have the full scope of information. You know, even I, you know, until I get into a CTL meeting I wonder why did the administration decide to do this. Well they kind of explain that to us in those administrative meetings. And so we can go back and tell the teachers why. And so, yeah, that happens I mean every time we have a CTL meeting or I meet with Ms. Harris there are always a couple of things I need to bring back to the group.

Researcher: *In thinking about your job, in say the past year, if you had to tell me about one event that depicts a typical activity that you would do as being CTL. What would that be? Could you tell me about something that you've done that is a normal occurrence as CTL?*

Joe: Well, y k, the last two, two and half years, uh sixth grade social studies pretty much has been on its own. I know last year all the different curriculums have gotten their benchmarks from the county and this year, well, y k, at the beginning of the year we did, but social studies have always made their own benchmarks.

Researcher: *And why is that?*

Joe: uh, well they changed the curriculum twice in the last three years. You

know, even the books don't necessarily align with the state of Georgia curriculum anymore in fact the books we had three years ago that they got rid of were better than the new ones we have. So, you know, so a lot of stuff has gone on collaborative wise for those benchmarks, for those lessons. And the benchmarks take quite a bit of time, so, one of the things we've done in the past, and is uh, you know, we've had to go over the topics, the AKS, the standards, the state standards, and when making a benchmark, what were we suppose to cover for this nine weeks. And we constantly do that almost every meeting, but at the end of the nine weeks go over it and, uh, come up with questions. We divvy up two teachers, we'll put groups of two or three; give them a set of standards; say come back next with the questions. And we pile all of the questions in. A lot of times they'll e-mail them to me or something and we'll pile those in and then we'll go ahead and look and preview the benchmark; look at it. Because something's, natural features, physical features, you know, there's some linguistic language that is different just from teacher to teacher, and we try to standardize all that, you know, and uh, figure out, check all the answers because teachers don't always make the best test. But when we get in here and we look at it we find mistakes and things and go over it. Debate a little bit about, cause you can only have so many questions, and we always make too many. So then we debate the importance. So just coming together, working as a group, collaborating,

um, to make those benchmarks has been something that for the last two years we've done, you know, almost every nine weeks. And this year's kind of fortunate cause we go back and look at nine weeks at curriculum and the scope and sequence changed, so, but we still have those tests from before. So we can go and look and say oh, our kids really didn't do well on that question last year, well how can we change it. Is it the question? I think the question is a little wrong, let's try to change that up or there's two answers that seem very similar or can we still catch mistakes that maybe we didn't catch last year too. So just work on those benchmarks as a group, that's the thing that sticks out the most to me.

Researcher: *Um, hmm. This week we've been taking CRCT and as you know that's our state accountability standard, I guess that's our high stakes test, and so when you think about the accountability issues that schools have and the high stakes testing that we have, um, what do you see as the connection between the instructional supervision you provide and those high stakes tests?*

Joe: Well the last two years we've been lucky, cause social studies hasn't been part of that. We haven't gotten any of those test results back. Not, the schools haven't the counties haven't, you know, the state has kept all that, because their working on field test for social studies. This year is a little different we're supposed to get those back even though the scores don't count for, I believe, seventh or sixth grade, or any promotion it's not going

to count. But, you know, when I think of the benchmark test that county's been doing and you put that information into a county database where everybody can see it. And all schools can see can see how other schools have done and the administrators here can see how they compare, how Rosewood compares to other schools. Even see how teachers compare to each other. The one thing that's hit me this year, because this is the first year we've put ours in that data base, as being the CTL, the thing that kind of scared me a little bit, the thing that worries me or got me a little anxious was making sure that all the teachers were on scope and sequence. You know, keeping all the teachers working at the pace that they need to work at. And we've been talking about this for, since last year, cause we knew it was coming we knew that this year we were going to have the benchmarks from county, which they changed, but you know, the first nine weeks we had them. We knew that they were going to go into the data base for the first time and so it just worried me about the scope and sequence because I could sit there and every week and go over what we're supposed to be teaching that week and go over the AKS, but, uh I can't push, I can't be in the classroom with those teachers. And they don't want to tell me exactly where their at, but I have a, you know, gut feeling okay this persons maybe a week behind or this person's maybe two weeks behind and that's where you have to be a little bit, you know, I have to come out of my shell of being a mister nice guy and say hey you need to you need to really try

to catch there. What are you doing right now well you should spend a day on that not two days or you can spend two days on that not the whole week. So I was just worried for my team, for my group, I want us to perform at the highest level and to do that they need to stay on scope and sequence. And so that's the biggest thing if you're asking about the standardized test, you're asking about the CRCT. I need to make sure that one: that all these teachers are on the scope and sequence and that they are teaching the standards that they need to be teaching. But for me the biggest thing the last for a while is the scope and sequence, because you have teachers have been teaching sixth grade social studies for fifteen, twenty years and their use to doing things their way. And. . .

Researcher: *And you said it had changed a little bit.*

Joe: And it's changed twice. We use to do the Renaissance I remember two years ago they took away the Renaissance one teacher said well I'm still doing the Renaissance, I'm still going to spend a week talking about the Renaissance or talking about the Middle Ages and they've taken all that away. So you have teachers who go in their cabinet and they have their little projects that they've always done. And that's fine you can go and teach that stuff, but we tell them you teach that stuff after you, you know, in your spare time, after you've gone over those AKS, after you've gone over those standards. You know, but that's the hardest part, and that's part that, when we talk about CRCT's and standardized test, the main part is,

the biggest is just keeping them, my biggest job is to keep them on scope and sequence.

Researcher: *Um, hmm, that sounds definitely true. Uh, it is interesting, so without the CRCT do you use that, did you use the benchmark database, or it was, it was taken away though? I didn't know.*

Joe: Yeah, for the first nine weeks. We had it first nine weeks.

Researcher: *and then you made your own, after that*

Joe: and then we made our own

Researcher: *but you still entered them?*

Joe: No, they didn't go. So. And part of me, really, I didn't like that and I wished it would have worked out and I know the benchmark. . .

Researcher: *Why is that, you think? Why is it that you didn't like that?*

Joe: Well, the main, because you know I had that issue with making sure that people were keeping on scope and sequence. And the problem is you know my team is made up of some special ed. teachers, teachers who teach the ESOL team, the collaborative team, two or three regular ed. teams and two Probe teams. When the ESOL teachers comes and says my kids don't know anything I need to spend extra time on this or they didn't do well on this test I had to go back and re-teach it. I can totally understand that. You know I'm lucky I don't have the ESOL team or the special ed. The collaborative team or I'm not the special ed. teacher. You

know, I guess, and uh, but when it came that benchmark, that first nine weeks, and some of the teachers were a little behind and they had to take that benchmark, and it had to go into the county data base. I thought that they learned their lesson, so to speak. I thought they were with me, they realized, okay I need to be faster. So I was looking forward to the next benchmark in December, and the next benchmark in March. Cause I thought, okay I'm not going to have to stay on them now; I'm not going to have to, you know, go out and prod them with a cattle prod. (Laughing) But then when the county came out and said they didn't like the benchmarks, and their redoing everything, and we're going to have make our own. Well then it was back to how it was the last two years. Well, oh we kind of go at our own pace now, as long as we get done before the CRCT's and you know. I want to spend extra time and go back and do those projects. So that was a little, I thought trained after the first nine weeks. (Laughing) and so. . .

Researcher: *But you had to keep that up?*

Joe: Yeah, you know.

Researcher: *Okay, uh, so looking back at all those things we've talked about and what teachers think the role of CTL is and what your expectations of you were when you started. Uh, when you track those practices that you do what would you say are the top five things that you should be doing? If you had*

to just jot them down what would the top five things be? And if it's not five that's fine; what are the top things?

Joe: Well, if we're talking about the, like if we're putting it to the practices of the CTL that's going to help with the CRCT, and help with the benchmarks and all that, I think that the number one thing is to constantly address the scope and sequence and the standards for that unit that their supposed to be on. I think that's the number one thing, is just, and they know the standards. The majority of them know the standards, I mean they change a little bit year from year, they drop some names, they edit and I think that's the number one thing is the scope and sequence and the standards. And uh, we do that at the beginning of each unit and if it's a long unit we'll do it twice, and uh. And the second thing is to connect those standards to lessons that we have in our database. And when I say database I mean in our book, in our lotus notes, the database that the county gave us, or in our s-drive which has two or three years of stuff in there. And some of it, most of it is still really relevant and good. So go over the scope and sequence, go over the standards, and then connect those standards to actual lessons. And most of it, like I said most of the teachers have been teaching this for a long time so they know the lessons that you're talking, you just mention it, remember we have on the s-drive

we have this, or remember there is a page in this text book, or this textbook, or we have Junior Scholastics too. Remember I have there's an article on Junior Scholastics and they all know about it. We do have one or two new teachers this year so getting them the copies and talking to them about those things or those projects, or lessons. Um. Those two things to me are the ones that are going to impact you know what's going on in the other teachers' classrooms. Is making sure in the back of their mind they're going to remember, I ought to teach about this and there is a lesson on it here, or here, or here.

Researcher: *Um hum, know you had mentioned earlier that communication factor between administrative. . . does that figure in that top five or are you focusing mainly on?*

Joe: Well, that's a top five thing that I need to be doing. You know, uh, you know, if we add that's probably around number three, maybe. Um, you know, scope and sequence, and the standards, then the lessons, then you know, this year we've been kind of fortunate where there hasn't been a lot changes from the administration. You know last year, well, I think there was the introduction of the lesson plans, and was, uh, and then at this time last year, there was the you know, talk about the communities into grade levels, but this year there hasn't, doesn't seem like there's going to be much change for next year so, recently there hasn't been a lot of things I'm going to have to talk to them about. We have the green summit

coming up so that's something that we've been mentioning and we're that's still not finalized how it's going to be run, so there's little tidbits that come in. and then after, you know the link between the administrative team after that there's just organizing the meetings and organizing some tasks that come along every once in a while. Which could be you know coming up, reviewing the old benchmarks and coming up with a new one. We going to have to do that soon, cause I think in a week we have to turn in fourth quarter benchmarks, so, you know, there's lots of odds and ends that you just have to organize. See if somebody wants to take on the job or split the job with you?

Researcher: *Okay, well thank you very much. That's, uh, the end of our topics for the day and I appreciate you participating.*

Joe: No problem.

Third interview with Joe, sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *Okay we are here today with Joe, the sixth grade social studies CTL. It's April 29th and this our third interview. I just wanted to start off with you, in the past we talked about instructional supervision and asked you to define that and going through some of my notes, you (interruption from outside), but you defined instructional supervision as being an messenger and organizer. You stated messenger relaying information to and from administrators and teachers as well as teachers to administrators. And organizer as it relates to collaborate meetings and with teachers to cover the scope and sequence. Uh. I just want to kind of revisit that definition. Is there anything you'd like to add to that or do you think that is pretty comprehensive as to how you see instructional supervision?*

Joe: Well I think for me it's pretty comprehensive I mean there's not much more that I do in my role and the assistant principal does a lot of instructional supervision herself. I mean she's also, she does, you know, she's also a messenger she comes in and talks to them and expands on things and uh. . .

Researcher: *In your meetings?*

Joe: In the meetings yeah, she always has the floor for the first maybe ten minutes or so to go over things that she wants to talk about. And uh, and if we're in a discussion she always gives the administrator view of why or

something's going on, so. Um. She does a lot of that herself, but you know, that's pretty much there's not much more. Some, few organizational things but that's not. . .

Researcher: *Okay. Well one thing you referred to in our last interview was that your position as a leadership position. And of course the title is Curriculum Team Leader, uh, do you more closely relate to the definition of a leader or the title of leader versus instructional supervisor?*

Joe: Yeah I was looking I was looking at that. Uh, and, you know, we talked before that I just feel like I'm just one of the team members, and you know, you do have to, maybe it's reluctance on my part to some extent to, um, I really don't like either one of the words leader or supervisor. You know.

Researcher: *So what would you use then?*

Joe: I'm not sure. I've been thinking about that today, and uh, you know, I mean you guide, maybe a guide. I don't know. Because, you know, by, when you say leader or supervisor, it uh, curriculum team leader there's just a lot of weight with both of those, you know. So maybe it's just my personality I little reluctance to take ownership of those two things. I want make sure that everybody on team knows that I don't think that I'm better than them or I have more knowledge than them on a subject. I'm just a member of the team and I'm kind of guiding them through our meetings and guiding through the scope and sequence maybe.

Researcher: *We may go back to your, as you define instructional supervision, you said an organizer.*

Joe: Yeah, organizer, I feel more comfortable with, uh, with maybe that. Being called a leader or a supervisor. You feel like if you're a supervisor you should be able to fire people. (Laughing)

Researcher: *It has that connotation though doesn't it?*

Joe: Yeah it does.

Researcher: *The word supervisor?*

Joe: And the leader, to me, you know, maybe it is because; you're in the, cause I was in the Army. You know, if you're a leader of men there's something special, you know if you're in the Army, and if you got a captain or lieutenant or the even your squad leader. Your squad leader might have the same rank as you but there's something special, you know, about that person. That person usually has more time in they have more knowledge about the situation. It's not necessarily that way for CTL's. I mean you've got people who work really hard and do a lot of work and they know the curriculum in and out. And we've talked about that before. Yeah, I like guide, maybe kind of a guide.

Researcher: *Okay, that's a good word. Um, in thinking about what you do with working with the teachers, what positive impact would you say, what positive impact on teacher instruction would you say you've observed as a result as the curriculum team working together?*

Joe: Well I think the team works really well on sharing information, and sharing lessons, sharing projects, a lot of collaboration. And really if, if you, uh, were a sixth grade social studies teachers probably ten percent of the collaboration happens in our meetings, ninety percent is just the day to day stopping each other in the hallway, seeing each other up in the mail room, sending out little e-mails with links to websites, or forwarding on lesson or a graph or a map or a power point. You know, it's just kind of second nature. Part of that was again we talked before about how our curriculum has changed for the last two years. We didn't have a book, that really, our book really doesn't hit a majority of our curriculum now. And two years ago the curriculum changed in August after we started school. So, you know, flying by the seats of our pants, so to speak, you know, we were always meeting in the hallway during connections time and running to one room or another whenever we can. And so, that's what, um, you know, that's the most positive thing about sixth grade and I think our administrator would say that too, that sixth grade more than seventh and eighth really does collaborate and work together, and share a lot of ideas, there's no pressure put on by me that you have to do this, this idea, this lesson, this project, or anything. It's just, we have a very open sense where we all just throw things out and if people want to use it that's fine, if people don't; nobody gets offended or, you know. And, um. So that

collaboration that happens on a just a daily basis is the most positive thing I can think about the sixth grade social studies teachers.

Researcher: *um, hmm. Can you think of any negative that results from that, or?*

Joe: Well the negative is, and I think we've said this is that, we, and there's a lot of variables that are played into this, but you also have a great sense of independence as a sixth grade social studies teacher, and without those benchmarks from the county, you know, it has been difficult to keep people on scope and sequence. You know, we, but that's part of our personality as a group we're a very independent group and a lot of us have been social studies for a long time and we have our projects and our things we like to do, and uh, which is like all curriculums I guess, but that's the only negative is sometimes people aren't up to speed with the scope and sequence.

Researcher: *And you think that comes from that, um, that there's not that system level, um*

Joe: Well, I think. . .

Researcher: *Guide, I guess it's not a definite place you have to be necessarily? Or test?*

Joe: Well, yeah, I think that's the number one thing. I think, you know, um, there hasn't been that kick in the pants. There was of, when we talked about last time, there was that first nine weeks when we got the benchmark from the county and people caught up. But, then we found out

two weeks later, the county's not doing benchmarks and you get to go make them yourself again. Oh, well, then that puts us back to where we've been the last, you know, two years. You know, and that was making them ourselves, and we could on their whatever we want put on there. And you know, um, but the CRCT I mean everybody knows by the time we get to CRCT we're supposed to be done with this. And so they do catch up as much as you can, you know, before the CRCT. So, um, where they're at right now, I mean everybody is pretty much in the same spot, you know, so.

Researcher: *All right. Well, um, as CTL, in thinking about that again, what would you say has helped you the most to be successful as leading your group as the curriculum team leader?*

Joe: Well, you know, the, looking at the question, what's most successful and then what's also, you know, hindered me the most is the same thing.

Researcher: *Is it?*

Joe: And that's probably my personality, you know. And that is a fairly laid back and um, kind of, easy going kind of guy. And that helps with this group, you know, because, um I think for this group of teachers and the way they like to operate. You know, that's, you know, like I said, they're fairly independent to some extent. They've been social studies teachers for years upon years so they know what they're talking about so they don't need to be lectured or told what do necessarily, and they don't want that.

So I think they enjoy, nobody really enjoys going to a curriculum, but it's less painful than going to the dentist. So, uh, I think that's a good thing, and we have a good, you know, they feel free walk in and talk to me or stop me in the hallway. We have that open communication, there's no, uh, you know there's no hesitation there thinking that I'm going to go run off to the administrative team or do whatever, you know, or that. But at the same time, you know, if, if I was not so laid back and easy going, you know, maybe with the scope and sequence and things like that, maybe they'd be a little bit more on board. I guess, you know, if other, if another CTL was really a go getter and wanted to take care of that situation, and put people in their place, or if you had that kind of attitude, I mean I can go make common assessments and say okay, we're all going to do these common assessments make sure you get to this point by next Friday, because that's the common assessment, and do all that, but, you know, that's not my personality. I'm not going to do that to those people I'm just going to gently remind them that they need to be where they're at before the end of the nine weeks. Or I'm going to gently remind each meeting of where we should be, starting the new unit next week or we should be on this right now, and here are the AKS. And I think the like, the AP probably wishes I was a little more, you know, aggressive to that extent. I'm not sure she always likes that I have like an open forum you know and I just kind of guide the discussion and I bring up the topics and then we all

discuss about it. You know, we'll all work together to decide who going to do what. You know, it's not like I go, Mr. so and so I want you to do this or I want you to do that. I pretty much say, okay, so does anybody want to take on this job here? Does anyone want to take on this job? I think, uh, my administrator would rather me already have that delegated.

Researcher: *Really?*

Joe: You know, and have it already done and say you're doing this, you're doing that, and you're doing that.

