Teacher Leaders: Demonstrating the Ethic of the Profession

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ABSTRACT

This case study investigated the ethic of the profession, one of the four ethical frameworks used for ethical decision-making in education. Typically, this line of research is applied to school administrators; however, this investigation extended this research to teacher leaders by examining their daily practice. Out of a pool of thirty-six respondents, nine teachers were chosen to participate in the study. These teacher leaders were employed in urban, exurban, and suburban school districts, with experience levels varying from three to thirty-three years. Participants were required to complete the following: the Self-Assessment to Assess Readiness for Leadership, creation of personal code of ethics, and the creation of professional code of ethics. An in-depth interview to discuss the codes, and clashes between codes was conducted, as well as a second interview to address an ethical dilemma identified by the participants. Categorical analysis was used to recognize recurring themes. A conceptual model of the decision-making process was developed to explain the phenomena observed in these data. In addition, recurring themes were identified through analysis of the interview data. Themes included a prevailing concern for fairness, student welfare, educational equality, safety, and student discipline. When responding to critical events that triggered ethical dilemmas, these participants habitually used their personal and professional codes of ethics to determine a course of action. Participants exhibited a sophisticated decision-making approach which moved participants past the reliance on one ethical frame of justice, critique, or care, into the use of multiple paradigms to solve ethical dilemmas. In the final analyses, the ethic of the profession was demonstrated by these nine teacher leaders through
reflection and reliance on personal and professional codes of ethics, and by placing students at the center of the ethical decision-making process.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The only leadership that will make a difference is that of teachers. They alone are positioned where all the fulcrums are for change. They alone know what the day-to-day problems are and what it takes to solve them (Buchen, 2000, p. 27).

This case study explored teacher leadership through the lens of one of the four possible ethical paradigms, the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). The use of the ethic of the profession was previously applied only to educational administrators. As an extension of research, this case study compared how teacher leaders in an urban, exurban, and suburban setting demonstrated the components of ethic of the profession through their work. Teacher leaders formulated personal and professional codes of ethics, identified the clash, dissonance, or tension between personal and professional codes, the clash, dissonance, or tension among codes of colleagues, and/or the clash, dissonance, or tension between the participants and the values of the community, and delved into the ethical decision-making processes of the nine study participants.

The central tenets of the ethic of the profession are the best interest of the student and the standards of the profession. Are these tenets common to all educational leaders? The work of teacher leaders was examined through broad descriptions of the four ethical paradigms of justice, critique, care, and the profession, models of school leadership, the development of ethical school leaders, and the need for ethical decision-making brought about by the diverse needs of learners in the 21st century.
Historically, hierarchical models of school leadership and institutional dynamics encouraged a one dimensional view of teachers. Leadership was perceived to reside with school administrators and flowed downward to teachers (Yarger & Lee, 1994). It can be argued that this management style is outdated and ineffective (Clemson-Ingram & Fessler, 1997; Lynch & Strodl, 1991). The 21st century will require a dynamic shift in leadership to meet changing needs in schools. Demographically diverse schools present an opportunity for educational leaders to recognize, reflect on, and appreciate the variety of differences presented in contemporary classrooms. In order to meet these demands, schools will need to empower leaders to develop, foster, and lead democratic schools (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). Current research demonstrates that teachers have the potential needed to exercise dynamic leadership for change in schools (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2007; Bennis, 2006; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; King, 2008). Although school leaders set the example or culture to develop or maintain ethical schools, the responsibility falls to all who work there.

**Ethical Paradigms**

As a direct response to the need to address ethical dilemmas in the school setting, educational writers have identified ethics derived from diverse traditions which embrace varying perspectives. The following brief discussion outlines a description of each of the four ethical paradigms, intended to present an overview of the perspective each ethical lens provided as foundational knowledge for this case study. Each ethic offered a specific
perspective, along with examples of values which frame responses from each ethical viewpoint.

*Ethic of Justice.*

The ethic of justice can be viewed from either a traditional or contemporary perspective. Questions stemmed from the rule of law, and concepts of fairness, equity, and justice (which are difficult to quantify without discussion). This ethic promoted the examination of issues of equality, rules, laws, and policies for fairness, questions relating to the unlimited nature of laws, and questions in which the rights of individuals versus the greater good of the community were discussed (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Haller & Soltis, 1998; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike,).

*Ethic of Critique.*

The ethic of critique stemmed from critical theory, and was intended to uncover educational and societal inequities (Foster, 1989; Giroux, 1991; Shapiro & Purpel, 1995). Instead of accepting the ethic of those in positions of power, critical theorists invited educators to restructure thought processes regarding “silenced voices,” social class, and distribution of wealth between school districts (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 14). This approach to addressing ethical dilemmas required educators to examine and wrestle with a variety of possibilities to ensure that all children, despite social class, race, or gender, had opportunities for achievement, growth, social, and emotional development. When dilemmas were viewed through this lens, issues of
oppression, power, privilege, authority, voice, language, and empowerment were examined and addressed.

_Ethic of Care._

The ethic of care conveyed a third ethical perspective to respond to complex and moral problems facing educational leaders. This ethic came as a direct response to the justice-based approaches, and recommended that duty is not discarded, rather that “room is made for human bonding and relationships” (Beck, 1994, p. 84). Viewing ethical dilemmas from this paradigm prompted questions reflecting solutions which show concern for others, emphasizes interactions and attachments, and sought to “facilitate a sense of belonging” (Beck, p. 85). This paradigm also asked individuals to come to grips with values such as loyalty, trust, and empowerment, with a focus on diversity, listening, observation, and responsiveness to others (Barth, 1988; Beck, 1994; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992).

