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Chapter 2: Items to Ponder, Opportunities to Reflect

1. Identify teachers at your campus who are either informal or formal leaders.
   a. What behaviors and/or traits have you observed about these particular teachers?
   b. How do they make a difference at your campus?
   c. How do they affect the attitude and actions of other teachers and the campus? Elaborate.
   d. What differences in leadership behaviors do you see between informal leaders and formal leaders at your campus?
2. What role does your principal play in developing teacher leaders at your campus? Elaborate.
3. Must a school have a principal to have leadership? Explain your answer.

Worthy of Reflection

We have to have faith for the future of the children;
we hold the vision for so many of them.

—Ginger LaGrone Tucker in *Sailing the High Cs: The Affective Characteristics of Effective Educators*

Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.

Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), in *The Most Brilliant Thoughts of All Time* (1999), John M. Shanahan, Editor

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Vision and Mission

http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/107042/chapters/Developing-a-Vision-and-a-Mission.aspx

This article includes information about why and how to create a vision and mission for your school. The information is taken from Chapter 2 of *How to Help Your School Thrive Without Breaking the Bank* by John G. Gabriel and Paul C. Farmer, an ASCD Publication.

http://nonprofithub.org/wp-content/themes/nonprofithub/img/landing-pages/mission/nonprofithub-missionstatement.pdf

This site contains a step by step process for leading a group through the development of a mission statement. The topic is specifically geared for nonprofit organizations, which fits nice with schools—public and private.

https://topnonprofits.com/examples/vision-statements/

This site would be a good place to spend time prior to working on vision and mission statements for your school. The site has a lot of great information, but the examples of vision and mission statements are wonderful for gaining a real sense of what these are and how they differ from one organization to another.

https://www.liquidplanner.com/blog/create-personal-mission-vision-statement-year/

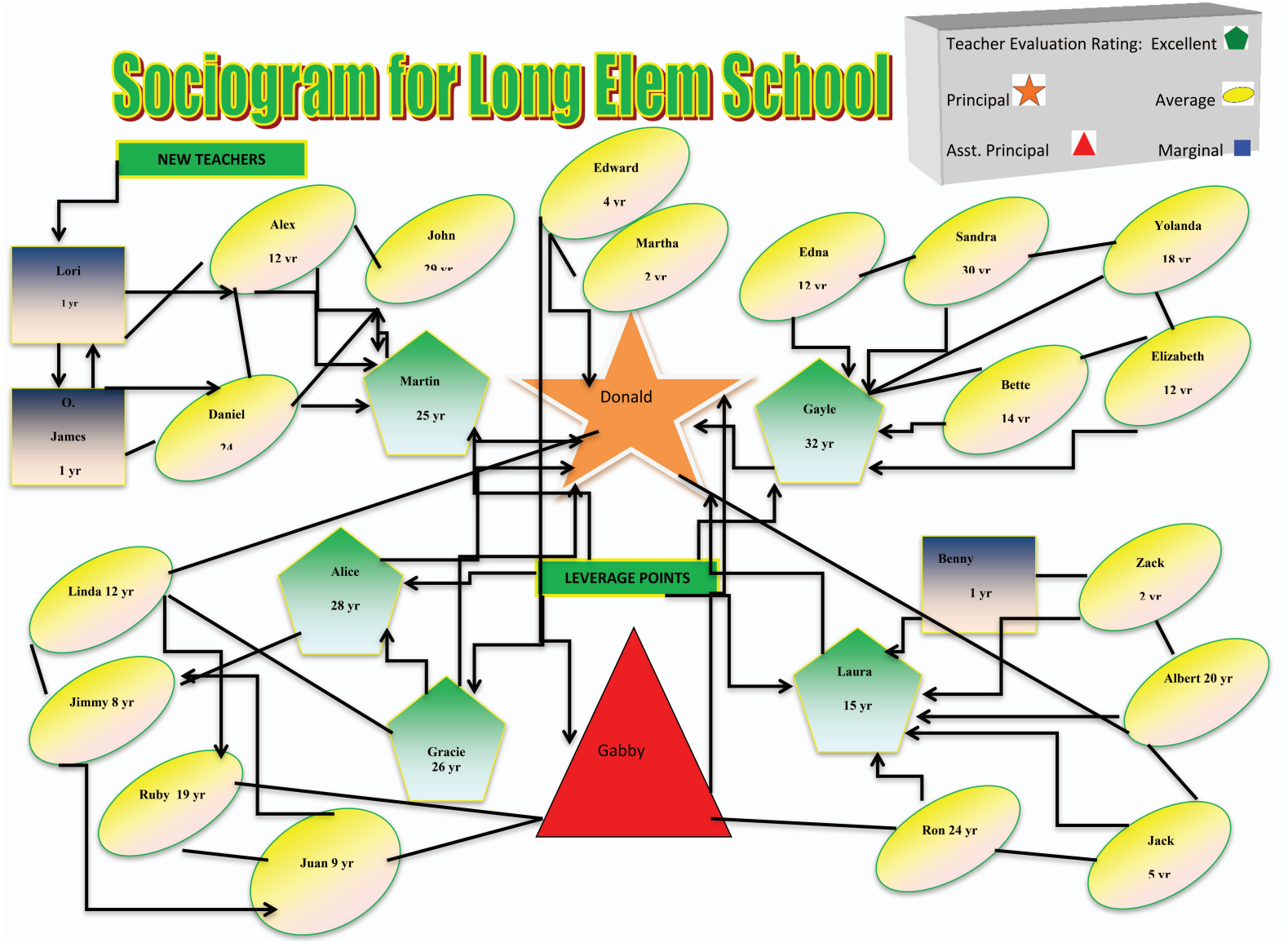
We recommend that principals develop a personal mission statement as a part of their development for working with others on a mission statement for the school and the changes that infers. This site has a step-by-step process for the development of personal vision statement. This could be helpful to a variety of aspects of life!