Researcher: *But that's working for you though? With your group of teachers?*

Joe: Yeah. Nothing never gotten done. Nothing never gotten, we've all gotten it done; we've always got it done on time. It's always been quality work, you know. But, administrators, you know, deal with a lot of paper work, and they're in a lot of meetings and that's how they, you know, delegate things so to speak. So. . .

Researcher: *A little bit different perspective from their leadership role there?*

Joe: And they have to do that because they have so many things that they're taking care of at a time and they need it written down on a piece of paper right then and there, I think.

Researcher: *Okay, well I guess the next question is really along that same line, I don't know that we need to visit that about obstacles in providing instructional supervision. That's really kind of what we talked about, so can you think of any? Does that mean something different as far as when I say obstacles,*

does that bring to mind anything in particular? Or what obstacles you might face providing that supervision?

Joe: You know, the only obstacles, the only really negative, I guess thing is just, you know, me personally, it's not obstacles. It's personality obstacles, you know like when have to introduce the new lesson plans and people are, can't understand them and are all upset, and uh, you know people were crying about it and stuff because they couldn't figure it out, and it was just. . . it was just a big mess, and at that time, um, you know, I just didn't, just wasn't happy being a member of, being a CTL, cause I didn't want, people, deal with all that, you know I couldn't tell them why the administrative have decided to do this backward design. Couldn't help anybody figure it out, cause I couldn't figure it out myself. You know, um, and the obstacle is that these people are friends, are co-workers, friends and uh, we have good relationships and the only obstacle is that I didn't want to, there's different times that things have come up or things that we have to do and I don't want to be perceived, or I don't want to lose their friendship, or um, you know, over something that I have to present to them that came down the pipe, or something like that. You know, and that, again goes back to my personality, I mean their not friends like we're going out and barbequing on the weekend, their co-worker friends. You know, so it's, you know, um its some people maybe their personalities that

wouldn't bother them or something, but with me. You know, I walk down the halls I want to make sure everybody smiles at me when I come by.

Researcher: *Yeah, they don't want to dread seeing you.*

Joe: Yeah I'm pretty paranoid I don't want them to. . .

Researcher: *So I guess would you say that. . .*

Joe: A personality obstacle.

Researcher: *Would you say that any obstacles that you've had kind of like that they came from outside of the group in that sense?*

Joe: Yeah, that has been an obstacle. I mean we move at such a fast pace, you know, if somebody comes in whose never done sixth grade social studies before, uh, an example, you know, we try to help them out, everybody helps out and gives ideas and gives lesson plans. And we've done that this year, but, uh, you know, we've talking, we gave somebody, okay here's your physical test, map test, and here's your political map test, and here's what you do, and you do this with the physical map and you need to go over this with the political map and you need to give your test next Friday. And the person looked at us and said what's a physical map? And what's a political map? You know, so there is a limited amount of supervision or guidance you can give a person. I can't, I can't be in there and sit in the back of the classroom or go and spend my whole planning with that person, or if I spend my planning with that person, I can't teach that person the AKS. They need to go and look it up and do a little bit of

reading on their own. I think that all my teachers are really good teachers, but I don't know? You know, and that's one think that's, you know you talk about supervision, if this is a real supervision and leadership; I like the administration. The administration can go in there on that county database and see what those teachers' scores were for the benchmark, whatever. I didn't ask to see them, I never saw them and you and I can't get on there and see other teachers'. You know, we see ours, we see the county's average and you see your school's average. So when, I saw ours in, uh, was it October or so, and we were a little bit higher than the county's average. But I know my test grades, you know, the guy next to me told me his test grades, and you know, people told me their tests grades over here, the gifted team told me their test grades, and I can start averaging in my head, and everybody whose told me was higher than the school average. Some of them were higher than the school average by like 15, 20 points, so that must mean that there is a class that's 15 or 20 points below. So I think all my teachers are good teachers, but I don't really know. You know, I know that their supposed to be teaching about, you know, uh, Latin America and they're supposed to be teaching a, b, c, AKS, but I'm not, you're not one hundred percent sure.

Researcher: *Um, hmm, how it's delivered you mean?*

Joe: Yeah, how it's delivered. Or are they hitting all the key terms, are they doing what their supposed to be doing, you know. Because you can have lots of fun and projects and your kids really love ya, but might not be what you're supposed to be teaching. And when you talk about Latin America or you talk about Europe, there's a million things you could do. I mean you're teaching those AKS or state standard. You know, I don't know, I don't want to know to a certain extent, you know, because there's nothing I can do about it.

Researcher: *You just want to focus. . .*

Joe: Well like if one of my teachers is sitting there and if I think, possibly, that, I mean, uh, how, what would I do. . . you know, I can go over there and give them the lessons, but I can't go teach it, you know. And if I went to the administration saying, you know what I don't think this person's a really good teacher, I don't think they know what they're doing. The administration, isn't, doesn't, because I did, I've done that, and nothing happens, the persons still teaching the same subject, the same. So, you know its like your toothless a little bit, you don't have any power to change what's going on.

Researcher: *Like a supervisor?*

Joe: Like a supervisor does. You know, because when I had somebody, this year when I've had a teacher that didn't know what a political map was, and a physical map, and they had a friend from California who teaches

sixth grade social studies, so they got all their lesson plans from the California teacher, well we're in Georgia we don't teach what California teaches. And I tried to tell them that, you know, uh, it's a different state, um, I brought those concerns up, but nothing. I mean I'm not going to go, they're not, they didn't do, I don't know whether the administration talked about it or not, but nothing happened nobody went to go sit in their classroom or. . . So that's the thing about supervision or leadership, you know, you don't have any power through the CTL to make much of any change.

Researcher: *Um, hmm, that's a good point. That's a good point. Um,*

Joe: and you don't really, you know, to tell the truth, you don't want that power. You know, I wouldn't want to be the person who goes and says, hey, listen you're not cutting it, you need to go.

Researcher: *Well, you've said previously that you're a team member with them and that doesn't carry that, doesn't carry that, uh like you said, that weight or power to do that. So that, that is a very good point, um, a couple of more things, uh, that, uh we'll want to touch on in particular high stakes testing and accountability. When you hear those words, when you hear the words high stakes testing in our state you know it means CRCT and sometimes the interim test for the county. And you hear accountability, what comes to mind um, for you in thinking about your, um your CTL role? What comes to mind when you hear those two things?*

Joe: Uh, fear. (laughing). Well that's the thing, you know, whether you're reading the news and everything that's going on, um, you know it's you see both sides, you need those kind of, you need standardized tests, you need to figure out what the kids know, you need to figure out where their at. Um, the biggest issue we've ever had is just the tests sometimes are just awful. You know, the words that they are using.

Researcher: *do you mean the standardized test?*

Joe: Yeah, the interims.

Researcher: *The interims, now those are the county made tests?*

Joe: The county ones we have gotten in the past have been awful. I mean, uh, there's a question about Haiti, you know we have to study about Haiti, and uh, it's the first country in Latin America to gain independence, and the county use instead Haiti, they called it the original island name Santo Domingo, and you know, the state says Haiti, the AKS says Haiti, it says Haiti everywhere you find it. You can find it in one of our textbooks, it says Haiti, it talks about Haiti's independence in the other textbook, never says Santo Domingo anywhere, and you know, if you look on the county lotus notes, uh, the uh, the lesson plans they put on the lotus notes, somebody had Santo Domingo on the lesson plan. So if you didn't use the county database you would have never known Santo Domingo. Little things like that instead of saying, uh, I mean we always say physical features, they, all their questions have natural features, but you think okay

that's a common thing, but that just blows kid's minds, if their teacher's been saying physical feature, physical feature, physical feature and all of sudden natural features. You know, so when I think of high stakes testing it's pretty much a negative, because every time we've done it, you know. And like the CRCT you have social studies is the last one. It's the last day the kids are just tired of five days straight testing. And it's a short test, I mean you either know the answer or you don't so it's not like math where you're going to work out problems, but their done. They're not double-checking answers, their done for the day, their ready to celebrate CRCT's are over. So I think about that and as a CTL, though, more directly to your question, I guess, I think I've mentioned this before, you know, I worry about all our scores. And back in September and October when we had that interim I worried about all our scores, because I wasn't sure that everybody was up to where their supposed to be in scope and sequences, and that was because you have some teachers that are teaching two collab classes, you have some teachers that are teaching the ESOL team. And I know that those two weren't where they were supposed to be. And of course you have pride in your school and you want to do better than, you know, Osborne, you want to do better than Twin Rivers, and all that. And you know that the administrative team is going to be looking at teacher's scores, you know is going to be looking at, um the school scores and comparing them to others. So, you know, as a CTL, you know, that's the

thing about, and, you know, partly maybe my fault, because maybe I should be more forceful with the scope and sequence, you know I don't want to jeopardize the personal stuff, but.

Researcher: *So does that come up in your curriculum team meetings as a focus of direction?*

Joe: Yeah, well I mean, we talk about that, we talked about from the first meeting we had in August was about the interim. And was like, hey guys, you know, we've got to be really be on top of this because we're going to start getting those interims every, those benchmarks every nine weeks. And we've got to, you know, the last two years we've been kind of loopy goosy, and we've had, we could kind of do whatever we want. So, and I think most of this is just transition stuff, you know, if they get the interims right, you know, you give teachers nine weeks and they get scared after that, then they'll be on the scope and sequence, you know. It's just, um it's just been weird for social studies, I guess. But, you know when you think about that high stakes testing and accountability, and you know, I don't remember much from when I was in school, but how did they, you know, I wonder, how did they determine when I was as at, 1980, when I was in middle school, how did they determine if a middle school was good enough? You know, because there weren't CRCTs and there weren't county tests, there weren't, there wasn't Gateway or anything like that so, you know it's really interesting how do you, how you grade a teacher, how

you grade a school, or district, what's the best method? And you know, are the tests reliable and with, uh, merit pay idea, how do you judge a school and a teacher?

Researcher: *Um hmm. There's a lot that goes into it's there?*

Joe: Yeah, you know, they say, uh, oh well, what's instrument's the best and how many instruments should you use. I do think, you know a little off the CTL thing, but if eighth grade is testing is testing like thirty-six days out of the year, that's just ridiculous. What are you testing them on because they haven't had enough class time yet

Researcher: and that's one of the problems with high stakes test.

Joe: and then we've seen this week also, is um the test is given in April, so the kids think it's holiday the last four weeks, and the administrative team comes down today and says, you know, make sure you're using lots of WOW in your lessons to keep them engaged because they think it is over with. And then they say make sure you have your lesson plans out and they need to be very detailed, because somebody going to come, somebody is going to come and check them. That's what we were told. So, I'm thinking, I didn't say it, but I'm thinking, okay we're supposed to teach seventh grade, preview seventh grade, which for all my teachers, they don't have any seventh grade stuff, they haven't ever taught seventh grade, there's nothing in there that they can pull out from their desk or from a file cabinet that's going, that's a seventh grade AKS. So we need to

go find those seventh grade AKS, which is not hard to do, plan a WOW lesson from scratch, and that takes a little bit more time, and you need to make sure your lesson plans are all done. So really if you think about, that's more work than they usually do. Because they usually, they've teaching sixth grade for a long time, and they usually have stuff in their filing cabinet that they pull out when it comes time, and they know where to search to find this stuff, they know what stuff is good and bad, because they've used these videos, or they've used these books, or they've used these Junior Scholastics before. So it was just very interesting.

Researcher: *Um hmm, it is. Uh. . .*

Joe: Am I talking too much?

Researcher: No, it's fine. No that's certainly fine. Just kind of, want to going back to, we a little bit we've talked before, but I wanted to talk about the um, administrative team and, um, their involvement with CTL, with you as the CTL and that sort of thing. What type of guidance or direction would you say you have received from the administrative team? And I know we have talked about expectations in the past, but thinking about guidance for your everyday, every week sort of work you do with your team, how would you characterize that and what is it?

Joe: Small, I mean they've mention a couple of times make sure your meetings start on time, make sure everybody's there. Make sure you send out an e-mail at the beginning of the week with an agenda, you know, make sure

the time is on that agenda, the location, make sure you tell people to be positive and be nice. You know, uh, respect others, um, so you get that, those kind of things. Make sure you keep a good log of whose there, everybody signs and signs out. Make sure everybody has a piece of paper filling out their twenty hours for the year. But besides that, there's really no other guidance, for what you're going to be doing on a weekly basis. You know, when we go to CTL administrative meetings, you know they ask us for input, what do you think about this, what do you think your teachers would think about this, you know, sometimes they say go back and ask your teachers this or that. Um, not a lot of guidance though, you know even their expectations, I mean they expect us to sell the party line and they, you know, expect us to, um sure they expect us to lead by example. But it kind of goes unsaid.

Researcher: *But it goes unsaid?*

Joe: Yeah

Researcher: *and you talk about those meetings, that was one of the things that I wanted to kind of focus on, is uh, the meetings with all the CTL's, the AP's and the principal, and uh, how do those happen and the question I guess is, you kind of answered it, but what do you think you get from those?*

Joe: Well you know, um they use to be every month sometimes more than a month, uh once a month, and uh we'd get an e-mail the week of saying hey ya'll got a meeting. And then last year we had um, the whole fiasco

with the lesson plans and after a month or a second month or so the second meeting every single one got canceled, except maybe the last one of the school year. And uh, I think we met once maybe in the summer and I think only two or three, it wasn't a full house, not everybody was there, I don't even think all the AP's were there. This year I say half of them have gotten canceled and there hasn't been any e-mail about them. So I know I've missed two, I know the majority of CTL's have missed a couple because there's no e-mail. And then, you know there's been times where I came in there be an e-mail after the fact. It's like, oh good meeting this morning, and reminder, you know, uh. I know, I think the last one I walked in with all the sixth grade CTLs, all the sixth grade CTL's walked in at the same time and somebody said aren't you supposed to be in a meeting right now or something like that? So the communication has been really lacking, I mean um, I think, um, but the meetings, you know what there I've been to two or three meetings this year total, I missed two and I think the other three or four have been canceled and I think part of that is uh, the administrative team is trying to have many, many, many leadership groups going on right now. One leadership group is the, you know, the teachers who have leadership degrees were asked to be in a leadership group. And then you have teachers who don't have the degrees but are interested in being leaders have a group. And then you have the literacy group, which takes on different jobs for the administrative team that don't

deal with literacy, and you know. So um, and I think all that happened, all these groups have sprung up because the administrative, and more so the principal, I shouldn't say team because I think the principal really got angry when that whole backward design came out. He didn't feel like he was supported by the CTLs, and you can't really fire the CTLs, but you can cancel all the meeting, and you can make other leadership groups that you can delegate stuff to. So, you know, that's how it's been the last two years.

Researcher: *Before that they were more regular than?*

Joe: Oh it was every month; yeah they were regular as can be. Just as regular as can be.

Researcher: *Do you think, um, in thinking about the leadership of the school as far as administrators do, would you say that the vision of the school is something that, um is kind of the for front, or is that something that's talked about among CTLs or is it just? How would you say that? I mean.*

Joe: Um, I think the, the CTL's of the past, who have quit in the last two years, the CTL's that I know and see somewhat on a regular basis, uh, you know were not happy and are not happy with some of the decisions that have come down and you know we've talked. Everybody who has ever read an educational magazine or book knows about buy in, and we're in this, we're supposed to be in this super bubble of collaboration, and collaboration is going on in all levels, well it's not.

Researcher: *Where would you say the most collaboration is?*

Joe: The most collaboration is with, right here with the teachers, you know. But the decisions that seem, the decisions that seem to impact the teachers the most whether be a small decision, or large decision, but that riles up the teachers, or that teachers don't understand, that causes for concern, all these things, and there was big decisions, like that backward design, there was no collaboration. You know there was no teacher input. You know, whether it be seventh grade not giving a grade lower than a fifty, where was the teacher input. If it was, you know, the thing that teachers keep complaining about this nine weeks, why is five percent of the overall grade, or whatever the percentage is it's not five, but five percent is homework. Why is that homework, when it should be homework and class work? Or why is project a separate grade, percentage, you know. Those are the things that their, now everybody is trying to get in projects so all the kids are going to do eight projects in the next four weeks, you know, and oh wait we've got to get in four tests, so everybody's going to trying to do about nine to twelve tests. Every kid is going to be doing nine to twelve test in the next four weeks. No, those things there was collaboration but the voices of the teachers weren't heard. The voices of the teachers aren't heard and if they are heard then their just whining and complaining. And they're all whining and complaining, and it is whining and complaining, but there's this whole facade about collaboration, you

know, and what kind of school we're supposed to be, but it's a mirage, it's not real, it's not happening it's only going so far. And the thing is the teachers have bought into working they like the idea of collaboration, you know, they want to collaborate, they want to take part in that, but if a view or an idea is different from what the, he wants, he's not listening to them. He doesn't do collaboration, and I've said this before, I'm fine with that, I'm fine with somebody telling me exactly what to do, but don't sell it as collaboration. Don't sell this school as a collaborative school when it's not. And I think irritates people more than anything, because then you're like a politician, you're tricking them, you're a used car salesman, you know, to an extent. And people would just rather be dumb and lazy and you just tell them to do this or do that. And we're fine with that as teachers, but then don't sell it as collaboration, and everybody's voice isn't heard. And that's why this IE squared thing is really scary, because we had no voice at the county level. The superintendent says teachers will have their voice when it gets to the school level. Well every decision that's supposed to be made by committee now, you know a committee of administrators, parents, and teachers. This is the second year, I don't know one teacher that's on that committee, I don't know anybody that's on that committee, I haven't even seen that committee released. Where do you sign up for that committee? And that is moving eighth grade to have halls, science halls, social studies halls, that's a big decision. So if we're in this

collaborative environment like we're supposed to be this learning focused schools and all this other stuff that he's spent money for UGA professors to come down and talk us about, and gave us books that we're supposed to read about. You know, where was that collaboration on that part, were if after the fact, hey we want to do this what do you think about it? You know. Even moving down to communities by grade level, they presented that after the fact. Where was the collaboration on that? And like I said I'm fine, you can be dictator and tell me what do and I'll be happy and do it. I'd rather be that but it's uh, it's just uh, I don't know it's kind of a fraud to some extent.

Researcher: Well would you say that presents an obstacle to, uh?

Joe: trust?

Researcher: *What you do in your collaborative team?*

Joe: No, no.