_Ethic of the Profession._

Finally, the ethic of the profession provides “a fourth ethical lens for reflecting on, then dealing with, dilemmas faced by educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 11). The ethic of the profession includes attention to the issues raised by the ethical paradigms of justice, critique, and care. In addition, the ethic of the profession poses questions regarding standards of the profession, and provided a frame for ethical decision making to address the best interest of the students who may represent highly diverse populations. Shapiro and Stefkovich maintain the ethic of the
profession provided administrators with a lens which encourages an
“understanding oneself as well as others,” an opportunity to “reflect upon
concepts such as what they perceive to be right or wrong and good or bad,
who they are as professionals and as human beings, how they make decisions,
and why they make the decisions they do” (2001, 2005, p. 21). 21st century
schools require personnel who understand how to mediate the complex
dilemmas encountered on a daily basis. Ethical knowledge and actions can be
compromised as teachers face ethical dilemmas and complexities that
challenge teachers in their daily routines (Campbell, 2003). Personal and
professional codes of ethics, clashes between and among codes, and placing
students at the center of the ethical decision making process are identified as
components of the ethic of the profession. Four clashes between codes were
identified (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 1998). These clashes require ethical
decision making skills which take into account diverse student populations,
issues of equality and equity, and standards of the profession. Clashes
appeared on a continuum, from a clash requiring reflection and wrestling to
make a decision, to dissonance between the personal and professional codes,
the codes educational professionals, and/or the codes of the community, to
tension between and among codes. By struggling with ethical concepts
through the lens of the ethic of the profession, educational leaders have the
opportunity to reflect on multifaceted ethical dilemmas through the use of
multiple paradigms. Decisions are based on the nuisances between the ethical
frames. The ethics of justice, care, and critique are considered, but keeping
students at the center of the ethical decision making process moves the decision into the realm of the ethic of the profession.

Statement of the Problem

The problem underlying this case study was the interest in extending the ethic of the profession from educational administrators directly to the work of teacher leaders. Inherent in the 21st century school is an atmosphere of increasing social diversity and the need for complex problem solving to address issues of equity and equality. No one is more aware of societal shifts than the classroom teacher. Fullan suggested that teacher leaders must view their role as more of a “mission than a job”, a “meaningful calling of the highest order” (2001, p. 143). Rapidly changing societal expectations required classroom preparation which was vastly different than that of preceding generations. Teacher leaders “must have a view of the future that is significantly different from how schools have been” (Spaedy, 1990, p. 157).

How does the work of teacher leaders differ from the work of other teachers in the profession? According to Yarger and Lee, “the most important factors for teacher leadership reside within the teachers themselves” (1994, p. 228). A review of the literature provided a snapshot of the characteristics exhibited by teacher leaders, including the following descriptors; teacher leaders identified a well defined set of values (Fay, 1992; Murphy, 2005); are risk-takers (Yarger & Lee, 1994); constantly looked for challenge, change, and professional growth (Wilson, 1993); searched for opportunities to enhance and refine the craft of teaching (Donaldson, 2001; Snell & Swanson, 2000);
were known for their commitment and hard work (Leithwood et al., 1997, Wilson, 1993); displayed a positive vision (Cooper, 1993; Manthei, 1992); consistently showed conviction, enthusiasm, and a sense of optimism (Crowther et al., 2002). Further, teacher leaders expressed a sense of personal responsibility and accountability toward students (Killian, 1996; Yarger & Lee, 1994); and were reflective about their teaching and leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996).

The literature clearly stated that teacher leaders exhibited an identifiable set of characteristics that distinguished these leaders from other teachers in the profession. Based on that assumption, does the display of one or more of the identified characteristics alone categorize the teacher as a leader? The realities of teaching in the 21st century required more than a single set of characteristics. Hargreaves and Goodson offered the following view; “Teaching today is a highly complex work, requiring the highest standards of professional practice to perform it well” (1996, p. 8).

Purpose of the Study

In order to be considered as a proponent of the ethic of the profession, teachers must move past the reliance on a single ethical perspective for decision-making. The case study provided the opportunity to examine the participant descriptions of critical events which triggered ethical dilemmas. A glimpse into the nine study participant’s daily work provided rich descriptions of the need to wrestle with ethical dilemmas presented in 21st century schools. Through the formulation and examination of personal and professional codes
of ethics, identification of the clash between and among codes, assessment of a critical event requiring an ethical decision, and the placement of students at the center of the ethical decision-making process, teacher leaders demonstrated the use of the ethic of the profession in their daily work (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). The findings of this case study analysis potentially filled a gap in the literature.

Research Questions

To achieve this goal, a grand tour research question was developed: Is the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, demonstrated through the work of teacher leaders? If so, how?

The following sub-questions guided the investigation:

- Research sub-question one: Does the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics influence the teacher leader’s practice? If so, how?

- Research sub-question two: How does the teacher leader address conflict, if it arises between personal and professional codes including clashes:
  1. within professional codes,
  2. of professional codes among educational leaders,
  3. between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community (i.e. either the professional community, the school community or the community where the educational leader works)?
• Research sub-question three: Does the teacher leader place the students at
the center of the ethical decision-making process to address ethical
dilemmas faced in daily practice? If so, how?

Theoretical Framework

This case study was conducted from two theoretical perspectives.
First, the ethic of the profession, described by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2001, 2005), provided both a paradigm and framework for the study of professional ethics. As a model of ethical leadership in education, Shapiro and Stefkovich viewed their paradigm as “dynamic – not static – and multidimensional, recognizing the complexities of being an educational leader in today’s society” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 23). The authors note, “Our concept of professional ethics as an ethical paradigm includes ethical principles and codes of ethics embodied in the justice paradigm, but is much broader, taking into account other paradigms, as well as professional judgment and professional decision making” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 21). In addition, “…we believe that if there is a moral imperative for the profession, it is to serve the ‘best interest of the student’. Consequently, this ideal must lie at the heart of any professional paradigm for educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 23).