http://www.cdnbizwomen.com/articles/peterkin2.html

This site also offers steps for developing vision/mission statements. While similar to the previously listed site, there is some variation.

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CHAPTER 2

Investigating the Vision, the Roles, and the Reasons

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Be the change that you wish to see in the world.

—Mahatma Gandhi

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In this chapter . . .

- The original MMS story
- The continuing MMS story with a focus on Theresa's new roles and opportunities
- The meaning of the term *teacher leadership*—both formal and informal roles
- Some reasons why principals would want to lead in this new way.
- What teacher leadership is

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Teacher Leadership

- Vital leadership role in the early development of our nation's schools
- Resurgence of interest in teacher leaders
- Fostering attention to classrooms
- Helping to reconnect administrators and teachers.
- Meaning of teacher leadership

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Markham Middle School: The Original Story

- Describes early steps in the development of teacher leadership
- Illustrates implementation of the principles from Chapter 1
- Focuses on building a school culture that embraces change

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Markham Middle School: The Original Story

- Attempt to create another phase in the school's development
- Focus on Theresa's challenges and opportunities in her new formal teacher leadership role

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A Close Look at MMS

Discussion Questions:

1. What does school culture and climate have to do with implementing teacher leadership?
2. What were some of the attitudes and perceptions about teacher leadership at MMS?
3. Compare and contrast your campus to MMS? What are the similarities and differences? Elaborate.

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The MMS Story: Background

- Only a snapshot of this school's history
- Shows how the new view of school leadership can be operationalized
- Jay's intentional leadership crucial to teacher leadership development

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At MMS, Jay's Perspective

- Worked with faculty and staff to develop a shared vision to guide decisions
- Gave frequent reminders that students' learning needs were priority #1
- Provided resources, structures, and support for teacher leadership

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Jay: Built Leadership Through Relationships

- Listened to teachers
- Determined existing social relationship networks
- Brought in outside resources when appropriate

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Jay: Believed leadership requires authentic distribution of power and authority

- Structures were developed to support teacher leaders.
- Leadership teams were the formal structure to move the school toward the shared vision.
- Formal teacher leaders had autonomy and responsibility for work with teachers.
- Teachers were involved in hiring and induction of new teachers.

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Jay: Made Sure Leadership for Professional Learning Permeated the School

- Supported the school-wide literacy initiative
- Was a co-learner with teachers on this project
- Encouraged others to influence other teachers to engage in professional learning
- Created a formal structure for making decisions regarding used of resources for professional development
- Established a mentoring program to help all teachers new to the school

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At the beginning . . .

- Positive examples of teacher leadership were not the norm.
- Pockets of teaching excellence did exist.
- Typical problems of people working together also existed.
- Efforts were made to encourage a variety of leadership roles teachers can assume.

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What Is Teacher Leadership?

- Not a new concept
- Studied for 50+ years now
- A term often misunderstood
- Misinterpretation can create confusion and sometime adversarial conditions

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What is Teacher Leadership?

York-Barr and Duke (2004) defined teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (pp. 287–288).

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What Is Teacher Leadership?

An important to note . . .

This definition does not identify a person or a set of characteristics; instead, it views leadership as an organization quality influenced by teachers, staff members, and others.

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What Is Teacher Leadership?

Principal's role in this:

1. To create a school culture in which teachers' knowledge, interests, talents, and skills are maximized

2. To empower teachers to come forward to take on leadership roles and responsibilities to become powerful change agents who make a difference

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Who Emerge as Teacher Leaders?

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Descriptors for teacher leaders grows with every year of study.

We use the dimensions proposed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001):

> [S]uccessful teacher leaders exhibit *competence,* are *credible* with other teachers, and build relationships so that they are *approachable*.