Researcher: *Or is it just a individual thing?*

Joe: Because they know; because everybody knows. I mean everybody; half of my team has been on the committees whose voices weren't heard. You know so they understand how things, how things work, but what it does is, and it doesn't mean that you don't like somebody or you like or dislike somebody as a person, but it does lend to distrust. That's what it is. There's not one person I know who feels comfortable walking up to that front office if they have an issue and sitting down and talking to someone.

You know, talking with the principal, in fact, it's the other way around, I think the majority of people that I know if they see him walking down one hall their going to try and sneak and go down the second. You know, there's not, and that's not, I was here for the principal before, and it's very interesting to see how totally different that trust factor is. Because the other principal, I know for a fact, many people walked in to the office and sat down and said do you have a minute. And maybe they talked about personal problems and the problems at home, and you know.

Researcher: *And you think that is a reflection of a leadership style change?*

Joe: Definitely and if I remember correctly there wasn't all this leadership, administrative team to teacher collaboration going on four years ago. I mean we were told what to do four years ago, I mean teachers still collaborated but we were told what to do four years ago and everybody was happy about it and there wasn't a level of distrust. You know, and uh.

Researcher: *So that collaborative, just to kind of, that collaboration you think breaks down when you get above your curriculum team.*

Joe: Yeah

Researcher: *That there's, you don't see a team collaborating above that?*

Joe: I think that collaboration breaks down to some extent between the administrators and the principal. I don't think there is a lot, I might be wrong.

Researcher: *And you just base that on you're, just seeing the interactions and what decisions are made?*

Joe: Just knowing some decisions, like, uh every sixth grade student got a letter to take home this week and that letter said would you like your child to be in uh, advanced, what is it advanced?

Researcher: *Accelerated*

Joe: Accelerated science, accelerated science. Now the science teacher, sixth grade science teacher is the one who decides that looking at test scores, looking at grades, looking at effort decides that. The sixth grade science teacher now has to call seventy out of our hundred and fifteen, seventy some odd kids

First interview with Ann, sixth grade Science curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *We are here today on Tuesday, April 13th with Ann and you are the science CTL for sixth grade. Is that right?*

Ann: Yes

Researcher: *We will kind of go through the profile here in a little bit. Now we will move on to the questions. How many total numbers of years have you been teaching?*

Ann: Six

Researcher: *How many years as CTL?*

Ann: Four

Researcher: *So you taught 2 years before you were asked to take the CTL position. Have you taught at any other schools or is this your first teaching experience?*

Ann: No

Researcher: *How many full time teachers are a part of your curriculum team?, as far uh*

Ann: Including me?

Researcher: *Yeah, well, no, just the ones that is in your team, not counting you.*

Ann: My team or my curriculum area?

Researcher: *Your curriculum area not counting you.*

Ann: Okay so . . .

Researcher: *Other science teachers in sixth grade.*

Ann: I would say six.

Researcher: *Are any of those six included in special ed.*

Ann: Well then there's the special ed. And I'm not sure how many of those are teaching science special ed. because some of them don't come here.

Researcher: *I understand they go to other areas. Okay.*

Ann: There are two that come here.

Researcher: *Regularly or just. . .*

Ann: Regularly there are two others that come here regularly, but I know that there's other that might be teaching 3 subjects.

Researcher: *Okay, but they don't attend your group. Okay then that's fine. I want to thank you for doing this with me. Hopefully we will both come up with some interesting things. Here are the questions that we are going to address today. One of the things is that a few years ago here at our school we kind of changed the way we did our planning and instruction and started looking at professional learning communities and some of the things that kind of happen in those types of schools. When we started changing, like I said, the planning and instruction. Well, the first question is could you explain what you believe the characteristics of a professional learning community are?*

Ann: Well this, um, maybe happened before I was here.

Researcher: *Did it?*

Ann: Or maybe the year that I . . . Well I don't know cause I always remember them being referred to as professional learning communities, so this maybe is the only environment that I know of.

Researcher: *Okay*

Ann: So as far as a change coming into this or contrast for anything else. . .

Researcher: *So this is. . .*

Ann: So this is my only model of what I've seen or worked in. So I guess my comments would be reflective of my observations.

Researcher: *Yes*

Ann: So characteristics are sharing with your fellow teammate that is probably one of the biggest ones.

Researcher: *Yes, okay*

Ann: I would think so.

Researcher: *Yeah you feel like. . .*

Ann: I would think that is the "it" though.

Researcher: *So you think that happens a lot then and all then, Okay. Well since, um, since you've been CTL, and um, worked with those teachers and been involved in instructional supervision what do you believe that instructional supervision is?*

Ann: Well, I think it is a general guidance of um you know we're given the county scope and sequence so I just make sure that we're on course with the counties' prescribed scope and sequence.

Researcher: *um huh*

Ann: How are we doing that, for example we totally unpacked the standards. I mean we took each of the AKS and totally unpacked it. What does it mean and what are the questions in this and what are the questions that go with that? What are the essential questions? What are the answers to the essential questions? Um and even in terms what lessons would be good for those questions? What labs would be good for those questions? And that was a big thing that um we did while I was CTL. And particularly as I told you before we got a whole new subject area. So that was really ripe. You know we are just teachers of science. So they were really looking for guidance. And note that I didn't guide the curriculum, but I just think that I guided the planning process. And kept them on track.

Researcher: *And so the instructional supervision as you see it was that guidance?*

Ann: What is that one thing that you need to do to achieve the scope and sequence, to achieve the teaching of these AKS's. How am I going to do that? What do they mean? What are they? What, you know, in terms of content? We unpacked the standards. Now it has changed. Now we're in a different flow. So I think it changes. Now the instructional supervision is very different than what it was those first couple of years that I was CTL.

Researcher: *How do you mean?*

Ann: Well, you know, we've pretty much unpacked the standards together, and everybody has had, I think the four years, I think that's how 6 years, well I can't remember four or five, whereas now we are much more familiar with the content area. The AKS and the scope and sequence has not changes from last year to this year. So it is a very different thing it is not a push to understand the content, to understand the AKS, not a push to put the sequence in. that has really disappeared. It is more of a, my role is really quite different now, much more sitting back. Because we have done a lot of the work.

Researcher: *and so. . .*

Ann: Very different. Now it is more of just a colleague sharing, I would say.

Researcher: *That is still more of the focus*

Ann: I think so, a lot less me and more of the group.

Researcher: *Well that's really what I wanted to cover today. Get the background information, and then address those two things and we'll uh what we'll try to plan our second interview and we'll go a little more in-depth then. And actually what happens in your curriculum meetings and that sort of thing. So thank you very much.*

Ann: Well your welcome.

Second interview with Ann, sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *We are here again with Ann, who is the CTL for sixth grade science. Our second interview and it is April 20 2010. In our first interview I asked you about a PLC's and what characteristics were of that and you said that the "it" of a PLC in your mind was sharing with your fellow team mates, in thinking about that definition, how do you think that? Can you explain your role in CTL in regards to that?*

Ann: Well, I mean I just go back to the scope and sequence, and just really want to follow that. I in the past have gone to a lot of conferences and would always come back and just share lessons that I had. You know, mostly, I think that I did a lot of just modeling of sharing.

Researcher: *Okay*

Ann: Because my lesson was yours, like here are three lessons here they are written up let me show you let me demonstrate, ? your next? So I think there was a lot of modeling and sharing and a lot of me sharing until they started sharing.

Researcher: *Okay, and uh,*

Ann: And also I do a lot of reading on professional journal, so that's always something I feel like I bring to the table, that perhaps they don't do.

Researcher: *Um hum, well that's good. And so as you work as a CTL and in that role*

and thinking about that are your expectations clearly communicated to you? And if you could, what would those be?

Ann: Well, I'm not so sure about that. I mean to guide instruction is the most I feel that I can say. That you are a curriculum leader and I'm assuming that means an instructional leader.

Researcher: *Well, what do you think is, you are expected to do I guess? Would be the best way to put it.*

Ann: I think I'm expected to help guide instruction. You know, to point out the calendar, to point out the AKS, to help interpret those AKS and to break them down into these are ways to achieve them.

Researcher: *Okay, so the number one thing is to. . .*

Ann: Help guide instruction

Researcher: *Guide the instruction?*

Ann: I think so, and if it's something else I don't know.

Researcher: *Well, now I mean it is. What it is, what you see your role is, is what we want to talk about. Do you feel like that's communicated? Was that communicated to you from?*

Ann: I think that one is.

Researcher: *Okay, from your administrator that's involved?*

Ann: Well, I think from the CTL meetings as much I can gather.

Researcher: *Okay, CTL meetings meaning?*

Ann: When we meet once a month.

Researcher: *Okay, so that's all the CTL's in the school meeting together? And*

Ann: And you know I've been doing it for four years, so I don't at what year I picked that up, or if it's still communicated, you know, or just something I assume now.

Researcher: *Okay. Well, um, that's your view of what your role is. What do you think the teachers would view your role as CTL? What would they say that's all about?*

Ann: Well, I think they would agree. I think that's what we're all about, and you know I focus their attention; I facilitate the meetings, which is big.

Researcher: *And the meetings occur weekly?*

Ann: The meetings are weekly, and they are in various people's room. Last year we met in different people's throughout the year. But, I think the role of just facilitating is big, and to keep them on task as a group. This is what we're here for today.

Researcher: *Focused on whatever the task is. Dealing with the scope and sequence.*

Ann: Yeah, dealing with meeting the objectives of the AKS.

Researcher: *Even though you met in different rooms, did you still take responsibility for the flow of the meeting?*

Ann: Yes.

Researcher: *Why did you meet in different rooms?*

Ann: Just to see their environment that they created see what's on their walls.

Just to see.

Researcher: *So that everybody could see it? Okay, um you had talked about how you unpacked the standards, in our state we had a change in curriculum from sixth and eighth grade, and being in sixth grade you had to go through all that, uh, and now you say, in our last interview you talked about how it's a little bit different now. What experience could you point to or describe, say in the last year that demonstrates your role as CTL, a common occurrence that might have happened in the last year.*

Ann: Well I think it's just in facilitating those meetings. You know everyone is pretty much the same but we're on a different topic so you know it's just, making sure that something productive comes out of that meeting, that it's not a waste of time.

Researcher: *Well as an instructional supervisor how do you?*

Ann: Well I don't ever feel like I'm ever a supervisor though.

Researcher: Well. . .

Ann: I'm not an instructional supervisor.

Researcher: *That's true. That term sometimes. . .*

Ann: Well, but I'm not. I think if you were it. . .

Researcher: *a problem.*

Ann: . . . would be a miserable failure.

Researcher: *Well*

Ann: I think facilitator is a much better word

Researcher: *Well, as the facilitator of the meetings.*

Ann: Um, hum.

Researcher: *Well, as the facilitators of the meetings how do you decide the focus of the meetings?*

Ann: What we're doing? What the AKS is for that particular week, time, you know, month, day. And a lot of times we deal with um, not instruction but content understanding this content, making sure that we're all, we all understand the content questions, just do you understand this concept and what are good ways to do it.

Researcher: *Would you say that you get to spend the majority of your time in that aspect of it that more so than let's say clerical. Are there any clerical things?*

Ann: Um, we usually don't do clerical things.

Researcher: *No initiatives that you deal with? I*

Ann: Not usually.

Researcher: *Okay, so you stay focused on the, on the, like you said the task at hand...*

Ann: Usually

Researcher: *. . . that scope and sequence. Okay. Um. Now we're right in the middle of CRCT testing, and all of it is considered high stakes testing now for AYP (average yearly progress) and those things. What, how, do you see the connection between, uh, instructional supervision, your role as CTL, and the high stakes testing? How do those two go together?*

Ann: Well, again, I don't see myself as a supervisor at all. And, and I feel, you know, if we're doing our job every day, that's the connection. You know, to make separate connections. I mean we share coach books, we talk about the coach books, and we'll talk about the content of the coach books. But I think the high stakes testing and me are a result of our relationship of an everyday, every week thing. Um, I'm trying to think. I mean if we're doing our job every week then the rest will take care of itself.

Researcher: *Would you say that uh, that you, that the teachers in your curriculum area feel any more pressure from the testing and the accountability Aspect of our job?*

Ann: Well, sure, I think we all do. I don't know, but, I'm not sure what the accountably is, other than test results.

Researcher: *Well, the AYP, yeah.*

Ann: But even sure what AYP is, that's attendance right?

Researcher: *Well, it's in every curriculum area has to meet certain standards each year.*

Ann: But isn't AYP attendance?

Researcher: *Well that's one of them. And so the, each disaggregated group has to make progress in each area, you know, to help us make AYP. Certainly attendance is a part of that. But,*

Ann: I don't know that. . .

Researcher: *But, you don't see that as a big influence you see it as more a fact that you are. . .*

Ann: I mean it is something that we, you know, definitely feel the pressure of, but for me, and I could be reading this wrong, it's more in terms of getting the materials covered, than score, but I teach gifted students, so. . .

Researcher: *Um, hmm. But that also goes back to previously, you said that you feel like your works toward, you help your group; facilitate your group to work towards covering that scope and sequence and understanding that material.*

Ann: Yes, Yes, I push that.

Researcher: *All right we talked earlier about the expectations and how they had been communicated to you or what you felt like they were. If you had to pick five things, or three things, or. . . Uh. What would you think the top five things you should be doing as CTL?*

Ann: Well I got to three. You know, I'm just going back to the help guide the instruction. Identify curriculum common needs. What do we need for this lab? What do we need for this week? Are the stream tables up? You know, identify the equipment needs. There are just the nuts and bolts of what do we need to get this through this week? Um, you know, I really think facilitating the meetings; make sure that produce, not wasteful, at least something comes out of that time together.

Researcher: *Do you feel like that there's not a wasteful time, you feel like it is a good use of your time as a teacher?*

Ann: Well sometimes are more useful than others. I mean, I yeah, the thing has changed since we made the switch. I think they were much more productive you know a year or two ago, when we were really trying to make sense of the scope and sequence. And now, you know, we've written a book on it, you know. And so its, I think we are in the middle of just kind of shifting this year. Now what do we do?

Researcher: *So do you think your meeting, you're on your way to doing what?*

Ann: I'm not sure. But I think we've cleared up a lot of the issues, and I think we really worked hard on that. And now I think we really have to redefine what our, what we're going to be doing in the curriculum meetings.

Researcher: *Okay, very good. Well thank you for your time. I appreciated and we'll plan for next time. Thank you.*

Third interview with Ann, sixth grade science curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *Okay we're here today, its Tuesday April 27th with Ann again the sixth grade CTL and we're going to continue talking about instructional supervision and some different perspectives that you might have. Last time when we discussed instructional supervision, you said that to you the definition was, the general guidance of the county's scope and sequence. I think you even used, you talked about being a facilitator and organizer of the teachers. And in thinking about, um, do you have any more thoughts about that as far as, um, what that instructional supervision is?*

Ann: Uh, what do you think it is?

Researcher: *(laughing) Well. . .*

Ann: I mean when you're asking me about it, what are you thinking it is?

Researcher: *Well I know the clinical definition.*

Ann: And what is it? (Laughing)

Researcher: *Uh, a long that same line, uh, supervising teachers in a sense that your guiding them and working with them.*

Ann: Well, I'll go back. I mean I just don't like those terms.

Researcher: *And, and that's fine we'll talk about that, but right now*

Ann: Cause I don't think that's what I am and I don't think that's what I'm supposed to be. I suppose Curriculum Team Leader is a better actual term when they say CTL. I like that better, in no way do I feel or have I ever

feel like I'm anybody's supervisor. So I mean I just keep going back to that, that just always hits me wrong.

Researcher: *Well I had made note of that the last time we talked, you....*

Ann: But curriculum team leader is a little bit better, I don't get to show other out.

Researcher: *so leader, leader is a better word to use, something to define you*

Ann: Well I think facilitator is the better word. I would go back to that. I don't even want to be a leader. You know, you can help facilitate others to be the leaders. I think facilitator is a better word. You know it's just kind of, you know when geese fly in a formation they just instinctively take turns leading, I think that if you that if one way you can facilitate to have others, to keep getting people to take turns leading is a much better, effective way.

Researcher: *Well, and you had said that last time that supervisor was, you didn't think that. . .*

Ann: I'm still all about that.

Researcher: *Yeah, in there. Um, so in line with that, have, define that leadership for me then. What is, when you see what you do what are the leadership things that you do?*

Ann: I think that I like to keep things interesting as a leader. So there's a level of energy that that I hope that I can help maintain with my group, and just having a curiosity and a zest for the subject matter. I think that's one thing, they can just keep afloat and keep energy going in that group.

Researcher: *And would you say that?*

Ann: I mean I'm always bring new lessons, new things, new way of looking at things to the table, but, but it's has to be done in a, you know an energetic, or a way that it's going to float. How that's done is the art of it all.

Researcher: *The art of the leadership.*

Ann: I think so.

Researcher: *Do you feel like that you got direction for that, or does that come from your background?*

Ann: I think that comes from my background, I don't think I received any direction.

Researcher: *When you say received any direction from? Who would be in charge of you as the CTL?*

Ann: I guess my AP.

Researcher: *Okay, the assistant principal in charge of your curriculum area.*

Ann: Um hum, yep. There is also a lot of support.

Researcher: *From the AP?*

Ann: Um hum, but not a like a step, a step directions to. If that's what you mean? There's a lot of support, a lot of possessiveness there.

Researcher: *Give me an example of. . .*

Ann: But, no concrete, well I take that back sometimes they're some concrete to it.

Researcher: *Give me an example of support. Maybe an event you just looked as really supportive of what you were trying to do.*

Ann: Well there have been times when, when we were kind of directionless or really didn't know what to do. And um, our AP would help guide us into a direction. You know that was good.

Researcher: *So you,*

Ann: So is that supportive?

Researcher: *Yeah that is supportive. Um, as the Curriculum Team Leader, and that's what we're talking about, when I say, when I use the term instructional supervision and in the sense, I'm thinking of in the sense that, that's part of what you do, and we've already talked about how you feel it's more of leadership and even more so facilitator. When you think of the things you've had to do over the years as CTL what is, uh, helped you to be most successful? What have you, uh, drawn from that has helped you to be most successful in that leadership?*

Ann: Yeah, well I. I went to a lot of professional conferences, which, um, the school provided for me; both, um, a national conference and a state conference and county workshops. So I really had a lot of opportunity to be exposed to really good lessons and really good people delivering really

good lessons. And so, I'm, you know, its part of my job to bring it all that back and then share it with my people here.