As a framework, nine interrelated concepts fit together to form the ethic of the profession. These nine areas of foci were combined into three recognizable tenets. The observable tenets were formulated into the grand tour research question and sub-questions which guided this case study research
(Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). These tenets included creation of personal and professional codes of ethics, discussion of clash, dissonance or tension between codes creating an ethical dilemma, and the placement of students in the ethical decision-making process.

A second theoretical perspective, identified by Argyris and Schon as “double-loop learning,” (1974, p. 70) was applied to the study. Double loop learning affords the individual the opportunity to question current mental models, personal ways of thinking and acting, and relationships with others. An important aspect of double loop learning is the distinction between an individual’s espoused theory (what they say they believe) and the “theory-in-use” (what they actually do) (Argyris & Schon, p. 83). Bringing these two conflicting theories into congruence requires double loop learning. The current case study provided the opportunity for teacher leaders to articulate current beliefs, and then to examine an ethical dilemma in light of their espoused beliefs. The very process of identifying problems, seeing new possibilities, and changing the routines by which individuals adapt or cope requires rethinking and redesign, an application of the framework of double-loop learning (Argyris & Schon, 1974).

Both frameworks provided the theoretical perspectives required for this study. The framework of ethical lenses supplied the necessary model for viewing the decision-making process of teacher leaders when faced with an ethical dilemma. Changes in values, behavior, and leadership were influenced by the teacher leaders’ need to think deeply about their ethical codes and
grapple with the clash, dissonance, or tension between their codes and among codes of colleagues or the community prior to ethical decision making, evidence of double-loop learning. These theoretical frameworks paved the way for the illumination of the ethic of the profession through the work of the nine teacher leaders who participated in this case study.

Definition of Terms

*Decision-Making* – Teachers will employ a cognitive process of professional judgment and choice to effectively select an outcome directly related to the classroom or school setting.

*Double Loop Learning* – A learning theory which pertains to the learning to change underlying values and assumptions in a four step process; 1) discovery of espouses and theory-in-use, 2) invention of new meanings, 3) production of new actions, 4) generalization of results. In double loop learning, assumptions underlying current views are questioned and hypothesis about behavior are tested. The end result of double loop learning should be increased effectiveness in decision-making and better acceptance of failures and mistakes.

*Ethics* - The rules or standards governing the conduct of a person or the members of a profession.

*Ethical Decisions* - Teachers will be aware and attentive to the ethical implications of their own policies and practices, as well as those of the school and the system, for example child protection policies and classroom discipline policies.
Ethical Dilemmas - The kinds of complex and perplexing problems faced during the real-life professional practice of teachers. The dilemma requires the teacher to make a choice between opposing alternatives, and will have an impact on the students, colleagues, the school system, or the community.

Ethical Teacher Leaders - Teacher leaders will demonstrate, through dialogue, the ability to explicitly reflect upon and internalize an ethical standard, and exhibit ethical conduct in decision-making and professional judgment, especially in situations where it seems to be a matter of choosing between competing values.

Exurban – A region lying beyond the suburbs of a city, especially one inhabited principally by wealthy people.

Teacher – A certified, practicing classroom professional practicing in the elementary, middle, or high school setting.

Teacher Leader – Stipulative definition: The teacher leader exhibits a genuine commitment to the work of colleagues and students, provides program improvement, and is knowledgeable about education policy, subject matter, the local community, and the school’s students.

Operational definition: For this case study, a teacher leader will be considered as a participant by scoring between 21 and 30 points on the online Self-Survey to Assess Leadership (Appendix A). The score identifies a teacher leader as a person with “virtually all attitudes, values, and beliefs aligned with the tenets of teacher leadership” (Appendix B).

Suburban – A residential district located on the outskirts of a city.

Urban – A geographic area constituting a city.
Delimitations of the Study

This case study used a purposive sample based on the selection of participants and geographic location. Study participants were chosen from the respondents who completed the initial online screening survey. Additionally, the locations of the districts studied were based on approval from the district superintendents and proximity to the researcher’s home. The researcher also imposed a two-week time limit for the recall of a critical event, which was central to the research design. In order to trigger examination of participants’ personal and professional codes of ethics, participants were asked to recall a recent ethical dilemma. The researcher did not define what an ethical dilemma was, but allowed participants to self-define the dilemma and the clash, dissonance, or tension between codes that led the participant to believe that this was an ethical dilemma. The interpretations of these data, the development of the conceptual model, and the subsequent focus on the ethic of the profession were filtered through the researcher’s experience as a career educator.

Limitations of the Study

Several issues will limit the generalizability of the findings of this case study. These limitations include a small sample size of nine participants. In addition, the participant sample lacked diversity, especially with regard to experience level and race. The lack of multiple participants in each setting and the aforementioned characteristics reduced the ability to select participants based on within and between group comparisons with similar characteristics.
Selection for participation was based on the online survey results derived during the screening process for participants. In all cases, participants with the highest scores in the designated districts were selected. However, the screening instrument did not discern nuances between scores in the predetermined range. The scoring guidelines only offered relative values and descriptions for participant characteristics (e.g., virtually, the majority, some or few attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership). Teacher leader characteristics further outlined in Chapter 2 by York-Barre and Duke on page 26 of this document could influence the respondents who were chosen as participants in the study; however those characteristics were neither measured nor taken into account when participants were chosen for the study.

**Significance of the Study**

Although challenges confronting schools are increasingly difficult and complex, the responsibility and authority given to teachers has not significantly changed in the past decade (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Haan, 2002). There may be reasons that some teachers may not seek to exhibit teacher leadership. The energy, confidence, experience, or expertise “to engage influentially” may be missing (Crowther et al., p. 11). However, in this the current age of continuous reform, teacher leaders are an essential ingredient to sustaining school success (Buchen, 2000). Crowther et al. point out, “One can not take for granted that teacher leadership will, through natural evolutionary processes becomes ingrained in our collective consciousness and
thus realize its potential” (2002, p. 17). Instead, Bolman and Deal (1994) assert that “leadership is cultivated and nurtured primarily through experience” (p. 87), and that “reflection and dialogue with others help people to learn to lead” (p. 88). In addition, Snell and Swanson (2000) found that teacher leaders need to be provided with an opportunity to acquire and apply new knowledge in meaningful ways.