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Competent and Credible

[T]he work of teacher is student learning. . . . Teacher leaders often have expertise in teaching and learning . . . [they]'re themselves learners and want to share with others.

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Competent and Credible

Competent teachers are usually recognized by their colleagues as knowledgeable and skilled in their work. Therefore, . . . they are *credible* in the eyes of their colleagues.

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Approachable

- Teacher leaders are approachable.
- Nurture collaborative and trusting relationships
- Are aware of social and political structures within the teacher culture
- Establish social networks in which they have influence
- Physically present (visible)

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What Are Teacher Leader Roles?

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Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000) describe 3 waves of teacher leadership roles

- Formal leadership roles
- Positions that were more closely aligned with teaching and learning, primarily based outside of the classroom
- The “third wave” teachers as leaders within the day-to-day work of teaching

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What Are Teacher Leader Roles?

In the real life of schools and school systems, teacher leadership emerges in a multitude of roles, each of which can provide a valuable service. Rarely, though, are all teachers willing to collaborate and formally or informally lead within a professional learning community, even with the best resources and support. Rather than advocating for any specific roles for teacher leaders, we advocate seeking teacher leadership that best supports the improvement of teaching and learning; this may vary from school to school.

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What Are Teacher Leader Roles?

Consequently, trying to create a single role description for teacher leaders is futile; there must be flexibility depending on the situation.

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Figure 2.1. Teacher Leadership Roles

	Formal Teacher Leadership	Informal Teacher Leadership
Individual	Serve in the established positions of literacy coach (Yolanda)	Use an instructional strategy in own classroom before influencing team members (Matt)
In Community	Serve as team leaders (Jaime) and Theresa (Dean of Instruction)	Mentor colleagues (Tim)

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What Are Teacher Leader Roles?

Principals who capitalize on teacher leadership accept both informal and formal teacher leader roles as equal in importance regarding the influence they exert, even though they are quite different in their makeup and responsibilities.

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Informal Teacher Leaders

- Often the most powerful influence for improved teaching and learning
- Recognized by peers and by effective principals
- Exist in a wide variety of roles

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Informal Teacher Leaders

- Have a passion for particular issues
- See a problem, identify how to solve it, and rally the needed resources to make it happen
- Available to help others with professional and personal issues

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Formal Teacher Leaders Roles (FTLR)

- Assume formal leadership roles in community with other teachers
- Selected by leaders either at school site or central office
- Other teachers lead through their ability to reach beyond their schools for professional learning or recognition.

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FTLR—Leaders in Community

Teachers work collaboratively with other teachers

- as school reform leaders,
- as district or school-site resource teachers, and
- as the more traditional managerial/leadership roles.

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FTLR—District or School-Site Resource Teacher Leaders

Teachers selected to do work with local, state, national, association reform work via long-term intensive learning

Examples might include

- STEM (work with science and technology experts),
- Curriculum Development (local, state, national) work with subject specialists, and
- NJ Writing Project (team reps working with other teams and national experts).

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FTLR—Teachers Who Seek Professional Learning

- Lack of like-minded teachers in their schools
- Result of
  - A lack of opportunities to work with other teachers
  - Teachers who are possibly not in their teaching areas who are as passionate about their work
- National and state networks developed to connect these teachers

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FTLR—Teacher Awards/Certification

- Numerous teaching awards for which teachers can self-nominate or be nominated by others, such as teacher of the year
- National Board of Professional Teaching Standards supports a rigorous national certification process

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Individual Formal Teacher Leaders

- Want to learn continuously but work in a school culture that does not support their growth and development
- Seek out their own professional learning experiences.
- A resource not always recognized and used by principals

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Teacher Leadership from Multiple Perspectives or Hybrids

- Overlapping informal and formal leadership roles (a hybrid)

- For example, resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, catalyst for change and learner (Harrison & Killion, 2007)

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Why Is Teacher Leadership Essential?

Principals have to believe that staying where they are in their practice is more painful than adopting something new because most of us do not change unless we can see the benefits or "what's in it for me."

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Why Is Teacher Leadership Essential?
(Individuals)

- Increase student learning
- Improve teacher quality
- Reduce attrition of teachers
- Benefit from diverse leadership styles

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Why Is Teacher Leadership Essential?
(The School)

- Reduce the power struggles
- Keep the focus on the improvement of teacher and learning
- Use limited resources effectively
- Accomplish the accountability agenda
- Sustain continuous improvement

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Why Is Teacher Leadership Essential?

(The Principal's Role)

- Help address the principal's ever-expanding job
- Distinguishes principals as leaders of leaders

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Summary

- Recognizing, developing, and using teacher leaders demands a commitment from the principal to make it happen.

- Knowing what the roadblocks to building a culture of change are along the way will help make the journey easier.

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