Researcher: *Now those workshops were science specific?*

Ann: Yes

Researcher: *Science specific, content area:*

Ann: Yes

Researcher: *Was there ever any leadership conferences that you attended?*

Ann: Uh Uh, No.

Researcher: *Well, what would you say hindered you the most in your CTL position as the leader of a curriculum group? Is there anything that kind of stands out that got in the way of you being able to be that leader or that facilitator?*

Ann: Nothing that was put up intentionally as a roadblock. I would not say that, just normal things that people, you know the way people relate, and...

Researcher: *The dynamics of the group, more so than...*

Ann: Yeah, yeah. And in just a general, you know, getting people to move in a direction.

Researcher: *Since you've been working with the curriculum team in the last few years, um, what kind of positive impact do you think the curriculum team has had on the instruction that teachers have been giving students.*

Ann: Well, we, look at the last year we did unpack the standards and I think that was big so we all had an in depth look at every standard, and I think, and I like to think that was big. And we made documents for every nine weeks,

and we have them all in a shared drive. So we all have those to refer to. With essential question, and answers and labs, and suggestions. And I think that's a big advantage.

Researcher: *And those were things that they took back directly to the classroom?*

Ann: They should. I mean, I mean that's we use to start our meetings. Here are the standards that we are covering this next week. Here's what they mean, here's the questions that go with it, if we want to add to it, we would acknowledge, and you know, just talk about that as a group. But we really focused on those standards last year. And I have written documents on it, to refer back to that we all had a hand in.

Researcher: *Um hum, okay. Do you see any obstacles that maybe came up with your teachers that maybe you had to deal with as a CTL?*

Ann: One of my major mottos is see no obstacles (laughing)

Researcher: *So you just work around it anyway?*

Ann: Well, I mean, you just don't, there doesn't have to be obstacles a lot of obstacles really aren't there. You know, just a frame of reference.

Researcher: *I understand. . .*

Ann: Good.

Researcher: *. . . that's a good perspective. One of the things I kind of wanted to visit again, we talked last time about, um high stakes testing and accountability, I wanted to revisit that a little bit. What do you think about when you hear people mention that? If one of them talks about high stakes*

testing and we talk about accountability for curriculum area teachers, what is it that you think about?

Ann: You know, I just don't think about it. Because I really feel like if I'm doing the best I can every day. You know, I'm really focusing on what I need to be doing. I'm really reading and looking for the best lessons, and so I feel like I've done my job, and the rest is out of my control.

Researcher: *Do you ever feel. . .*

Ann: You know, bring it on. I've done my job.

Researcher: *Do you ever feel the push from your supervisor, from the AP or from the. . . Is that ever mentioned in discussion?*

Ann: Yeah, yeah.

Researcher: *You just don't focus on that is what you're saying?*

Ann: Um, I don't focus on it at all.

Researcher: *Well that's interesting; I kind of take that philosophy also.*

Ann: I mean, I, we have the coach books and that the focal point for the CRCT, if that's one of the things about high stakes testing. But, um, I've come to really like that as a resource. I feel like there's a great resource.

Researcher: *Really?*

Ann: Yeah. Very much so, I like how the information is presented there. I find it to be a really nice resource, supplemental resource.

Researcher: *Um hmm.*

Ann: Testing doesn't bother me; it's not what's important. Nor is the grading.

Researcher: *Well what is important?*

Ann: Well I think it is the student learning and excitement for what they're learning, and the rest is. . .

Researcher: *How does that philosophy, so to speak or maybe that idea that you're more concerned about the student learning, how does that come through in the curriculum meetings when you are working with your teachers?*

Ann: I think my teachers share that, because I think we all just love our content area, and maybe you've experienced that, but we really like what we teach. So, you know, I've seen most all of them that have, that really enjoy what they're teaching and when you enjoy what you're teaching you want to pass it on, you want to see them enjoy what they're learning.

Researcher: *Yeah. Well, um, we had talked, well one other thing we had talked about earlier was about how you went about the curriculum meetings you changed from large group to a large group and then small group and that was one of changes that happened. Are there any other things that impact your, that maybe you changed in your approach?*

Ann: Well, I, you know, like I said just the familiarity now of the subject which we didn't have and now we do.

Researcher: *Do you feel like you're going to a deeper level with the lessons or just?*

Ann: No, I feel like we're at a standstill, kind of, and right now. I mean, I think we were really thirsty, really hungry for all kinds of neat lessons, and you know, we were just so receptive to seeing new lessons and hearing new

lessons, and I think, uh, I really think we're just kind of in a transition right now, and we need to redefine, I really think we really need to redefine how we need to structure our meetings to be affective. I'm not going to do it next year.

Researcher: *You had said that.*

Ann: Yeah, I just think, you know, I think I've, four years I think I've done it enough. I have really feel like I've accomplished a lot and did my job, but I think it needs somebody else to, I just think it needs to be redefined somehow to be effective, and um, I think a change is good.

Researcher: *Okay, uh, one last thing, uh, in uh, we talked about that all the CTL's generally meet with the AP, with the leadership team, which includes the assistant principals and the principal of the school. Is that a regular occurrence, or how have you seen that, how's that, how does that work?*

Ann: Well, I really don't know. I'm not all that sure. I missed the last one as did my, most sixth grade curriculum team leaders, because we didn't know it was happening. I think of the four of us only one showed up and our AP missed it. So I mean if that's evidence of anything take it as it is, but.

Researcher: *Is that a priority between CTL's to be in attendance?*

Ann: Oh, yeah, we just didn't know it was happening.

Researcher: *So it wasn't on the calendar? It was different?*

Ann: Well I think it was on the calendar, but the calendar now is funky, I mean it's not printed and you can't get to it. It's not on the first, I mean when you pull it up it's not, you might have to scroll down that particular, it's just, it's not user friendly or it's just, its. So I never check mine on my calendar,

Researcher: *I understand that, I don't either cause I can't seem to get to it.*

Ann: and there was no memo sent so? So that was pretty much, and then there was no memo sent on what happened during it. So it has kind of been a strange year this year, as was last year.

Researcher: *What do you mean strange last year?*

Ann: Well last year that had somebody from the University of UGA, University of Georgia, UGA, so that was trying to do something.

Researcher: *You weren't sure what it was?*

Ann: Well I think I kind of know, but I don't know the timeline or the goals for it, and there were things that were going to happen that just kind of fell through. So . . .

Researcher: *Well what I was trying to get, what I was trying to get at*

Ann: I don't quite know what's going on either.

Researcher: *You haven't met enough is that?*

Ann: We haven't met that many times, and I missed the last one, and I don't even remember what they're about.

Researcher: *Well I was just kind of. . .*

Ann: You know it's, it's not a situation where we have any input. You know, just kind of sitting there.

Researcher: *Okay, well that's kind of what I wanted to know, what your feelings were as far as how instrumental those sessions are to you being able to uh, be the leader in your curriculum team. I know we've talked about how you were the liaison between administration and your teachers, and keep them informed, but.*

Ann: Well not even, not even so much that. I mean I'm just all about the scope and sequence and meeting the AKS and delivering the good lessons; and as far as informed, on. . . not all that important.

Researcher: *Well, have you, do you get anything from those meetings, I guess, to help you in what you do?*

Ann: I don't think so, I would have to say no.

Researcher: *And you said it's more of a sit and get from, um, a philosophy standpoint? Or is it a. . .*

Ann: I don't know?

Researcher: *So you don't come away with anything?*

Ann: I don't come away with anything.

Researcher: *I'm not trying to put you on the spot, I just, I just, I'm trying to understand what those, the impact of those are.*

Ann: I don't know that there is an impact. . .

Researcher: *Okay*

Ann: From my point of view.

Researcher: *And one, just one last thing, we talked about expectations, and you said there's nothing really written out, you developed your own expectations of what your role is. How closely tied to, say the vision of the school would you say, um what you do is? Is that something that is discussed, uh, as a focal point for CTLs and for teachers, or is that something that is written in a book and is never heard.*

Ann: Not that I'm aware of.

Researcher: *It's not a focal point?*

Ann: Not that I'm aware of. Doesn't mean it doesn't, but I'm not aware of it.

Researcher: *Okay*

Ann: You can use somebody's notebook on some page, but I don't know. I'm not aware of it.

Researcher: *Okay, all right. Well you've covered the topics today, and we'll plan for the next thing.*

Ann: Okay.

Researcher: *Thank you.*

First interview with Abbey, seventh grade math curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *I am here today April 16 with Abbey. She is the math CTL for 7th grade.*

How long have you been here in our school?

Abbey: Six, well, this is the sixth year.

Researcher: *Okay*

Abbey: Six years

Researcher: *How many years have you been CTL?*

Abbey: three years

Researcher: *Three years. And this is, you haven't taught anywhere else?*

Abbey: This is my first time.

Researcher: *Okay. About five or six years ago we began changing how we plan and planning and our instruction. And one of the things we began talking about was Professional Learning Communities. Could you explain what you believe the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community to be, as you understood it?*

Abbey: I understand it to be teachers who are professionals working together to collaboratively to plan everything that they're going to be doing in the classroom, but also to extend and what they know how, and like what they know about teaching, like technology, um in tech lab, new ideas for teaching, ideas that we all come together and there's contributions from

different sources and together we become a greater whole. Is kind of how I take it?

Researcher: *Okay. And here in our school as a CTL how would you explain what instructional supervision is?*

Abbey: Um for me I kind of feel that my role is to um to kind of facilitate when we have collaborative planning and when we meet I also am the go to girl for when anyone who has questions about either the content or they need to clarify or just really any needs that you work with has. So I'm kind of the one that they can go to as their immediate point of contact, then I can either point them in the right direction or I can immediately facilitate what everyone needs, so Where I can actually go and get whatever it is they need. So for me I feel that my role is not really their boss but more of a facilitator, uh making sure that math curriculum is being implemented successfully in all of the seventh grade classrooms. Math classrooms, so I kind of feel like that is my role.

Researcher: *Kind of like on the scope and sequence for some math curriculum?*

Abbey: The scope and sequence, um as far as special lesson plans, as far, like just everything that we're doing kind of like what we're teaching, when we're teaching and how we're teaching. Is kind of what I think of when I think of instructional supervision.

Researcher: *Well thank you, that's kind of our first interview there and um we'll plan on our second one.*

Second interview with Abbey, seventh grade math curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *Well we are here today with Abbey, she's the seventh grade math CTL. It's April 21, 2010 our second interview we want to go a little further in talking about your role as CTL. In our first interview, you, we talked about PLC and the characteristic of that and you stated that characteristics of a PLC were professionals working together to collaboratively to plan everything that goes in the classroom, we talked about that. In light of that definition could you explain your role as CTL in regards to that idea?*

Abbey: Uh, I mostly, as far as that's concerned, I feel that I am a facilitator so anytime that we are getting together to plan I kind of come up with the structure of this is what we are planning for. I also put together a math binder every year that has here's our scope and sequence more specifically here's what we need to be teaching every week. Not necessarily that you do this on this day, you do this on this day, but this is where we need to be so we can stay together as a group, so that the connection classes are able to remediate appropriately. So I feel that my role is more like big idea of here's what we're doing and kind of the focus of what any collaboration that we need to do together. I kind of help focus that.

Researcher: *All right, very good. Um, would you, did you feel like as going as being CTL that your expectations were clearly communicated to you? About how you were perform your role?*

Abbey: No. I took over CTL. The first year I was co-CTL and so the other lady who was CTL was out on maternity leave. And so I kind of took it over and I think it was a lot of learning as I went type thing. As far as the expectations I still have not been specifically told what my expectations are. I've been doing it for three years. So it's kind of I kind of figured out my own little roles and I've gone with those.

Researcher: *Well, what would you say those are if you? Well, in thinking about that, you haven't been told explicitly, what do you think your expectations are?*

Abbey: Uh I feel like I'm the organizer um, as far as our scope and sequence I make sure we are all organized that the people that join the math department either from another grade level or just came to our school brand new. I kind of put their information together for them. For the other teachers I just facilitate them putting, like I put all the stuff on the S-drive and they have to get it themselves. But I'm the organizer so I kind of make sure everybody's organized. Um. . .

Researcher: *When you say stuff what type stuff?*

Abbey: um, the math materials as far as we have a math binder that has our scope and sequence explicitly laid out I've created a calendar that I've put in there that has everything, has like what we need to be doing each week or what topics and how many weeks we have to cover each topic. In the math binder I've pulled together different assessments that we have been using. And there not you have to use them type of assessments there assessments

that can be used. So there's kind of like a way for the new teachers to come in and not feel like they have nothing. Kind of gives them a starting point for everything that they're doing. Um it also has resources in there such as CRCT links, it has all the scope and sequences for our grade level as well as the other grade level so that teachers can see where the kids have been and where they're going and where they are now. So I kind of organize that stuff I guess could say all the math materials. So I feel that I'm the organizer of the materials. I'm also the problem solver. Anytime a teacher has a problem in math, whether it's math related or they need something, they need to know something, they generally come to me and say I need this or what is this or how do you do that and I solve the problem. Whether I actually solve it myself, or whether I direct them into the right place, or I say, "I'll take care of it and whatever." So I'm in general the problem solver. I organize, I solve problems I also am generally the one that has given information from our assistance principals as far as this needs to be done and I have to go back and communicate it. So I'm also the communicator from certain levels to other levels, then I also go back so when we're in meetings and we discuss things that the teachers either want to know more about or they have a problem with or they have suggestions we put them together and I'm the one who then goes and communicates that either with the assistant principal in charge of the math department, or Dr. Kruskamp, or with the assistant principal in

charge of seventh grade academy. So whomever it needs to be communicated with. So I'm kind of like the conduit between the administration and the math teacher. What else? I feel like I do a little bit of everything. So I'm kind of like the anytime anybody needs anything done I, they will generally come to me and say I need this and I will either do it or figure it out. I feel like I do a lot as far as this position goes and so I would say my job is to pretty much take care of the seventh grade teachers, whatever they need.

Researcher: *Okay, whatever they need in order to. . .*

Abbey: Teach in their classrooms. Like, whether they need materials to teach, whether they, whatever they need in order to teach. Is kind of my role.

Researcher: *well, in light of that if you were to ask your curriculum team members that you work with what do you think they would say your role as CTL is? How would they view it?*

Abbey: I think that I must just be an over achiever cause I talk to other CTLs and their like you do all of that. And I'm like yeah, don't you? So I don't feel like they do all of the same things that I do. I feel like I've kind of fallen into that I'm such an organized person that it is more natural for me to take over,

Researcher: *No, I. . .*

Abbey: but I would say that other CTLs aren't doing.

Researcher: *What about your teachers?*

Abbey: Oh, the teachers?

Researcher: *The one is that are in your seventh grade curriculum math.*

Abbey: the seventh grade math teachers, oh they would say that I do a lot more than probably necessary. I threaten last year, I said you know I think this might be my last year and I thought they were all going to boycott. They're like NO you can't leave. So I think that they are a little spoiled, but also they are very appreciative of all the stuff that I do. So they would say that I do probably above and beyond.

Researcher: *Okay, very good. Could you give me one example maybe in the last year of you've kind of given some already but maybe more specific an example of what you do as CTL that you know that demonstrates what you think you should be doing? I know you talked about the notebook. Is there something else that maybe you do weekly that you could tell me about?*

Abbey: Um. I create our weekly agendas for our math meetings, um, which actually I should say biweekly. We have a meeting every week but one week it just to check and make sure everyone's doing okay and then we break into small groups to do collaborative planning. The alternate weeks we have an organized meeting.

Researcher: *With everyone?*

Abbey: well, everyone goes to both meetings, but the organized meeting is structured with an agenda it has specific topics that we're going to cover, times that we cover, that we, that I have allotted for each topic, it also has

if Jeff is going to come speak to us, it has him or M?????? Everything that we are going to do is on the agenda and I also make sure I um get it set up to where going to meet Because we rotate meeting places with the teachers so that we meet in different classes so we can all look at what other people are doing and get good ideas from them. And so I set that up and figure out where we are going to meet and someone is going to be time keeper so I kind of get that organized. So I do that on a very regular basis.

Researcher: *Okay. Where did you get that idea from of doing whole group one week and then breaking into small groups? Did you develop that or how did you come about that?*

Abbey: Actually, we use to meet biweekly, so we met every other week when I first started teaching here and that was great that gave us enough, it was kind of what we need as far as a structured these are the topics we need to go over. And then on alternate weeks we would always just collaborate. Well then we were told two years ago that we needed to do a meeting, like an organized meeting every week. Because we always just did our collaborative planning and we just did it in our department.

Researcher: *Together?*

Abbey: right, we always have done that. So that wasn't a big thing for us cause we're like oh we already do that so what we decided to do was do the every other week and we actually said hey we are going to be doing our collaborative planning on this day instead of every group just picking their

own day. Cause that's what we use to do is like okay so these five teachers like to meet on Mondays, so they would meet on Mondays, and these three teachers like to meet on Wednesdays, so they would meet on Wednesdays. So instead of everybody just meeting on whatever day they wanted to we said okay we're going to meet on Thursdays. So it was kind of it almost naturally came around like let's do that so I was the one who mentioned it, but it was not like a big jump for us.

Researcher: *Okay, very good. Um, one of the things that we have here is CRCT testing, we're in the middle of that now and that is one of our high accountability things for our students as far as promotion and for us as teachers to make sure that they can score well on the test. In light of that type of environment where we have high stakes testing, as it is to be called, how do you see your connection between your instructional supervision that you provide as CTL and those high stakes tests and accountability?*

Abbey: I would say, um, that's kind of an area where I have to almost step in sometimes and say okay, you have to teach all of these topics before this deadline. And so there are times where I have had to step in and say you are taking too long, to a specific teacher, I would never call anyone out in a group, but speak to someone individually say okay if you are only at this point we need to get you sped up. Do you need help? What do you need? Let's us work together so we can kind of get you where you're going. Simply because with the high stakes testing it covers everything from our

curriculum, and that's given on a specific day, so there's no lead way, oh let me get an extra week. It's this day, that's it. So with that being the case that's kind of where I feel I have to, I like to make sure we are all staying together so that it doesn't end up with one teacher being a month or two behind, not having covered all the material, and then the students are being held to this accountability, of you have to pass in order to promote and suddenly they hadn't had all the material it is very unlikely that they will be able to do well on it. So, I kind of feel like, that's where that kind of keeping the thumb on what's going on and kind of keeping pace of with how everybody's doing and making sure that we are covering all of the material. Um, that's kind of what I take as my biggest role, other things that I also would say fall under things that I kind of watch out for is making sure that we spend accurate amount of time in relation to the percentages. Like algebra is the largest percent of the CRCT for us. So we make sure that we spend an amount of time that reflects that. Where data analysis is deemed tiny, it kind of, making sure we line up our instructional calendar to the percentages of the CRCT.