The current case study afforded identified teacher leaders the chance to create personal and professional codes of ethics, and to identify the clash, dissonance, or tension between personal and professional codes, or among codes of colleagues, or with the codes of the community. Teacher leaders were asked to identify a critical incident that required the teacher to make an ethical decision. Wrestling with the decision-making process allowed the participants the opportunity to think deeply about the solutions to their dilemmas. The answer to the research questions had intrinsic importance to the participant, but may have application to the organization as a whole, as well as implications for other teacher leaders within each school setting.

Secondarily, the study may add to the growing body of literature illuminating the shift in leadership, in which “…new perspectives of schooling include methods of organizing and managing schools that are generally consistent with the quiet revolution [in] organizational and administrative theory in Western societies” (Foster, 1989, p. 71).
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

It is increasingly implausible that we could improve the performance of schools, attract and retain talented teachers, or make sensible demands upon administrators without promoting leadership in teaching by teachers (Little, 2000, p. 390).

Educational writers are showing an “unprecedented amount of interest” in reflection on “ethical issues” (Beck & Murphy, 1997, p. vii). This case study was designed to bridge the gap in the literature by extending the ethic of the profession between educational administrators and teacher leaders. This chapter investigates the interconnected nature of teacher leadership and ethics. To that end, the topics of historical context of teacher leadership will be explored.

Historical Context of Teacher Leadership Development

Traditionally, schools have functioned in the autocratic leadership style, with principals acting as managers and teachers as employees, often voiceless and powerless to influence the mission of administrators to implement school improvement (Gabriel, 2005). The nature of teaching, as exemplified by the factory model, was based on a 19th century replica of business with the administrator acting as management and the teachers as laborers. As “factory workers,” all teachers had equal status, with few leadership opportunities (Troen & Boyles, 1994). The stratification of roles kept the line of authority clear; superintendents and principals were in charge, with teachers enacting the directive of the administrators (Lemlech, 1995).
Teachers were expected to carry out district objectives, not to question authority, and to view their work as a vocation rather than a career (Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997). In this factory model approach, teaching was viewed as a process or treatment that was applied equally to all students in “cookie cutter” fashion. To that end, the graduating senior was considered the final product from the factory, prepared to assist the advancement of an industrial society (Troen & Boles, 1994).

The result of long-standing systems thinking created a preoccupation with hierarchical organizational system. This system supported tenets of separation of management (administrator) from labor (teacher), with an emphasis on chain of command, and positional authority (Murphy, 2005). In addition, the theoretical underpinnings of educational leadership are grounded in authoritative theory, stemming from Weber’s notion of legitimate power (Mayer, 1943). Weber’s focus was on hierarchical coordination in bureaucracies, and noted that administrators as authority figures “constituted the right to command, to instruct, to order,” as well as to “exercise sanctions in support of such commands” (Mayer, 1943, p. 67). The role of prescribed authority was a basic premise to the concept of legitimate power. Classic educational administration texts have continued this line of authoritarian thinking. This ideological perspective on administration and the impact on practice were summed up through the view of educational administration as a technology of control. The concepts, theories, and organizing systems were an indication of control that was prevalent in the occupation of teaching (Bates,
1983). Additionally, the leadership literature focused wholly on those in formal leadership positions, with the assignment of school-wide leadership ascribed to principals, and classroom leadership relegated to teachers, trapping teachers in traditional roles (Clift, Johnson, Holland & Veal, 1992; Kowalski, 1995). As a consequence, even when they have been acknowledged as exemplary classroom teachers, teachers were unable to emerge as leaders for purposes of leading work on teaching, and remained dependent on administrative authority (Creighton, 1997; Little, 1987).

Changing forms of leadership, with a notable emphasis on the emergence of teacher leadership, have gained prominence in the literature over the past decade (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Leithwood, Jantzi, Ryan & Steinbach, 1997; Lieberman, Saxl, & Miles, 1998; Smylie and Denny, 1990; Wasley, 1991). Continued emphasis on the shift from top-down management to shared leadership within an educational organization creates an environment that promotes sustainable leadership enacted throughout the system (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). As a direct result of the legislative impact on school systems, effective schools currently operate in a mode of continuous improvement, a contemporary model which involves a complex interaction of all stakeholders. In these schools, it is difficult to study any particular component of the system without considering how it is influenced by, and in turn, influences other parts of the educational system (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004).
Slowly but surely, the nation began to move through several phases of legislative control imposed on educational entities. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared ‘War on Poverty’ and dedicated the single largest source of federal support for education (Elementary and Secondary Act, 1965). As part of this attention to the nations’ poorest schools, communities, and children, $11 billion dollars a year were designated to assist those living in poverty. As mandated in the Act, the funds were authorized for educators’ professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs, and parental involvement promotion. The Act was originally authorized through 1970; however, the government has reauthorized the legislation every five years since its enactment.

In 1983, the Nation At Risk report was presented. The commission, led by Secretary of Education, Ted Bell, began an inquiry into the condition of the nations’ schools. The study findings included declines in performance which were attributed to inadequacies in schools across the nation (Archived Information: A Nation At Risk, 1983). As a result, five aspects of the educational process were addressed by the A Nation At Risk report including content, expectations, time, teaching, leadership, and fiscal support. The report concluded with the following final statement, “Our present plight did not appear overnight, and the responsibility for our current situation is widespread. Reform of our educational system will take time and unwavering commitment” (p. 8). Reform efforts sprang up, and were studied throughout
the nation, calling on leaders at the administrative and teacher level
(Lieberman & Miller, 1999; Little, 2003; Little & Dorph, 1998; Siskin, 1994;
Sizer, 1985). The call was answered in several ways over the next decade. The
following sections illustrate the development of teacher leadership and the
impact these teacher leaders had on school reform as reported through a
variety of case study research.

*Education Policy and Teacher Leadership*

Little’s (2003) work examined how teacher leadership came into
focus, and was endorsed by teachers under policy and reform conditions with
shifting responsibilities for teachers. Throughout the reform era, initiatives
were targeted to address disparities in educational achievement and
attainment. This focus had a direct bearing on the recruitment and retention of
capable, committed teachers. Three separate case study data sets, collected
from 1988 to 2002, examined expectations of administrators, policy makers,
and teachers regarding teacher leadership, the kind of practice thought to
constitute leading and the institutional resources available for teacher
leadership (Little, 2003). The following review examines these case studies
and the prevailing attitudes about teacher leadership. Little’s first data set
utilized data from Research on the Context of Teaching in Secondary Schools,
schools focused analysis on five high schools that were identified as schools
engaged in reform efforts, but not identified as schools experiencing difficulty
(Boyer, 1983; Powell, Farrer, & Cohen, 1985; Sizer, 1985). During the
1980s, teachers tended to situate leadership within the context of their daily work, and small-scale collaboration in departments. Department heads were credited with leadership for building and sustaining effective departments (Siskin, 1994). Enactment of formal leadership roles varied from school to school. Some chairs inspired collaboration, innovation, and professional development, while others embodied hierarchical traditions based on seniority, protecting the status quo (Siskin). During this progressive mood in state policy, leadership was linked to individual cases through established structures.

The second data set included in Little’s study was collected from 1992-1997, and centered on five high schools involved in whole-school reform (Little, 2003). The School Restructuring Studies provided data on the development of interdisciplinary teams and curricula, as well as the funding for high schools under California’s Demonstration School Restructuring Program (Little & Dorph, 1998). This period of time was defined by the standards movement and linked leadership to reform agendas at the school level. A campaign for whole-school reform emerged in the mid-1980s as a response to the reported inadequacy of public schools. The Coalition of Essential Schools, led initially by Ted Sizer, emerged in a direct response to public criticism. State-sponsored initiatives, such as California’s Second to None program, provided a blueprint of reforms designed to initiate whole-school reform (Little & Dorph). The reform created new professional roles for teachers in school-level decision-making, school governance, and program
improvement. Despite the strategic course of whole-school reform, administrators continued to elicit voluntary collaboration and leadership of talented individuals in informal leadership roles. In a report completed at the close of the School Restructuring Studies in 1998, the research team concluded, “At their best, [designated teacher leaders] helped create a climate and organize forums in which teachers could examine the effects of their instruction, or develop new ideas and skills” (Little & Dorph, p. 41).

The final data set in Little’s study, Teachers’ Professional Development in the Contexts of Secondary School Reform (PDCR, 1998-2002), draws from an intensive study of two high schools, looking specifically at the accountability movement. One high school held a long history of whole-school reform, while the other had individual departments with regional reputations for being innovative and reform-oriented. The policy movement during this time period identified a conservative atmosphere in state policy. Leadership was defined in relation to state, national, and local reform agendas (Little, 1995, 2003). The political climate was marked by prominent internal contradictions between leaders and policy makers, while the concept of expanded roles for teachers gained importance (Lieberman & Miller, 1999). At the same time, policy emanating from the state level resulted in external control over teachers’ work (Bartlett, 2001). Teachers understood the prevailing external forces and embraced the principle of public accountability on individual levels, but actively opposed what they considered misguided or overly narrow reform vision and coercive strategies adopted by the state or
local district (Little, 2003). Teachers expressed collective responsibility for student success as a central element of this expanded reform role. The teachers identified the need for explicit understanding of the expanded role, specific training for leadership, strategies for addressing the external reform demands, and ways to deal with opposition to political pressure (Little). In addition, Little’s examination revealed that factors in certain environments enabled vigorous leadership by teachers which was focused on issues of educational purpose, teaching practice, and pupil learning. Leadership characteristics included factors found in studies of effective schools, but still remarkably infrequent in practice. These characteristics included consistent and deliberate collaboration; group adoption of specific practices and routines to discuss reform goals and problems faced by teachers and students; concerted efforts to eliminate uncertainty and critique current practice; maintain ties with organizations and groups that supplied intellectual, social, and material resources for the work of teachers (Little).

_National Reform Effort (1994 -2000)_

National interest in reform surfaced again in The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, signed into law by President William Clinton on March 31, 1994. This act set reform in motion by involving state governors (Archived Information: Goals 2000: Legislation and Related items, 2005). The act expected states to develop clear and rigorous standards to support comprehensive state and district wide planning and implementation of school improvement efforts. These efforts were focused on improving student
achievement to meet the standards set by the states. Governors in forty-nine states participated in Goals 2000. The specific targets defined by the legislation included school readiness, graduation efforts, student achievement and citizenship, teacher education and professional development, mathematics and science achievement, adult literacy and lifelong learning, safe and drug free schools, and parental participation (Archived Information: Goals 2000). As was the case in previous reform legislation, the objectives were not accomplished by the target year of 2000.

Teacher Leadership Role Development

During this time of changing policy, Silva, Gimbert, and Nolan (2000) conducted studies which identified three distinct waves of teacher leadership that demonstrated an evolution of the role of teacher leaders. In wave one, teacher leadership focused on maintaining an efficient and effective educational system within the existing culture, and offered limited opportunity for change (Evans, 1996). Roles such as department head, master teacher, and union representative were created, with an emphasis on system efficiency rather than on instructional leadership (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). By relegating teacher leadership to managerial roles, the first wave of teacher leadership positions may have “contributed to the neutering of teachers” (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan). This limited view of teacher leadership described teachers as, “…neutered by bureaucratic routinization of teaching and learning that has grown out of administrative attempts to control schools as places with
teachers as deskilled workers and students as uniform products” (Frymier, 1987, p. 11).