Researcher: *And that's part of what your weekly and biweekly focus on? That times the time and that keeping on track?*

Abbey: Right. Every meeting that we have even if it is just a planning meeting we still come together at the beginning and just status check. Where we all check in and say how are things going? Where are you? And, you know,

do you have any questions? So every week we do that, every teacher participates to say this is where I am, um, this is how it's going, and either, yes, I have questions here they are or no I'm good.

Researcher: *Okay*

Abbey: it gives everybody an opportunity also to see peer wise where are we all, so that we all know that we're staying together.

Researcher: *Okay, we talked earlier about expectations being clearly communicated to you, and you talked about some of the things you know you do uh, when you look at all that you do in light of, preparing for that high stakes test and preparing the students, what would you say the top five things that you should always be doing? You kind of covered those you might include some of the ones from earlier, but if you had to tell the three to five things that absolutely you have to do all the time, what would that be?*

Abbey: As far as teachers or me?

Researcher: *As far as being the CTL and the practices that you participate in the role that you have.*

Abbey: The top five things, I would say, definitely, the organization, cause I think if you lose organization, you've lost every meaning, you have no clear purpose, you don't know where you're going or how to get there, anything else. So organization is definitely number one. Um, I would say making sure that we all stay on track so that almost, not I don't want to say supervision, but almost as supervision, making sure we check and that

we're all staying focused and where we need to be, so keeping us on our straight and narrow path.

Researcher: *Tracking the progress?*

Abbey: Right, right, just making sure we are all staying there. Um, I would say for the sake of the happiness of the teachers is that communication element making sure they know what's going on because I know that nothing is more frustrating for, really anyone is to not have a clue what's going on.

Researcher: *You mean communication between you and the curriculum teachers?*

Abbey: Um hum, between the administrations to the teachers. I feel like, I'm like that middle person, who has been told, get this to them, then so that I can get them, and then I'm like they. . . are like we want to know, to go back. So I feel like, they like to be kept in the loop. And I'm also on county committees, so I go to the county level and I find out things there, and again report back to the teachers. So I feel like that keeps them happy, because they know what's going on. They know what's coming they know what to look forward to or you know what's happening cause when they don't they get very frustrated. Which I do too, so I understand that. So... that's probably.

Researcher: *If that's the top ones that's fine.*

Abbey: I would say that's probably, I mean mostly, organization covers most of what I do.

Researcher: Okay

Abbey: Oh then problem solving is probably on there too.

Researcher: *You mentioned that earlier, about problem solving. Okay. Well, I don't have anything else now. So I think we're finished. We'll look at the dates for next week and we'll try to get together for our next interview and take it a little further.*

Abbey: Okay

Researcher: *Thank you so much*

Abbey: Your welcome.

Third interview with Abbey, seventh grade math curriculum team leader:

Researcher: *Well it's Wednesday, April 28th, we're here with Abbey who is the seventh grade math CTL. This is our third interview. One of the things that I wanted to start off with, was talking about previously we talked about instructional supervision, and you defined that as being the facilitator of collaborative planning so that the math curriculum is implemented. Um, could you explain, would you want to add anything to that definition.*

Abbey: Uh, not really, um implemented maybe in a timely manner, but no, yeah really that covers it I feel anyway.

Researcher: *Okay. You are a facilitator of that?*

Abbey: Um, hmm

Researcher: *Well your title CTL stands for curriculum team leader, and um, would you say that leader best describes what you do verses say instructional supervisor?*

Abbey: I would, I would say, um for me a leader kind of helps to make sure the group is going in the right direction, where as a supervisor almost, it almost feels like it has negative connotation of there's an evaluation element to a supervisor. So and I'm not here to judge my peers I'm simply here to make sure we are all going in the right direction. So I kind of feel that leader for me feels like a better descriptor of what I am and what I do.

Researcher: *So you're a part, you would say you're a part of the curriculum team?*

Abbey: Um hmm, I feel like I'm a part of the team, I'm part of the group, I'm just the part of the group that also makes sure that we all are as a group going in the right direction. I feel like that makes me more a part of the group, and it doesn't kind of ostracize me from the group where as supervisor, I mean there's almost kind of like an invisible wall between the group and the supervisor. And I don't want there to be a wall between us, I want us to be able to work together as a team and I feel like leader is, for me, better, as a definition.

Researcher: *Okay. Um, well in thinking about your position as the leader of the group, what would you say has helped you the most to uh, to be a successful leader of the curriculum team?*

Abbey: Um, I think working with the team prior to becoming the leader. So kind of already having a feel for how the curriculum works, and for having a feel with my peers and who they are and where their strengths lie and maybe where they needed more support. And where my strengths are and where I need support. And kind of, already having a feel for how we work together as a group, even though we've had new people join us and we've had some people leave, um being part of the group, as just you know, a part then stepping in as leader I felt like I had a more clear idea of where we needed to go, because I already had experience.

Researcher: *And you were just part of the, you were just the teacher for how many years before?*

Abbey: Three

Researcher: *For three years. And you've been?*

Abbey: CTL for three.

Researcher: *For three, okay.*

Abbey: So I've had three of each.

Researcher: *All right, very good. Is there anything that you could say hindered you? Or things that have come up while you've been CTL that maybe, came up and slowed you down or you had to work around?*

Abbey: For me, um, I was second youngest in the group when I took over CTL, so for me I was very young and yet leading. So, um that kind of took a little bit of everyone getting use to that. So that kind of been an obstacle, but with the county level committees that I served on, and I was knowledgeable, and if I didn't know something, I did go out and make sure that I learned it. I think that almost established that role with my group they realized that yes I was younger and didn't have as many years of experience, but what I lacked in that I more than made for in my willingness to find out information and I did go to all the committee meetings and did report back and so, what I lacked in experience I made up with in all those different areas. So and that is one of those things that as I've CTL each year, so now it's almost a given. So, it's not even a remote problem at this point but at first it was little bit of a challenge to overcome.

Researcher: *Okay, um, when thinking about the teachers and them delivering instructions to students, what positive impact on teacher instruction have you observed from the curriculum meetings what would you say is a positive outcome, affecting instruction?*

Abbey: I would think that um, some of the ideas. For instance, a teacher shared with us something she had learned at a training she had gone to last summer, and we all said oh that's a great idea, a great new way or different way of teaching this concept. And it was just an alternate strategy that can be used, and I think things like that; like the atmosphere that we've created where everyone, kind of, feels free to share and to give ideas. Well that was great, and I know I've taken that and run with it. So I think creating an environment where teachers feel comfortable sharing their ideas has been great, because we have all benefited from, you know, other people's ideas as far as ways to present instructions, different assessments to use, tools to use, software programs, um, so I think we have all benefit because we feel comfortable enough to share.

Researcher: *Um hum. Do you think that is something that is kind of pervasive in your curriculum team that everybody is open to the collaboration of the team?*

Abbey: I think so, and I think it especially when we have, a lot us are established we've been together for, uh this is my sixth year, we've all been together for six years or more. Um, but we have a couple of new people, and I would say that they are probably still getting use to us but I would say that

they feel more comfortable as they've been with us longer, cause you start hearing them piping up and starting to share. I um, am glad that they feel more comfortable, I think at first they probably were like oh I'm new I don't know what to say, or anything, but I think that they are feeling more comfortable. I hope that they are feeling more comfortable.

Researcher: *Well they are participating or you say their participating.*

Abbey: I would say that they are participating and each week that we meet I feel like they are participating more than they did previously. So I feel like there's positive movement there. And the way that the department works I'm sure that they will be with us a while longer, because we haven't had a lot of change in our department, so which is a good thing I feel, cause we kind of are able to build and build and build each year what we're doing because we keep working together on it and keep making it better. So we have a very positive attitude, I feel like we have a good attitude.

Researcher: *Okay, um. Well the opposite of the positive, do you see any negatives from, uh, say within the team about, that impact instruction, or is there, or maybe it's not within the team, is there anything from outside of the curriculum team that maybe has uh, caused any negative?*

Abbey: I would say over all I am super-duper pleased with the department that I work with. I brag all the time that I feel like we're the best department in this whole school. Um, I would say probably one of the things that we, that we all find frustrating, is changes that are not communicated. For

instance, the high stakes test, the ORT that we were supposed to have given, that we had been working on preparing for we found out at the very last moment that it was cancelled. And we found,

Researcher: *Was this last year?*

Abbey: No that was this year.

Researcher: *This year, okay.*

Abbey: And then last year found out at the very last moment that it wasn't going to count for anything, so it kind of, feels like sometimes we are the last to know, which we all find frustrating. Even me, oh, oh that would have been handy to have known, you know, before now. So I would say, and those are outside forces that we can't really do anything about, but it is still frustrating for the group.

Researcher: *And those aren't building, were those building level or county, uh system level decisions?*

Abbey: System level decisions, which are good and why we have absolutely no say in it. We are just like outside forces, we're just like "sigh", but I feel like we do manage to move forward, but we have to all just take a minute to go oh that was very frustrating.

Researcher: *Well good, um, and this is kind of along the same line, but thinking about obstacles of a. . . I think earlier I asked you, I mean I asked were there some positive and negative impact on instruction, but are there any obstacles that you could relate that um, hindered you in anyway? That's*

kind of the same question, I guess, but I was trying to think of uh, are there any obstacles in say the way school is organized or the way we go about things that you think impact how you work with your team?

Abbey: Mmm, let me think. No.

Researcher: *Well that's fine. I understand that. And that's good, you have just talked about the good relationship you have with your AP and the people and so that would go along with that for sure. Um, one of the things we talked about is different practices; I think in our last interview or the interview before you talked about how that originally you started and you met every week and it kind of evolved into...*

Abbey: We met every other week.

Researcher: *You met every other week and then it evolved into small groups one week, large group, small group, as you alternated, are there any other procedures or practices that you may have changed over the last year or so or two that uh, and how the group works, or how you work with the group.*

Abbey: Well actually, I was thinking about that not so much; I would say the past year, because this is my third year. The first year was definitely learning, um, second year we kind of worked a lot of kinks out, this year I feel like we've mostly worked all the kinks out so this year it was a matter of, we did change, that is when we went to every other week, because this was the first year where we were required to meet every week. And we've

always met every week, but we actually had to document that we were meeting every week so we just started doing our small group collaborations on Thursdays instead of whenever people wanted to meet. Um, that was really the only change we've probably had in awhile, um, simply because we kind of, I feel like worked most of the kinks out already, but of course we're more open like if there's anything that needs to be changed we'll erase that and change if it needs it.

Researcher: *Do you think that's because, uh, as you stated earlier so many of you have worked together for a period of time?*

Abbey: Yeah, and we've kind of, we're kind of in our groove, um, one of the nice things is that the group of teachers that I work with, like I said we had some new people join us this year, whether they're from different grade levels or different curriculum areas, for whatever reason they were new to our team, for seventh grade math, and um, I feel like we've all made sure that they are all included in everything that we do. So that, you know, the small groups which were pretty established, like everyone pretty much had their small group that they worked with, we've made sure to like, cause when some people left, so some of the small groups were too small, and so they've worked with others, and we've brought in some of the new people, and kind of so I feel like, you know, we've done our best to include them. So that was a little bit of change, but not drastic, nothing major.

Researcher: *Well, um, one of the things that I wanted to talk about was not just the work you have with your curriculum team, but thinking about some of the things that you have mentions that all the CTLs meet with the administrative team, which includes your AP's and your principal, and that sort of thing, and in thinking about that relationship the question I had was: what type of guidance or direction do you feel like you've received from the administrative team? I know before we talked about expectations, but I'm just thinking about on the regular month to month basis as you work along, do you feel like you get...what do you get from those, those meetings, and how does that work?*

Abbey: Well quite frankly, a few of those meetings have been cancelled this year so we have not met as much as we have in previous years. Um, additionally I missed like two of them for whatever reason, so, I don't feel like I've had a lot of, um, guidance from the administrative team as a whole. My math administrator has come to me with different things, but as an administrative team, with the principal and the team, and then the CTL's I have not felt like I have gotten a lot from those levels.

Researcher: *Well thinking about those meeting, what do you see as the purpose of that group meeting? You know, from your perspective what was the original intent in your mind and what has actually happened?*

Abbey: From what I was told the intent was that we would get together and meet and things that needed to be communicated to every department would be expressed to us in those meetings. And then we would go out and share with our teachers. So, it was kind of a way to get information trickled down to everybody by going through these channels. Is the way it was communicated to me, but this year with us not meeting as much, um and the meetings that we have had, that I have been at and the sometimes I haven't, but at the ones I have been at it did not feel as if that was truly the purpose of those anymore. So. . .

Researcher: *Then what would you say?*

Abbey: I don't know. I think they just check in to make sure that we doing what we're supposed to be doing.

Researcher: *Okay. When you say doing what you're supposed to be doing, is the school purpose or the school vision discussed. Is there any, when you say checking in, are we, what are we checking in about?*

Abbey: I would say, like for instance there was one meeting where we were talking about RBES and LSPI, so we met, it was explained to us what the school goal is, we were, the data was described to us and then we were told go back to your curriculum areas, and make sure they are doing xyz as far as making these goals and you know, making sure it reflects the LSPI and the school goals. So and then they kind of, say are you doing that. So, and that's what I kind of feel the checking in. Not too much of

like specifics of, okay seventh grade math did you do this, but more of as a group, are all doing this, okay good, make sure that you're all doing this.

Researcher: *In the past have you received any guidance about instructional supervision as far as how to go about, we'll use your word, how to go about leading your curriculum team? Is there anything specific that you can think back, it doesn't necessarily have to be in this year, but in thinking back?*

Abbey: I would say over all not so much. Um, no I really I took this over blind, I had no idea what I was getting into when I agreed, um. Yeah I just kind of thought it was, I had no idea. Um,

Researcher: *And so. . .*

Abbey: But I do, I would say that there's hit and misses as far as guidance for the CTLs uh, a couple of years ago we had meetings about, uh, it wasn't peer coaching, but it was the same type of thing it was peer observations, it was last year. So we went to couple of different trainings about the CTLs went to the training, and then the CTLs went and then observed peers within their teams, and I felt like at that point, we were given specific, explicit instructions on observing, but not with the goal of evaluating but the goal of just seeing what was going on in the school. I took it, for my teachers so it would become a positive, good spin on it, that I was going out to see the wonderful things that they were doing in their classrooms so that when we met as a group I could say, kind of like a brag thing of this is going on,

and this is going on and I saw this wonderful idea and I thought it was great, I thought we could kind of steal from that it was so good. So I kind of took as an opportunity to kind of boost the morale of my team, and not just say I'm coming into evaluate you, cause I didn't feel like, it was expressed that was not our purpose, because we are not, we are teachers, we're not administrators, so that's should, that's never supposed to be a part of our job description. So for that, that was explicit this is what your responsibilities are. But as far as generally my responsibilities as CTL, no I have never had them described to me, as far as what role I need to play, no I've never had it described to me. So. . .

Researcher: *So you would say that the role that you play now as curriculum team leader is?*

Abbey: Is a self-described role that I, that I put together on my own, and said this needs to be done, okay I'll do it. Um, when you need math binders created, I'll create those. We need, um xyz, you know, we need someone who's going to make sure that we're all doing this, then I'll do that. So it's kind of been a role that has morphed as I've seen needs, I've said okay, is that something that I need to do or is something I kind of say hey guys I need help with this. But no I've never had my role described to me. I would have no idea if there is even that in writing somewhere, I've never had it, never seen it. Never, never

Researcher: *Okay, there's something, I've forgot about, I'm trying to think back, I didn't write it down. Uh, I'm sure that when I go back over I'll think of it again. Okay well thank you.*

Abbey: Did you want to ask me about the last question?

Researcher: *Oh, yes, I'm sorry, thank you so much. That is one of the one I did want to get. When you hear the words high stakes testing and accountability what comes to mind. What do you think about?*

Abbey: Well, immediately I thought of CRCT, MRT, and No Child Left Behind, which are kind of like the key words that you hear.

Researcher: *And that's the. . .*

Abbey: CRCT Criterion Referenced Competency Test.

Researcher: *That's the state test and then the. . .*

Abbey: MRT was a county level test, that's actually, because of numerous factors, none of which have been explicitly told to us, um, has been scrapped. We did it for a few years, but it's gone. And then No Child Left Behind is the legislation that states we all have to meet AYP, or adequate yearly progress, so that we can continue to get federal funding. Um, for me when I hear high stakes testing, I'd say there is both positives and negatives. Um I personally, and this is probably the math portion of me coming out, I don't think that is bad thing. I think that um, having a standardized test that says this is what you need to teach and then it assesses whatever the kids have learned at the end, I think that's not a bad thing. It is criterion

referenced, we're all told explicitly, here's the criteria, make sure they learn this, and I think it helps to guide instruction, cause instead of teach whatever, it's teach this. So I think it just kind of helps give clear goals to all teachers in curriculum. Now as far, and that is the portion of accountability of my job is to teach this material, and it kind of says, you know, whether I taught the material. Now is every child going to learn it, no not necessarily, but at least it gives me a goal of this is what I need to do, and it gives a tool for assessing whether the kids have learned what they need to learn or not. As far as high stakes testing, I'm not as big of a fan of that; um I like the idea that the kids need to perform well on the CRCT. And for seventh grade it is a promotion requirement. So for me, I feel that they need to perform well, because they should show that they've learned all this material, I mean, it seems like almost a given, you've been in class all year you had to learn this you should know it. But at the same time having one test it's taken on one day to determine promotion for the entire year, and the test isn't even given on the last day of school, it's given a month, a month and a half, before the last day of school, I feel like that almost sends the wrong idea. It sends the idea that, oh this is the only really important day. This is the day you take the test, and once the test is over you're done, you don't really have to do anything after the test because that's the only thing that is going to determine promotion, so for me I don't like that. I think that sends the wrong message of if you have a

bad day, uh you flunk seventh grade. So I don't care for that I understand the need for the accountability portion, the high stakes testing portion, that, somehow that needs to be different. But I also understand that if wasn't a promotion requirement not all students would do their very best. Which, that's a sad commentary on society or what that is, but I understand the need for making it high stakes, but at the same time I don't like the fact that it's high stakes.