The second wave of leadership roles was created to acknowledge teachers as instructional leaders. Changes were systemic in nature, which lead to cultural changes in goals, structure, roles, and norms of schools as organizations (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). Positions were created to capitalize on instructional knowledge, such as team leader, curriculum developer, and staff developer. Although these positions moved teacher leadership away from management and toward pedagogical expertise, these positions were still “apart from” rather than “a part of” teachers’ daily work (Bennis, 2006; Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000, p. 780). The recognition that the curriculum could not be “teacher-proofed,” highlighted the importance of empowering teachers to work from within the classroom (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, p. 781 – 782).

Third wave leadership change was defined as anti-hierarchical, and valued collegiality and professionalism (Devaney, 1987; Gergen, 2007; Lieberman & Miller, 1999, Little, 1987). Third wave leaders were those who supported colleagues in professional practice improvements, shared input on school-level reform efforts, mentored colleagues, engaged in school-level problem solving, and provided professional growth activities for colleagues (Wasley, 1991). Teacher leaders began to collaborate, discuss common problems, share creative teaching approaches, search out solutions to address time constraints, space limitations, resource inadequacies, and restrictive
policies, as well as to explore motivational instructional strategies (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000).

Several current models of leadership emerged which still fall under the umbrella of third wave leadership. A resurgence of servant leadership, proposed initially by Greenleaf in the 1980s, proposed a continued focus on civil unrest, discrimination, senseless wars, and solving complex social problems informed by collaborative efforts, and causal effects (Wren, 1995). Greater social consciousness, community orientation, collaboration, and holistic approaches characterized the concept of servant leadership, which continues as a present form of leadership (Wren). Recently, the Ethical Leadership model added the relationship between character (inner experience of the individual), civility (an understanding of the individual’s place within the democratic system), and community, (response to actions of others) (King, 2008). The model outlined experiential learning, reflective learning, and storytelling as critical components for leadership reform (King). In the wake of the third wave of leadership change, teachers embrace their leadership roles as contributing members of the school community.

*National Reform Policy (2001-2014)*

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, signed into law by President George W. Bush, carried with it an emphasis on student achievement to established standards accompanied by monetary rewards and empowerment sanctions to those schools unable to reach adequate yearly progress. This bipartisan legislation set a timetable for every child in America to reach a
state-identified set of proficiency levels by the year 2014 (Fact Sheet: No Child Left Behind, 2006). Under No Child Left Behind, schools are publicly measured by student achievement test results, requiring the application of the continuous improvement model of reform to be employed in schools (Earl & Lee, 2000).

The evolution is clear; reform efforts have spanned decades and included implementation at the local level, as well as national education legislation. Ultimately, organizational leaders at the local level are responsible for the direction for school reform. However, these same leaders recognize the importance of teachers working collaboratively to achieve the identified vision and carry out school reform initiatives (Harris, 2000; Lambert, 1998).

Teacher Leadership Meta-analysis

As an example of the need to better define teacher leadership, a meta-analysis chronicled thirty-six studies on teacher leadership (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). These findings synthesized characteristics of teacher leaders, development of teacher leaders, and the role of teacher leadership.

Characteristics of teacher leaders surfaced from the review. Teacher leaders have backgrounds as accomplished teachers, are respected by their colleagues, extend knowledge, skills, and influence to others in the school and communities. Teacher leaders develop trust, and cultivate collaborative relationships. In addition, teacher leaders consistently seek to improve teaching and learning practices designed to demonstrate increased student learning and achievement. The most consistent documented positive effects of
teacher leadership were identified in the teacher leaders themselves, supporting the belief that leading and learning are interrelated. Finally, teacher leadership work that was focused at the classroom level of practice (e.g., implementing instructional strategies) was likely to show student achievement more readily than work focused solely at the organizational level (e.g., participating in the site-based decision making) (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

The development of teacher leaders occurs in three separate arenas. Individual development, collaborative or team development, and organizational development occurred simultaneously. This leadership model presumed that leadership emerged from many individuals within an organization, and did not rest in a handful of formally recognized leaders. Principals played an essential role in the success of teacher leadership by actively supporting the development of teachers, by maintaining open channels of communication, and by aligning structures and resources to support the leadership work of teachers (York-Barr & Duke). Teacher leaders grew in their understanding of instructional, professional, and organizational practice as they enacted leadership roles within the school system.

The role of teacher leaders was to achieve improvement in teaching and learning as a resource for school improvement. Organizational leaders identified supports at the district level that advanced leadership work of teachers (York-Barr & Duke). Teachers and administrators worked collaboratively to clearly identify student learning and school improvement goals, as well as to create priorities for staff development and school
improvement plans (York-Barr & Duke). School systems needed to identify specific ways teachers lead efforts related to student accomplishment. A caution was raised; specific leadership functions and needs that were well served by teachers were fluid and likely to change and evolve as improvement goals and emphases changed (York-Barr & Duke). Systems considered the unique and varied leadership capacities of individual teachers and matched the capacities with unique and varied leadership functions (York-Barr & Duke).

All stakeholders within the school setting were considered essential to conversations regarding the purpose and expectation for leadership work were held among formal and informal leaders, and within school faculties (York-Barr & Duke). Finally, York-Barr and Duke (2004) recommended regular systemic opportunities to obtain feedback, and to reflect on progress made toward job embedded leadership and resulting student achievement.

The findings support the tenets found in the framework of the ethic of the profession. In particular, results uncovering the assertion that “leading and learning are interrelated”, and that “teacher leaders grow in their understanding of instructional, professional, and organizational practice as they lead” can be directly related to the ethic of the profession (York-Barr & Duke, p. 288). The opportunity for a teacher leader to create personal and professional codes of ethics, as well as to discuss the clash, dissonance, or tension between the codes, provided the opportunity for the teacher leader to grow as a professional. The ethic of the profession would ask the teacher leader to exert “professional judgment and decision-making which all center
around the best interests of the students” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 24), which meshes with the assertion that teacher leadership is “focused at the classroom level of practice” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 288).