Researcher: *Yeah I understand, I can see both sides of that so. Well in thinking about that, you know, the good and the bad, um how does that impact you as the CTL, as the curriculum team leader, how does that play into what you do each day with your curriculum team?*

Abbey: Um, I know that when we as a group, cause we try to work together as a group to create assessments, when I say common assessments, we try to have, um when we were getting ready for the MRT, we had common performance assessments because that's more of a performance based exam, or it was a performance exam, but we try to come up with assessments that are similar in formatting to our standardized tests, so that the kids don't get to the standardize test and that's the first time they've ever seen that formatting, so we try to work together as a group to make sure. And I went to all the committees for the MRT so, for me I was excessively exposed to the exam, so I knew exactly how the formatting needed to be done, so I was, you know, very helpful in leading that to

make sure it was formatted correctly. And on the CRCT of course, we all try to work together to make sure that we do multiple-choice tests that mirror the same formatting as that. Um, which of course apparently the CRCT is being revised in the next few years, it's all going to go to universal design. Which I am currently being trained in that, actually I've been trained in that and I'm working on a committee, and item review committee with the county to revise all of our interim questions and the item bank to mirror universal design, so that, because it's suppose to be more accessible to all students anyway. So it's supposed to be a better way to write a test, but the CRCT will also go to that in a few years, so that's to help the county get ready for that, but I'm also bring my knowledge back to the curriculum. Cause when we did our last interim I went oh, we need to do it this way, um universal design dictates that, yada yada yada.

Researcher: *So that has impacted how your team has made those common assessments, and those tests.*

Abbey: It's starting to, cause I just did the training about two months ago. So I go back every so often I went yesterday, I'll go back next week, and this portion where I'm going back is actually to do the item analysis and the review of the each, each of the thousands and thousands and thousands of questions in item banks. We're kind of doing as many as we can, I'm sorry, but I've gone three times so far, I go next week, and the following week and the following week, and I'll be going this summer as well, so

each time I go I feel like I get more practice with it I get better on it, I'm starting to really pickup on those things you need look for universal design. So I feel like that has allowed me to come back and share with the group and say this is what we need to look at and this is how we need to make sure we're setting up our test so that they will...the students will be able, a: the test will be assessable to all students and b: the students will be accustom to that type of test so that they will be comfortable with the interims next year as well as the CRCT when it gets to them.

Researcher: *Well thank you, that is the last one, I appreciate you reminding me of that and we'll stop now and we'll talk about next time.*

Abbey: All right.

APPENDIX H: CODING CATEGORIES

Research Question One

CPLC	Characteristics of professional learning communities
DIS	Defining instructional supervision

Research Question Two

RCTL	Role of the curriculum team leader
WCTL	Work of the curriculum team leader
RWT	Relationship with teachers
TR	Top responsibilities of curriculum team leaders
DS	Differentiated supervision
NAS	Not a supervisor

Research Question Three

SOJ	Success of job
HJS	Hinders job success
LOG	Lack of guidance
IC	Increased collaboration
HTE	High-stakes testing effect

APPENDIX I: TEAM MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Seventh Grade Language Arts Curriculum Team Questionnaire Responses

Question 1: Who is your CTL?

Team Member 1 Paula Smith
Team Member 2 Paula Smith
Team Member 3 Paula Smith

Question 2: Describe the role/job of the CTL, as you have observed it.

Team Member 1

- organize meetings, benchmarks, planning
- Help plan lessons, give input, and share suggestions and ideas
- Support curriculum area problems by voicing concerns to administration.

Team Member 2

- Plan meetings, relay information, serve as liaison between teachers, administration
- Provide support

Team Member 3

- Leads our meetings
- Organize information from administrative team
- Collaborates with seventh grade Language Arts teachers
- Planning and lesson ideas
- Submits our tests for bench marks

Question 3: Describe the working relationship you have with the CTL?

Team Member 1

- Lisa has been a great support system for me this year. She has checked on me throughout the year, and she has helped me organize my plans so that they are successful. She has given me great ideas and suggestions, and she is always there for any problem, concern, or question I may have.

Team Member 2

- I feel free to discuss concerns, issues, and questions with her. I feel she does a lot to support and help Language Arts teachers. I feel she does an excellent job managing/leading Language Arts teachers.

Team Member 3

- We work well together.

Question 4: Describe the collaborative curriculum team in which you participate, in particular, the CTLs role in that team.

Team Member 1

- Our small group collaboration runs very smoothly. Lisa assigns the groups at the beginning of the year and comes to our meetings when she is not scheduled with another group. She also gives us an agenda for what we need to cover during our small and large group meetings. Her role has been to guide us.

Team Member 2

- Teachers work together to plan, make assessments, and share ideas. The CTL manages and participates also.

Team Member 3

- Our team plans together for the year. We share lesson ideas and resources. Technology is readily used by seventh grade Language Arts teachers. Our CTL leads our collaborating efforts by having materials and ideas readily available.

Sixth Grade Social Studies Curriculum Team Questionnaire Responses

Question 1: Who is your CTL?

Team Member 1: Joe Beck

Team Member 2: Joe Beck

Team Member 3: Joe Beck

Question 2: Describe the role/job of the CTL, as you have observed it.

Team Member 1

- To keep us informed about the instructions handed down by department head. Keep us aligned with scope and sequence. Schedule and run weekly meetings. Ensure all teachers are knowledgeable of AKSs and where to find ways to teach AKS.

Team Member 2

- The role of the CTL is to conduct the weekly meetings (curriculum). Bring the teachers all information from the county office and be the liaison for the new teachers to that curriculum.

Team Member 3

- Lead the mandatory, full time planning period once a week
- Organize S-drive materials
- Gather content and questions for benchmarks
- Relay information from administration
- Encourage us to follow curriculum map and calendar

Team Member 4

- Facilitate social studies curriculum is being delivered appropriately

Question 3: Describe the working relationship you have with the CTL.

Team Member 1

- Joe is a very friendly person. He is very willing to share all his ideas and lessons. He is also laid back and helps make teaching social studies fun.

Team Member 2

- He has been very helpful in getting the materials necessary to be successful in my classroom. He has also helped with ideas of “WOW” and has collaborated with me being that this is the first year that I’ve taught this subject.

Team Member 3

- Fine! He is kind, approachable, dedicated to RMS.
- So glad he has the job and not someone else.

Team Member 4

- Great

Question 4: Describe the collaborative curriculum team in which you participate, in particular, the CTLs role in that team.

Team Member 1

- We all work together to discuss the best materials to teach AKS. We review benchmarks (many we have to create together). Keep each other in line with scope and sequence. Sometimes we break off into small group collaboration. Beck leads and coordinates these efforts.

Team Member 2

- He has been very instrumental in my collaboration efforts. As described in answer #3.

Team Member 3

- Loose, diverse in teaching styles and adherence to schedule lesson structure.
- Shared frustration with hurried and disjointed content map
- We collaborate at a low level-but really no desire or need to “step it up.” All involved seem to be competent, experience teachers able to do their job independently.

Team Member 4

- Designing benchmarks
- Organizing materials and resources on S-drive
- Brainstorming about lesson plans that work

Sixth Grade Science Curriculum Team Questionnaire Responses

Question 1: Who is your CTL?

Team Member 1 Ann Lee
Team Member 2 Ann Lee
Team Member 3 Ann Lee

Question 2: Describe the role/job of the CTL, as you have observed it.

Team Member 1

- Remind teacher and revisit instructional calendar
- Share lessons and resources
- Coauthor, offer input opportunities, and distribute benchmarks and other common assessments.

Team Member 2

- In charge of running our weekly meeting
- Guiding discussions on information to be passed along
- Keeping us “together” regarding information taught and shared

Team Member 3

- The role of the CTL is to facilitate the weekly science meeting. The CTL should also make sure that teachers are keeping up with the curriculum.

Question 3: Describe the working relationship you have with the CTL.

Team Member 1

- Great, coworkers, good friends on a personal level, much give and take with the professional relationship

Team Member 2

- We often plan and bounce ideas off of each other. She is a great resource to our science classes.

Team Member 3

- It is much better. I feel that she listens to what I have to add to our meetings.

Question 4: Describe the collaborative curriculum team in which you participate, in particular, the CTLs role in that team.

Team Member 1

- I have thoroughly enjoyed and benefitted from the grade level academy organization. Beyond our grade level science meetings, it has been so easy to share materials and plans – there are three of us (including the CTL) who collaborate every couple of days.

Team Member 2

- Ann leads our meetings and puts questions out to us as to how we like to do a lesson and activities. She brings materials and ideas to share with our group. We often break into smaller groups to plan for our individual classes. (Probe, special education)

Team Member 3

- Again the CTL is the leader of a framework in which we implement our daily activity. She gives us some sources to go through our daily activity.

Seventh Grade Math Curriculum Team Questionnaire Responses

Question 1: Who is your CTL?

Team Member 1	Abbey Jones
Team Member 2	Abbey Jones
Team Member 3	Abbey Jones
Team Member 4	Abbey Jones
Team Member 5	Abbey Jones
Team Member 6	Abbey Jones

Question 2: Describe the role/job of the CTL, as you have observed it.

Team Member 1

- Lead group meetings
- Helps facilitate collaboration
- Puts together interims

Team Member 2

- Provide leadership in curriculum as the school year progresses. This would include planning currently and into the future regarding present and future activities.

Team Member 3

- The role of the CTL is to help teachers get what they need in order to do their job teaching.

Team Member 4

- Curriculum leader, determine agenda of meetings, liaison between administrators and teachers, trains and mentors new staff, goes to person with questions and problems.

Team Member 5

- Lead meetings
- Provide strategies and assistance
- Informing us re: various information
- She has a wealth of materials she is willing to share

Team Member 6

- Organize grade level curriculum. Present grade wise announcements. Encourage each member of the team to add their knowledge to a common pool for the betterment of all.

Question 3: Describe the working relationship you have with the CTL.

Team Member 1

- Great! Such a helper goes above and beyond duty as a CTL. Makes being in seventh grade math easy and fun.

Team Member 2

- Limited contact with the CTL-most daily work is planned in the classroom, for my students. She provides the framework and some detail. The implementation is left to me.

Team Member 3

- We all work together to make assessment and get materials that are necessary for classroom instruction.

Team Member 4

- Professionally, mutually, helpful, collaborative, respectful.

Team Member 5

- Wonderful. She is very helpful and organized-comes to our rooms frequently to check in and make sure things are going well.

Team Member 6

- We share lesson plans, class work, etc. Discuss assessment and better ways to accomplish our mission of instruction. We also share.

Question 4: Describe the collaborative curriculum team in which you participate, in particular, the CTLs role in that team.

Team Member 1

- Wonderful! Everyone is giving and willing to help. We divide work evenly so one person isn't stuck with all of it.

Team Member 2

- Again the CTL is the leader of a framework in which we implement our daily activity. She gives us some sources to go through our daily work.

Team Member 3

- The CTLs role is the same as stated above.

Team Member 4

- Leader
- Drives meetings and discussion
- Focused on results
- Keeps everyone on track and accountable

Team Member 5

- Lesson planning
- Resources
- Providing information from county

Team Member 6

- N/A

APPENDIX J: PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Principal Questionnaire Response

Question 1: Title

Principal of Rosewood Middle School

Question 2: Supervisory Role

- Assistant principals work directly with the CTLs and the curriculum teams; I would describe my supervision as indirect. Although I don't meet with the CTLs on a regular basis (usually monthly) the APs do meet on a regular basis (at least weekly).
- The APs receive directives from me on a fairly regular basis that they are instructed to relay to the CTLs and to the teachers on the curriculum teams.
- In fact, I have high expectations of the CTLs and of the APs to carry out the vision I have shared with our entire faculty.

Question 3: Top five things CTLs should be doing.

In order of priority:

- Providing instructional supervision/support
- Insuring that collaboration occurs within the context of curriculum team meetings
- Providing mentor and coaching as needed among faculty within their curriculum area and teams
- Insuring that teachers have the resources necessary to teach the curriculum and requesting these items from the appropriate person of vended
- Communicating directives and concerns to and from school leadership.

(The bulleted list provided in #3 is really not an all-inclusive lists and could change depending on circumstances and time to think or rethink priorities. The most important role of a CTL is to support student achievement in their classrooms and in the classrooms of those teachers that are on their teams.

Question 4: Explanation of the CTLs work.

- The CTL fulfills the role of the teacher's immediate leadership contact for his or her faculty or curriculum team. Although they do not evaluate the teachers within their groups they often recognize needs and issues before they become apparent to building leaders. Because of their proximity to their colleagues the CTLs can and

do implement solutions-often independently of their curriculum APs. The teacher-leaders often seek the advice or assistance of the curriculum APs.

Question 5: Expectation of CTLs

- At no time is it my expectation that a CTL act in an evaluative capacity.
- CTLs are, in fact, part of the “leadership” of RMS. I expect the CTLs to promote any initiatives that are implemented school-wide. Whether a CTL agrees with a task or not, they are expected to provide support both in their own classrooms and with their curriculum teams.

Assistant Principal Questionnaire Responses

Question 1: Title

Administrator 1

- AP-Assistant Principal for the 8th Grade Academy at Rosewood Middle School and administrator for the social studies teachers at Rosewood.

Administrator 2

- AP-Assistant Principal for the 6th Grade Academic at Rosewood Middle School and administrator for the language arts teachers at Rosewood.

Administrator 3

- AP-Assistant Principal for Data Analysis and Technology at Rosewood Middle School and administrator for the math teachers at Rosewood.

Administrator 4

- AP-Assistant Principal for the 7th Grade Academy at Rosewood Middle School and administrator for the science teachers at Rosewood.

Question 2: Supervisory Role

Administrator 1

- I collaborated with the three grade-level curriculum team leaders both individually and in a small group with all three. In the beginning of the school year, for example, we met to make sure we were all on the same page with the template/preparation of lessons plans. When we meet as a large group with the Principal, I make sure they know about the meeting and attend it. If for some reason, they are not able to attend the professional learning/collaborative meeting, I meet with the CTL and give the needed information. I give information about the county's professional learning opportunities to the CTLs and they, in turn, pass it on as needed. I attend all meetings to give support and encouragement to the CTLs and to monitor their success. If there is a problem/challenge, I intervene when needed.

Administrator 2

- I work with the Language Arts teachers to help support and facilitate the planning, instruction, and assessment of Language Arts at all levels.

Administrator 3

- As the assistant principal that works with math, I work directly with the three curriculum team leaders for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade made. I am the instructional supervisor for the math department; however, I rely very heavily on the

curriculum team leaders to keep each grade level on track. I meet with the curriculum team leaders as necessary to share information from the county or the administrative team that needs to be covered with the teachers. I also meet with the CTLs when I need their input on how to implement something in the math department.

Administrator 4

- I attend all grade level curriculum meetings weekly, and CTL meetings once per month. I relay pertinent county and professional learning information to the curriculum teams. I discuss RBES goals and their relationship to the school LSPI. I help assure that collaborative planning is taking place and that proper procedures are being followed.

Question 3: Top five things CTLs should be doing, in order of priority

Administrator 1

- They should be flexible and willing to meet with me to collaborate when needed/planned.
- They should organize the weekly meeting, plan and agenda in advance, send it out to teachers before the day of the meeting and “stick to” the agenda during the meeting.
- They should have a “check in” at each meeting to make sure everyone is following the curriculum calendar and offer support to those who need it.
- The CTL is a curriculum leader using and sharing resources and strategies with all teachers.
- While making sure best practices are used, they must also lead with assessment ideas and the use of data gathered through assessment.

Administrator 2

- Facilitate the curriculum teams to focus on quality lessons that bring “WOW!” to the classroom, thus ensuring student engagement.
- Collaborate on planning and assessment.
- Plan and create lessons that differentiate for the needs of ALL the students.
- Discuss assessments: data analysis of assessments, creation of quality assessments, common assessments to create a common language.
- CTL needs to be creating an energy that focuses on collaboration, teamwork, excitement for the subject matter, and finding ways to collaborate in and out of the assigned meeting time.

Administrator 3

- Providing leadership to grade level teachers. I think this is important because the teachers need to see someone on almost a daily basis that is completing the tasks and offering a model if needed.

- Guiding the collaboration-it is a big job to keep the teachers on topic and making sure that the collaborative planning time is not wasted.
- Help teachers plan WOW! Lessons.
- Work with teachers to find ways to differentiate, summarize, and use other best practices.
- Work with their teachers to create common assessments and then work together to analysis the data.

Administrator 4

- CTLs plan curriculum meetings.
- They mentor new teachers.
- They share resources, activities, and ideas with other teachers on the team.
- They plan collaboratively with other teachers on the team.
- They are instrumental in developing common assessments and RBES goals for the grade level.

Question 4: Explanation of the CTLs work

Administrator 1

- The Curriculum Team Leader needs to lead with integrity and positivity. He/she must have the respect of the other teachers as a professional who leads by example and who serves the needs of others. The CTL must be organized and informed so that he/she can present and follow the county's and the school's guidelines/professional learning in the meetings and in the classroom. The CTL must certainly know the curriculum, know the resources that are available, and know how to share both. The CTL must be a good listener when others are not quite ready to move forward. Data is exceedingly important, and the CTL must lead the group in using it to determine future decisions. Common assessments just be written by the group, and the CTL must, once again, be the leader in this endeavor while welcoming and encouraging input from all. Above all, the CTL must teach with energy, enthusiasm, and urgency so that his/her students are engaged, thus setting the highest of standards for the other teachers.

Administrator 2

- The Curriculum Team Leader is the glue that holds the content area group together. The CTL facilitates the meeting so that everyone is a contributing member of the group. It's important that the CTL not be the only person who talks each week. It's critical that the group members all share ideas so that quality instruction can occur daily in ALL classrooms. The CTL needs to ensure that all the members display collaboration and teamwork. The CTL creates an environment of "sharing" so that teachers watch out for their own students as well as the students of their colleagues. The CTL is one who is always looking for

ways to be better themselves and for the participants in the group to be better as well.

Administrator 3

- I worked as a CTL for several years before working as an assistant principal. I think doing both has provided me with a unique perspective. As an AP, I can see how critical the influence of the CTL is on the teachers on their curriculum group. The conversation in a curriculum meeting seems to naturally find its way to the woes of teaching middle school students. A great CTL will find a way to get these issues out of the way in a timely manner, while making the teachers feel like they have had a chance to blow off some steam. The CTL must get past these issues and save the valuable collaboration time for planning lessons and common assessments. The CTL has to guide the collaboration time in a positive manner.

Administrator 4

- Curriculum team leaders consider themselves an important resource for other teachers. They provide activities and ideas for those teachers and encourage them to likewise share great teaching strategies and lesson ideas. They provide direction for the scope and sequence of instruction suggested by the county and clarification of expectations for that scope and sequence. They help guide the development of common assessments and analyze data from those assessments. And very importantly, they mentor new teachers and those seeking assistance and reassurance of their instructional skills and activities.

Question 5: Expectations of CTLs

Administrator 1

- (All the above). Above all, the CTL must teach with energy, enthusiasm, and urgency so that his/her students are engaged, thus setting the highest of standards for the other teachers.

Administrator 2

- No response

Administrator 3

- I think it is a learning role for the CTL to realize that they are the leader of their particular curriculum group. The CTL needs to have an exceptional understanding of the content and be able to share that understanding with students and peers.

Administrator 4

- No response

APPENDIX K: CURRICULUM TEAM LEADER REFLECTIONS

Directions: After the curriculum meeting, please journal your view of the curriculum meeting today. Reflect on what happened.

Paula Smith seventh grade language arts curriculum team leader:

I thought the meeting was well-planned and productive. It began with a presentation on how technology tools we can use to plan authentic and “WOW” lessons for Language Arts. This was followed by time for us to review and revise the fourth nine weeks benchmark.

I thought the meeting gave useful information, and it allowed teachers to express their comments and concerns. We kept to our agenda and remained focused on our tasks. To me it was run as collaboration and not as a dictatorship. Everyone’s voice was respected. I also thought all the information shared was relevant.

Sometimes I wonder if there’s not enough laughter at our meetings. I hope they aren’t too serious or boring. I would hate it if people dreaded coming to our meetings and felt that they were useless.

Directions: After the curriculum meeting, please journal your view of the curriculum meeting today. Reflect on what happened.

Joe Beck sixth grade social studies curriculum team leader:

I thought that the meeting went pretty smoothly. The first few minutes were spent discussing the previous day's grade level meeting and a few of the things the school principal spoke of. Next we got into the review of benchmark questions. There were a few bumps in the road. A few of the questions were disliked by the group for the wording or easiness. We replaced three questions and changed about three others.

Overall, the meeting was very open, everyone felt comfortable making suggestions for the benchmark. Little difficult making ESOL, SPED, Gifted, and regular education teachers happy, but I think they left satisfied with the process and the outcome.

APPENDIX L: OBSERVATIONS

Paula Smith Observation

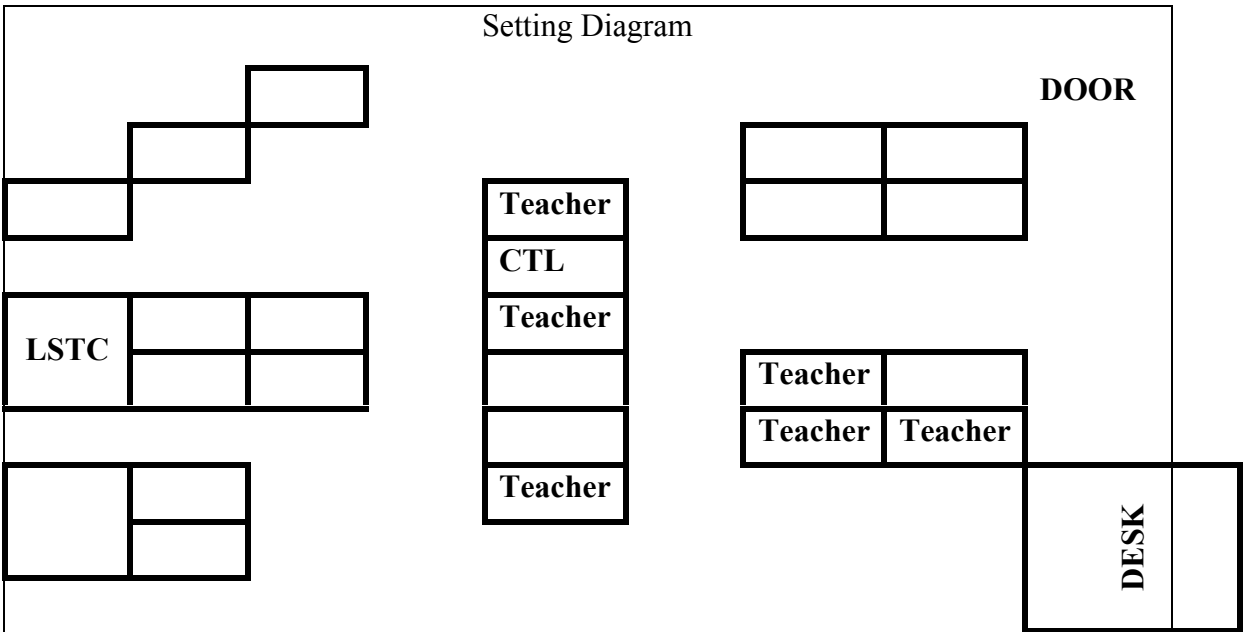
Directions: 30-40 minute curriculum team meetings. Write the time to mark specific areas of observation or when the viewing changes from curriculum team leader to curriculum teacher. Always include a diagram of the setting and accurately record the verbal exchanges. Separate personal thoughts on the material being observed.

Observed fact with time stamp	Thoughts
9:30 CTL: Sign in and pick up sheet to complete with time and benchmark sheet	
9:31 CTL: We have a special guest speaker. I know Tara is out, where is Larry? (Three teachers arrive)	
9:32 Teacher/CTL discussing lesson one-on-one Jury simulation CTL: Describing methods (Two other teachers arrive)	
9:33 CTL discussing with another teacher. CTL: Glad you're here (last teacher arrives) I hope you can be here next week at our last meeting. I asked Emily (LSTC) to share something that she showed the Gifted teachers. Just put the benchmark aside.	
9:35 LSTC: Showing from the Wordle website. Describes how it works,(type words, display, etc.) copy and paste it to a word document	
9:36 CTL: How do you think students can use it? LSTC/Teacher: Use to show characters of story; to work with vocabulary, digital story telling is what I wanted to show you. You can use this at home with pictures. They have cameras/phones, etc. We have cameras to check out etc. Download from internet	
9:39 CTL: When she showed this I thought students could use in lab to retell stories, etc.	

<p>9:40 Teacher: I want to be negative. I tried to book the computer cart and it was booked up for a long time.</p> <p>LSTC: We are going to address that with three days max. There will be a lab that will not be used. I will work with teachers on projects.</p>	
<p>9:41 All teachers affirmed that would be great.</p> <p>LSTC: This is one I like. You can put the pictures in on the website.</p>	
<p>9:43 Teachers: This website is Peachphoto.</p> <p>LSTC: I have created Creekland Web 2.0. This is a staff development you will get to learn how to use Wikis, digital storytelling, etc. Eleven weeks – This is ThingO with videos on how to do this. (All teachers engaged and listening)</p>	
<p>9:47 LSTC: This is a man I love. (Website) He shows 50 ways to tell a digital story. He uses the same story using 50 tools. We sat in our meeting and were railed for having face book/twitter, but now the county has a page on both.</p>	
<p>9:48 LSTC: Are we censoring?</p> <p>CTL: We have problems with parents complaining. I saw a lesson using texting to do poetry. I am not sure if I can do it.</p> <p>LSTC: You can use it for activities.</p>	
<p>9:50 Teacher You can go to Verizon Wireless to text someone.</p> <p>Video: about use of technology (online)</p>	
<p>9:52 LSTC: This is our new website. Think about using Google to post power points, etc.</p>	
<p>9:54 LSTC: I will send links to you. Come see me if you need help.</p> <p>CTL: I used the flip phone.</p> <p>Teacher: I didn't know how to change the batteries</p> <p>CTL: The Flip Camera was so easy to use. Another teacher helped me to use it on the Green Summit night. I was scared because I am a control freak.</p>	
<p>9:55 CTL: I asked the kids and they told me how to use it.</p>	
<p>9:56 LSTC: Asking them helps with the student relationships.</p>	

9:57 LSTC: We want more technology but we are going slowly, so that we choose the right technology that works in our building.	
9:58 Teacher: One of the elementary school uses them. LSTC: They have different wiring, cell phones interfere too.	
9:59 CTL: I just wanted you to see what you could use and maybe get you interested in the Web 2.0 class. I hope that what you know you share. Teacher: The thing that is a problem is students don't have the skills and they are slow.	
10:01 CTL: I used the whiteboard to do a poetry blog without the computer.	
10:02 CTL: The last two things, next week will be fun to be here. I've put together the benchmark and tried to put level 3 questions in the reading passage. I want/need you to help out with the questions. Look over and eight great heads can help.	
10:04 Teacher: Do you want format changes or just questions? CTL: We can change formatting if we need to, but I really need help with the questions.	
10:05 All Teachers: Reading a copy of the benchmark test and reviewing questions individually. Some pairs having conversations concerning wording of questions and difficulty.	
10:08 AP: (not the Language Arts AP) came in. AP: The county is pushing us to review for ITBS if you have time (shows a booklet) eighth grade will be doing this next year.	
10:09 AP: The RBES needs to be adjusted. We had the wrong final sheet so at the top put your name and I.D. number	
10:11 Teacher: Does everyone check out the review book? AP: Yes you can check these out.	
10:14 CTL/Teacher discussing a question: I think number eighteen is not clear. I don't think they will get it. CTL: What about nineteen? Teachers are reading it aloud and offering suggestions.	

10:16 CTL: Take time to read the passages. I know you're busy, but if you get it to me by homeroom tomorrow I can get it done. I can put it together.	
10:17 Teachers 3,4: discussed the use of questions with a colon. CTL and teachers changed the wording.	
10:18 All teachers discussing use of phrase in number thirteen.	
10:19 CTL: We need to change it. Teacher: Rewords it while CTL writes it. CTL: I really need it by homeroom.	



Joe Beck Observation

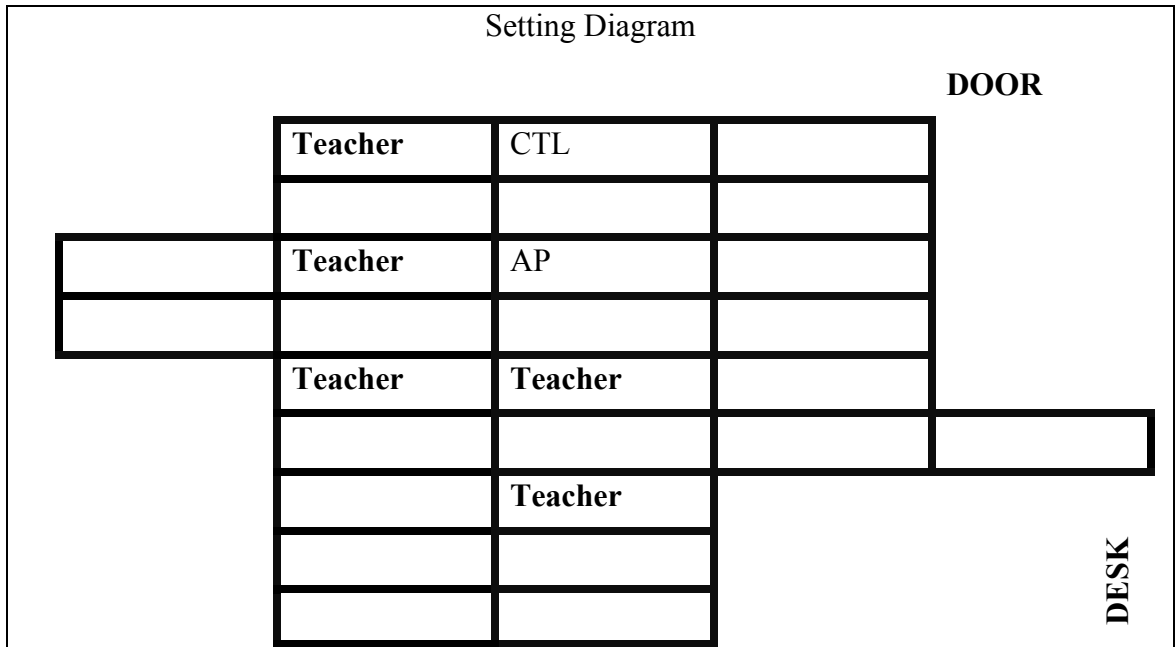
Directions: 30-40 minute curriculum team meetings. Write the time to mark specific areas of observation or when the viewing changes from curriculum team leader to curriculum teacher. Always include a diagram of the setting and accurately record the verbal exchanges. Separate personal thoughts on the material being observed.

Observed fact with time stamp	Thoughts
<p>10:35 Two teachers in meeting 10:36 two more arrive 10:37 AP arrives – telling all about speakers in building for career day 10:38 Two more teachers arrive AP: You guys did a great job at green summit Teachers: Discuss the hall being blocked during the night</p>	
<p>10:40 CTL: (asks AP) Do you need to day something? AP: Just checking on Benchmark. Do you want to share from CTL meeting? CTL: Discussed the green summit theme for next year – flight is the broad topic next year. Discussed the writing test and the rubric. Maybe Social Studies focus on compare/contrast</p>	
<p>10:43 Teacher 1: They struggle with that. Teacher 2: They can do Venn diagrams.</p>	
<p>10:44 CTL: we discussed how CRCT and county will use Universal Test Design and we will learn how to use it. Several teachers have been working on County Benchmarks using the design.</p>	
<p>10:46 CTL: Benchmarks will come back and be phased in AP: We will see. CTL: We can use ours if they don't use them.</p>	
<p>10:47 CTL: Do you (AP) have more? AP: No just the benchmark. The RBES sheet needs your name and ID number on it. I will get those to you.</p>	

<p>10:48 CTL: I wanted to look at the Benchmark. Sally and I put together last year's fifty questions to look at. AP: Can I interrupt? One question – We have talked about teaching 7th grade stuff. Are we okay with that?</p>	
<p>10:49 CTL: Read the questions and teachers provide feedback. Number 3 is that okay? Market okay? Number 4 Correct name in questions with feedback from several teachers. CTL: Asks Sally – What do you think?</p>	
<p>10:52 CTL: Continues with questions and feedback from all teachers. Question 9 Teacher: I don't think I ever used the term "remote location" CTL: If they had to pick the best they should figure it out. Teacher: Leave it I will teach it before the end of the year. Continued reading questions.</p>	
<p>10:54 Teacher: Is the fifty questions? CTL: No Sally and I picked thirty-five and this is those thirty-five questions.</p>	
<p>10:55 CTL: Continued reading questions. Teachers: Limited discussion, some feedback. CTL: These questions are just map skills.</p>	
<p>10:58 Teachers: Go back to twenty-two. Is Crystal Sea going to confuse them? Teacher: It's not a natural wonder. CTL: Change the word? Teacher: Put Outback in there. Teacher: That's a busy map. CTL: It's a map from a supplemental material. The county put it in there.</p>	
<p>11:00 CTL: Continued to read questions. CTL: The issue is we are only using Australia. It makes it hard to get thirty-five questions. Teacher: Are we not going to use government questions?</p>	

<p>11:02 CTL: so we can take a couple of questions out and add questions on government. Teachers: Who holds most power? All teachers offering suggestions for answers, etc. Teacher: Students pick up on voting rules. They really pick up on it.</p>	
<p>11:04 Teacher: Have we heard out DOK? CTL: We will do it on benchmarks. Teacher: Do they consider the sixth graders are so concrete?</p>	
<p>11:05 CTL: Do we want to question culture? There are two about aborigines and colony, nothing about English. Teachers: Ayers rock is.</p>	
<p>11:06 Teacher: I think this is good. CTL: Do we want to add political power questions? Teacher: The test is easy and we have them for two areas.</p>	
<p>11:08 CTL: So give me some suggestions. All teachers (except two) offer suggestions, etc. CTL: Reads new questions.</p>	
<p>11:10 Teacher: Put the government questions together. CTL: Any suggestions for a voting question? All teachers discuss other suggestions.</p>	
<p>11:12 CTL: Any other topics to question? Teacher: What else are ya'll going to do? Teacher: Personal finance Teacher: Jeff Corwin</p>	
<p>11:13 CTL: There are many sources to pick from to discuss seventh grade topics. CTL: That's it thanks.</p>	

Setting Diagram



Ann Lee Observation

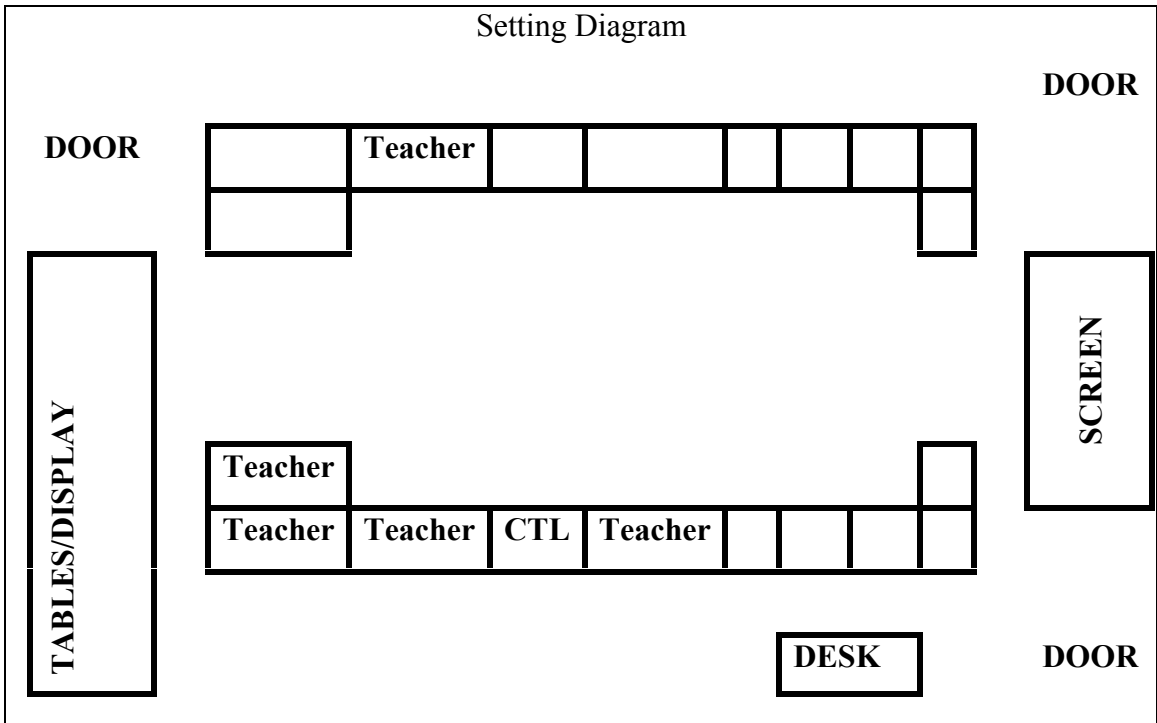
Directions: 30-40 minute curriculum team meetings. Write the time to mark specific areas of observation or when the viewing changes from curriculum team leader to curriculum teacher. Always include a diagram of the setting and accurately record the verbal exchanges. Separate personal thoughts on the material being observed.