**Definition of Teacher Leadership**

The following paragraph describes commonly accepted definitions of teacher leadership derived from the literature. Teacher leadership has been one of the most nebulous concepts to define and measure (Burns, 1978). Further, teacher leadership is not a new concept. In the field of education, however, the struggle continues with basic definitions of terms, which should be inherent in professional vocabulary (Forster, 1997). Leadership was defined as the exercise of significant and responsible influence, with no attempt to alter the definition to delineate teacher or administrative leadership, stating that “the role itself defines the difference” (Sirotnik & Kimball, 1996, p. 183). Implications for school and classroom change remain complex, as early teacher leadership theory was understood in relation to individual characteristics. Opportunity existed within the educational system for “practitioners with deep personal convictions to inspire social change and improvement, both individually and collaboratively” (Crowther & Olsen, 1997, p. 9). Teacher leaders were noted to be in a unique position to influence school reform efforts; however, teacher leadership is difficult to replicate between school systems (Bruckner & McDowelle, 2000). Teacher leaders were referred to as clinical faculty, clinical educators, teachers-in-residence, master teachers, lead teachers, and clinical supervisors, all formalized teacher
leadership roles (Sherrill, 1999). Individuals placed into these roles were shown to exhibit a set of characteristics identified previously from the research. However, these definitions of teacher leaders were criticized on the same grounds that “behavioral and trait approaches to leadership have been criticized for many years – they deny the capability of individuals whose characteristics and talents lie in areas other than those identified” (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hahn, 2002, p. 32). Traits, behaviors, settings, or events have been studied as key concepts contributing to the effectiveness of an individual leader, but these explanations of leadership have been shown to be inadequate when considering teacher leadership required in the 21st century (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2007; Blaise & Blaise, 1994; Elmore, 2000, 2006; Hargreaves, 1994; Maxcy, 1995).

Prevailing thoughts on leadership are moving beyond the identification of a “single charismatic individual credited with episodic improvements which promote dependency among followers” (Fullan, 2001, p. 15). Instead, leadership is conceptualized as an organizational quality embedded in the relationship that exists throughout the organization, not only by teachers leading from specified roles (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Further, “Leadership is at its heart a critical practice, involving educational leaders in the necessary practice of reflective and critical thinking about the culture of their organizations” (Forster, 1998, p. 52). Teacher leadership “contributes to school reform or student learning, within or beyond the classroom, influencing others to improve their professional practice, or identifying with and
contributing to a community of leaders” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996, p. 5).

Finally, teacher leaders are identified in this way, “It is the core profession, the key agent of change in today’s knowledge society” (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hahn, 2002, p. x).

For the purpose of this study, the definition of teacher leadership taken from the literature includes attention to ethical principles:

Teacher leaders need to explicitly reflect upon and internalize an ethical standard, which includes an understanding of the purposes of regulations, and are aware of ethical conduct in decision-making and judgment, especially in situations where it seems to be a matter of choosing between competing values. Ethical principles are pursued in a context where an emphasis is placed on the value of each person in a concrete, particular sense. These relationships should be characterized by trust, respect and concern based on an understanding and awareness of each other as a real and unique person (Foster, 1998, p. 6-7).

Historical Context of Ethics in Education

Dewey, identified as a pragmatic progressive, wrote Ethical Principles Underlying Education in 1902. Dewey espoused the belief that ethics were not different inside or outside of the school house. His overriding belief was, “The moral responsibility of the school, and those who conduct it, is to society” (p. 10). Dewey’s perspective emphasized the learner as an individual, requiring a learning to have a direct social application. Dewey’s writing provided a maxim for the Progressive Movement, which was advancing at that point in history. His writing represents mainstream thought about the usefulness and practicality of education. His vision was that educators participate actively in all aspects of schooling and turn “American values into American realities” through schooling (p. 11).
Codes of Ethics

Codes of ethics emerged for the teaching profession during the 1920s. In 1927, Benson Landis published his dissertation on professional codes (Yeaman, 2005). Landis examined the codes of ethics for eleven organizations for professionals including accountants, architects, lawyers, physicians, engineers, newspaper editors, art directors, businessmen, realtors, educators, and Congregational ministers (Yeaman, p. 15). Landis found that all of these codes were developed as a result of conflicts with clients, employers, supervisors, colleagues, competitors, and services provided (Yeaman). Landis noted twenty-seven state education associations adopted codes of ethics. The Pennsylvania Education Association (PEA) adopted its code of ethics in December, 1920. Two cases of professional misconduct were investigated by the PEA in 1924. Through further examination of these cases, Landis wrote: “Codes are still, to a great extent, even in the older organizations among doctors and lawyers, formulation of vague idealism, largely evident of wishful thinking” (Yeaman, p. 15).

The first national code of ethics for the education profession was adopted by the National Education Association (NEA) on July 1, 1929 (Code of Ethics, 1929). The 1929 stance of the NEA was based on the need to ensure that teachers were upholding ethical principles in their daily teaching practices. The code included attention to the welfare of the teaching professional, proper teaching procedures, and endorsing professional standards of conduct.
The code was revised six times, but “rarely implemented as a tool of enforcement” (Travers, 2001, p. 403). In 1963, the NEA Representative Assembly accepted a revised code. By 1965, all NEA affiliates had accepted the revised principles (Travers). The significance of this revision was that, for the first time, the national code “superseded at least thirty-seven extant codes at lower levels” (Travers, p. 404). The concept of teaching as a unified profession was beginning to emerge. The code underwent several more wording changes, but the “intent of the code remained the same” (Travers, p. 405). It was generally accepted that the code of ethics was appropriate for “relationships dealing with students and the profession in general,” while issues pertaining to “employment, to the practitioner, or to the association itself are best handled by contracts or by-laws of the organization” (Travers, p. 406). Since 1965, the code was not utilized as a tool of enforcement. A poll of membership in 1973 revealed that only thirty-three percent of the membership endorsed the concept of an enforceable code, while forty-two percent believed that the document should be only a statement of principles (Travers, p. 406). The NEA code currently exists in the form adopted by the 1975 representative Assembly.