Observed fact with time stamp	Thoughts
10:33 Before meeting discussed students with math placement.	
10:34 CTL: Told teachers to go and bring AKS – we will make Interim test.	
10:35 Two teachers discussed how students want to sign up for accelerated science but didn't need to	
10:36 CTL: We are going to write it and I will put it together (one teacher present)	
10:37 Three teachers – CTL present (no agenda seen)	
10:40 Teacher: have we started yet or waiting on all CTL: Yes we are waiting Teacher 3: asked about accelerated science letter Teacher 2: explained to him how it works. Teachers: discussed it further	
10:43 CTL: had AKS on screen for all to see. Counting and dividing the AKS for teachers to use for test questions.	
10:44 CTL: The science plan has not been explained well.	
10:45 CTL: Are ya'll clear on Green Summit? Who do we give the science letter to? Teacher: Jeff. CTL: Do I need to get Jeff for clarification? CTL/Teachers: Discussed the letter's clarity.	
10:47 CTL: do we need to get questions together for AP? Teacher: Just wait – she may be here	
10:48 CTL: I am going to give each three AKS and make 2 questions for each. We want it to be between forty and fifty questions. Teacher: Can we throw out the ones you don't want?	

<p>Teacher: Is that the AKS (screen)? CTL: We can do forty questions that two per AKS, there are twenty AKS</p>	
<p>10:50 CTL: Did anybody notice process skills on CRCT? Teachers: No CTL: Assigned AKS for each person</p>	
<p>10:51 CTL: It's our test, we can make it however. Teachers: We may not get to all extension Teacher: Why don't we get to (different topics listed) these extensions of AKS. CTL: We should include sun stuff and constellations. CTL: It's hard to do questions on that.</p>	
<p>10:54 Teacher: Look at 12A – it looks like it could be a discussion question. CTL: Look in test bank for Multiple Choice questions. Teacher: there are none there. CTL: What my task was to develop the benchmark. We can do this from what we have taught. CTL: This is what I need- two questions per AKS- just email them to me Teacher: Twelve is not in the county bank CTL: Just make your own. Teacher: Do we do depth of knowledge type questions? CTL: Just make the best questions possible. It's our test.</p>	
<p>10:57 Teacher: We don't want to throw them for a loop with the test. Teacher: I can't find it (list of AKS) CTL: Click on indicators – that's it</p>	
<p>10:58 CTL: So next Thursday we will put it together Teacher: So if you get it tomorrow it's okay? CTL: Yes we have to have it done by May 14th</p>	

<p>11:00 Teacher: Is everyone teaching light year? All: Yes Teacher: Read question for all to hear. (Teachers/ CTL are working independently on developing questions) Teacher: Two each is enough CTL: I think forty questions is enough? Teacher: I have more AKS CTL: That's okay we need extra to choose from.</p>	
<p>11:02 One teacher left to work in her room next door.</p>	
<p>11:03 Not much discussion among teachers concerning test questions. One teacher helped another to find the AKS indicators of achievement.</p>	
<p>11:04 One teacher (special ed.) Discussed with CTL concerning the makeup of CRCT. CTL: I did not look at it. The scores are the tell all.</p>	
<p>11:05 Special ed. Teacher left the meeting (didn't have the AKS questions to do). CTL: Send it to me in a Word Document.</p>	
<p>11:06 Third teacher left meeting. Teacher: I sent you the questions. CTL: Thanks</p>	
<p>11:07 Teacher: Here is the movie- you can just e-mail for permission to watch the movie.</p>	
<p>11:08 Teacher explained to CTL how she did mass e-mail to parents.</p>	
<p>11:09 Tow teachers and CTL left in meeting. All three working on developing questions, no discussion.</p>	
<p>11:12 Work continued. CTL is finalizing/organizing the test in a final document.</p>	
<p>11:13 Teacher: Did ya'll decide when to do the day of fun? Ours is tomorrow Teacher: I don't know whenever. Susan (AP) said she wanted us to make sure we have a mechanism for late work before the day of fun.</p>	

Setting Diagram



Abbey Jones Observation

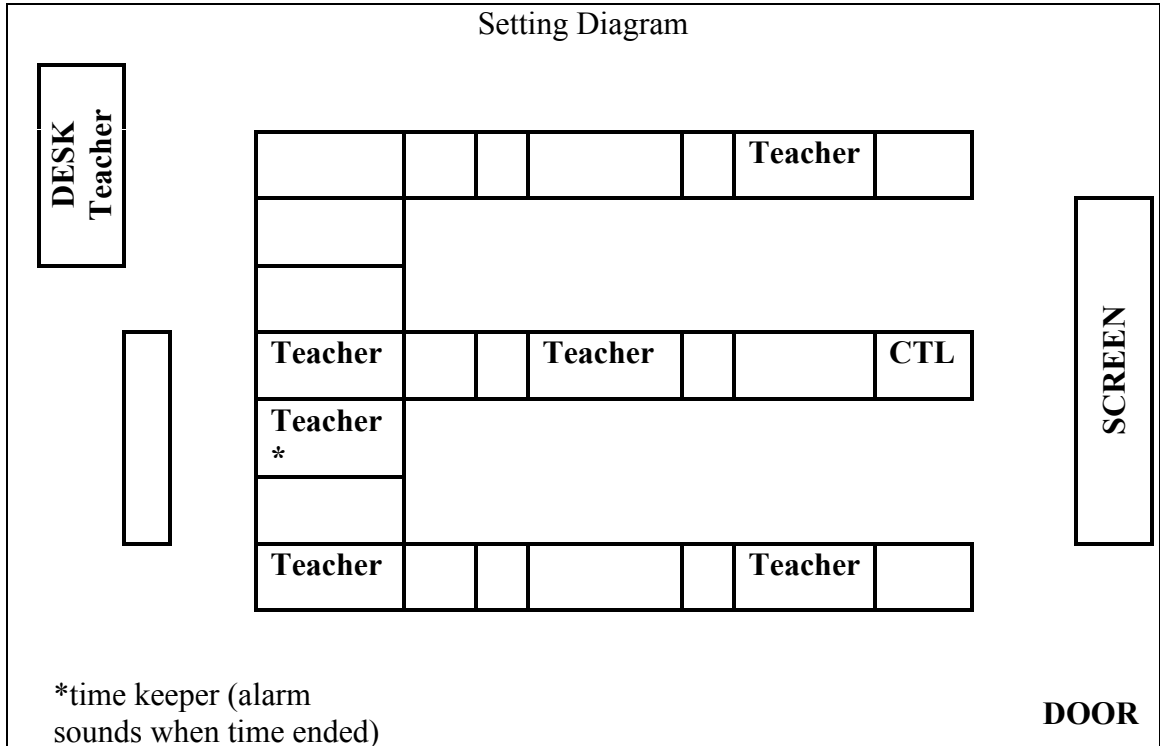
Directions: 30-40 minute curriculum team meetings. Write the time to mark specific areas of observation or when the viewing changes from curriculum team leader to curriculum teacher. Always include a diagram of the setting and accurately record the verbal exchanges. Separate personal thoughts on the material being observed.

Observed fact with time stamp	Thoughts
9:32 Two teachers present. One teacher working on project. One teacher and AP discussing new student math level	
9:34 CTL arrives, discussed with a teacher and gave probability worksheet she had found.	
9:35 CTL: I have extra agendas for those that need it. Discussed new Chick Fil-A opening close to three teachers' home.	
9:36 CTL: Let's get started, began meeting, check-in	
9:37: Teacher tells story of Mark telling students how many CTL: Asked each teacher and AP how they are – Check-in	
9:38 CTL: Number two: questions and concerns. Teacher asked: Since my first year, How do I answer questions from parents about passing math? CTL: Explain it's the last week of school.	
9:39 AP: We should get scores the third week of May. Teacher: What can we do ahead of time? AP: Academic contract must be done. Teacher: Computer problem with academic contract database. AP: I will check. Use a teammate's computer.	
9:42 AP: Twenty days left. Remember we are teaching every day and have lesson plans. CTL: Number Three: Green Summit: Where do we meet? Middle hallway? Responses vary. Middle hallway final choice.	

<p>9:43 Teacher: How many pieces of work do we need? CTL: As many as you decide. Teacher 2: Explains how Language Arts teacher is working with her on projects.</p>	
<p>9:44 AP: What was the paragraph written on? Teacher: Explained how students describe the analysis of math chart representation.</p>	
<p>9:46 CTL: How is project going? All respond – engaged by project – excellent work easy to do.</p>	
<p>9:47 RBES CTL: How are all working? One teacher needs copy – Discussed results of vocabulary RBES. Results are very good; a few didn’t give final test but incorporating into regular test.</p>	
<p>9:48 CTL: Any changes to it for next year?</p>	
<p>9:49 CTL: Since MRT not done we/I want to do a math performance. I will give problems along the way to work on problem and write how.</p>	
<p>9:50 Teacher: I do one on error analysis with tests. I will incorporate vocabulary and writing into that assignment. Teacher: Do individual writing and math or do we mesh the two? CTL: Mesh the two. Explained the activity with rubric. I was playing with the idea for RBES. I thought we could do it next year.</p>	
<p>9:53 CTL: Final Test Teacher: I adjusted the test numbers and questions. Teacher: I didn’t show improvement. Got unexpected result. CTL: I was pleased. Mine did well 23% to 75%</p>	
<p>9:54 Teacher: Pretest done in ELT, posttest done in class, made difference. CTL: That’s interesting. CTL: Incorporate performance based questions on regular tests. This is from administration.</p>	
<p>9:55 CTL: Number four: RBES: Thanks for working hard on integrating. AP: It will pay off on the CRCT. Deeper understanding.</p>	

<p>9:56 Teacher: I thought we would work on RBES together, couldn't find CTL. I will e-mail it to you. Teacher: Can you put it in my form? CTL: Use textbox to do it.</p>	
<p>9:58 Teacher: What do you need? AP: Need results page, and conclusion page.</p>	
<p>9:59 CTL: Number 5: Eighth grade preview: CTL: Eighth grade wants us to work on graphing of different functions, slope, etc. CTL: I will put accelerated work with graphing on S-drive. See me to use red book online.</p>	
<p>10:00 CTL: Buying graph paper for students. What about the supply list?</p>	
<p>10:02 CTL: We will lesson plan this together.</p>	
<p>10:04 CTL: Number 6: Interim test: We must develop it. No more than fifty. What topics? AP: Remember don't create something hard to grade. Teacher: Can't we use past test questions? CTL: What topics, it's cumulative. We will work together on this. Teachers make list, all contributed. Data Analysis 35% to 40% Teacher: I think higher CTL: Might be too easy AP: The number fifty. Don't make it too hard. Teacher: It's only 5% CTL: Data Analysis is 50%</p>	
<p>10:07 CTL: Very quickly we will meet next week to make the test – changed (after more discussion) to 40%. Teacher: Put up test on screen to look at.</p>	
<p>10:09 CTL: 40% Data Analysis, 20 questions; 20% of eighth grade preview. (One teacher didn't agree with new material.) AP: Ten questions is okay. It should work. It's only 1% of final. CTL: That leaves the rest for review topic questions. I would like all to pull three to five questions and bring to next meeting. We will put together.</p>	

10:13 CTL: I will do the preview. Get it to me and I will put it together. CTL: Thanks everyone have a good day.	
After meeting: Two pairs continued planning how to get together and the topics more specifically.	



APPENDIX M: ARTIFACT COLLECTION

Principal Vision and Expectations Memo

CTL Vision for 09-10

- Lead grade level curriculum areas in support of 180 Days of Wow!
- Focus on creating grade level curriculum (Backward Design) lessons with focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Focus on Five Common Classroom Expectations with an added emphasis on Differentiation

CTL Expectations

7. Lead grade level curriculum areas in support of 180 Days of WOW!
8. Focus on creating grade level curriculum (Backward Design) lessons.
9. Focus on five common classroom expectations with an added emphasis on differentiation.
10. Focus on providing instructional leadership.
11. Focus on implementing literacy.
12. Focus on supporting mentoring and peer coaching opportunities.

LLT Vision/Expectations for 09-10

- Represent faculty in all curriculum areas
- Focus on Literacy, i.e., writing and reading across the curricula in support of 180 Days of Wow!
- Propose school-wide expectations and strategies to be implemented
- Provide Professional Learning in some form or venue
- Prepare for literacy implementation for 09-10 including presentation to CTLs

APPENDIX N: PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

Principal Consent Form

I, Dr. Bill Kruskamp, agree to allow Michael Conley, to
(Principal name) (Researcher's name)

gather data about our Curriculum Teams Leaders. The researcher may interview school personnel, make observations, and administer questionnaires.

Dr. Bill Kruskamp
(Principal Signature)

3/30/10
(Date)

APPENDIX O: CONSENT FORM

You are invited to be in a research study that is investigating the perspectives of Curriculum Team Leaders toward instructional supervision. You were selected as a possible participant because of your experience as a Curriculum Team Leader. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Michael K. Conley (Liberty University doctoral student, 7th grade teacher)

Background Information

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the perspectives of Curriculum Team Leaders as it relates to instructional supervision of teachers in one middle school.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: Allow the researcher to interview you to discuss your experiences and perspectives toward instructional supervision on three separate occasions while being audio taped and videotaped; allow the researcher to observe you in more than one curriculum team meeting; submit a reflective journal entry after the observations; and, submit artifacts (memos or meeting minutes) for review.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

There is minimal risk that participants may not openly share their perspectives during interviews. Conducting three interviews to increase familiarity with the interview process will reduce the risk.

Due to the researcher entering the classroom for observations, there is minimal risk that teachers will change their behaviors. The researcher is a teacher at the same school and has worked in the school several years, which will lessen the risk.

The benefits to participation are being part of a case study that will provide information to school administrators and teachers about instructional supervision in the middle school collaborative model.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report that might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- The schools and participants will receive pseudonyms.
- The researcher will store all data in locked file cabinets.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or your current employment. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The local researcher conducting this study is: Michael K. Conley. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact this person at 706-208-8651 or mconley2@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 2400, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study according to the following interview guidelines:

- I will allow the interviews to be taped for later transcription
- I will allow the interviews but do not want them taped

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Curriculum Team Leader)

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX P: AUDIT TRAIL

Researcher's Audit Trail Data collection done. Example; interviewed CTL, Observed CTL #2, Collected Meeting minutes)	
Week 1	
Day 1 Discussed steps with building level Principal.	Granted permission to begin 3/26/10
Day 2 Met with each CTL	Gave consent form for review 3/29/10
Day 3 Follow up with CTL's	Collected 5 consent forms
Day 4 Follow up with CTL's	Collected 6 consent forms
Day 5 Follow up with CTL's	Collected 3 consent forms
Day 6	
Week 2 (4/5/10 -4/11/10)	
Day 1 Reviewed consent forms	Compared data to criteria
Day 2 Reviewed consent forms	Compared data to criteria
Day 3 Reviewed consent forms	Compared data to criteria
Day 4 Chose four CTL's to participate	
Day 5	
Day 6 Prepared copies of demographic sheet for CTL study participants	
Week 3 (4/12/10 – 4/16/10)	
Day 1 Passed out demographic sheet to four chosen CTL's. Set up first interview with the four CTL's	Met with Principal and Assistant Principals to distribute questionnaires
Day 2 Interview number one with Alexis (#1) and Lisa (#2)	
Day 3 Collected CTL profile from #1 and #2	Transcribed interview #1, Alexis
Day 4 Interviewed Chris (#3)	Collected CTL profile #3
Day 5	
Day 6	

Week 4 (4/19/10 – 4/23/10)	
Day 1 Reviewed interview #1	Collected AP questionnaire
Day 2 Second interview with #1, Alexis	Collected Principal and Assistant Principals' questionnaires
Day 3 Second interview with #4, Abbey	Second interview with #2 Lisa
Day 4 Second interview with #3, Chris	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Week 5 (4/26/10 – 4/30/10)	
Day 1	
Day 2 Third interview with #1, Alexis	
Day 3 Third interview with #4, Abbey	
Day 4 Third interview with #2, Lisa	Third interview with #3, Chris
Day 5	
Day 6	
Week 6 (5/3/10 – 5/7/10)	
Day 1 Pass out Curriculum Team questionnaires	
Day 2 Received 1 questionnaire	
Day 3	
Day 4 Received 4 questionnaires	
Day 5 Received 2 questionnaires	
Day 6	
Week 7 (5/10/10 – 5/14/10)	
Day 1	
Day 2 Received 5 questionnaires	
Day 3	
Day 4 Received 2 questionnaires	
Day 5 Submitted transcripts to the study participants for review	
Day 6	

Week 8 (5/17/10 – 5/21/10)	
Day 1 Received 2 questionnaires	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4 Received 4 questionnaires	
Day 5 Discussion with participants concerning focus interview	
Day 6	
Week 9 (5/24/10 – 5/28/10)	
Day 1 Received 4 questionnaires	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4 Focus Group Interview (1hr 15min) 3 of 4 present	
Day 5 Collected reflections and meeting agendas from 2 of 4 CTL's	
Day 6	

APPENDIX Q: BUDGET

The case study of Curriculum Team Leaders and their perspectives toward instructional supervision did not seek external funding. I funded the research expenses personally. The following is an itemized list of basic expenses:

Office supplies	\$300.00
Video Camera	\$400.00
Transcription/Typing Services	\$200.00
Refreshments for participants	\$ 20.00