*Ethical Decision-Making*

Given the historical context of professional codes and the lack of an enforceable code for educators, how then can the distinction be made between the purposes of codes, and the ethical principles that guide the codes? It is argued that “codes of conduct mandate specific behaviors in particular
“situations” but do not “promote individual adherence to ethical principles” (Carter, 2002, p. 1). In addition, the “gray areas in decision-making that confront most teachers on a regular basis” stem from “competing interests and values” (Carter, p. 1). Organizations mandated what not to do in a specific situation, but it would be impossible to list all possible situations. The application of the code of conduct provided some guidance, but did not “permit consideration of competing value positions inherent in professional judgment” (Carter, p. 6). Instead, case studies provided practice with ethical decision-making skills. The intersection of three key components, “relationships among individuals, laws, and rules; regulations and codes of conduct; and values and cultural influences” were rehearsed through the professional dialogue following case study implementation (Carter, p. 5).

Carter designed several case studies for teacher discussion. The cases included situations with ambiguous solutions, professional situations requiring ethical decisions, and cases requiring resolutions from competing value positions. The purpose was to “provoke a range of possible responses” dependent on a “professional dialogue and the ability of the individuals to reflect on and acknowledge the implications of different decisions” (Carter, p. 14). This approach to ethics training was considered effective in a “workplace culture of inquiry and professional learning,” and “incompatible with cultures of bureaucratic dependency based on rule following and abrogation of individual responsibility” (Carter, p. 14). Carter summed up his proposal for requiring teachers to participate in ethical decision-making case study discussions in
this way:

In grappling with the issue of ethics in teaching, the employer faces dilemma in acknowledging the uncertainties that surround the professional practices of teachers through the use of case studies, and at the same time, providing a framework for professional conduct that is acceptable to the community (Carter, 2002, p. 6).

The framework of the ethic of the profession provides the opportunity for teacher leaders to utilize the “fourth ethical lens for reflecting on, then dealing with, dilemmas faced by educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 11), as does Carter’s ethical case study approach. However, a gap still exits. What do educational leaders need to provide to ensure that teacher leaders have the ability to utilize the components of the ethic of the profession, thereby creating ethical schools? The following sections of literature review present a snapshot of the environment conducive to teacher leadership and ethical teacher leadership.

The Environment Conducive to Teacher Leadership Development

In a growing addition to the body of literature, empirical studies reveal numerous small scale, qualitative analysis’ aimed at describing dimensions of teacher leadership practice, teacher leader characteristics, and conditions that promote and challenge teacher leadership (Krisko, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The most promising atmosphere conducive to teacher leadership is in an environment where there is evidence of interactive theories of leadership. Transformational leadership (Burns, 1978, Leithwood, 1992), facilitative leadership (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991), democratic empowered leadership (Blasé & Anderson, 1995), synergistic leadership (Covey, 1993), communities
of leaders (Barth, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994), and distributive leadership (Elmore, 2000, 2006) are all models of leadership that exhibit an interactive relationship and emphasize the collaboration and shared power. Leadership theories continue to be a topic of discussion throughout the literature. Several leadership theories will be explored in more detail in this literature review.

*Distributed Leadership.*

Elmore’s notion of distributed leadership may be the vehicle to leave behind antiquated notions of leadership in schools, and to move seamlessly into the 21st century, Elmore eloquently states:

We transform dysfunctional relations into functional ones, not by continuing to do what we already know how to do more intensely and with greater enthusiasm, but by learning how to do new things, and perhaps, more importantly, learning how to attach positive value to the learning and doing of new things (Elmore, 2000, p. 19).

According to Elmore, distributive leadership contains two main tenets: 1) describing the ground rules which leaders of various kinds would have to follow in order to engage in large scale improvement; and 2) describing how leaders of various kinds in various roles and positions would share responsibility in a system of large scale improvement (Elmore, p. 19). In addition, Elmore proposes five principles that lay the foundation for large scale improvement based on distributed leadership:

The purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of the role. Instructional improvement requires continuous learning. Learning requires modeling. The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution. The exercise of authority
requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity (Elmore, 2000, p. 23).

The essence of transformational leadership was described as relationship, engagement, and elevation of common motives or values (Burns, 1978, p. 50). Avolio and Bass identified transformational leaders as individuals who motivated colleagues to work for “transcendental goals instead of immature self interest and for achievement and self-actualization instead of safety and security” (1988, p. 137). Further, Avolio and Bass identify charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation as three elements essential to transformational leadership.

*Educative Leadership.*

Educative leadership was viewed as a link to social reconstructionist philosophy. The essential point of educative leadership was to “involve the making and articulating of choices, the location of oneself within the cultural struggles of the times, as much as the cultural battles of the school as in the wider society” (Bates, 1992, p. 19). Another definition of educative leadership involved continuous critical discourse and social action as a means of addressing social injustice and disadvantage within the organization (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). On the other hand, the notion of educative leadership was a misnomer in that “leadership traditionally defined implies hierarchical division of power and corporate directions setting” while “educativeness implies the opposite, namely assisting people to understand themselves and their world…to overcome the oppressive conditions that characterize work
patterns and social relationships” (Smyth, 1989, p. 182). Finally, it is asserted that:

…the traditional tendency to associate leadership with formal authority will probably inhibit sustained school reform in the years ahead because it fails to take advantage of those leaders who are most closely associated with the central function of schools – namely, classroom teachers. A concept of school leadership that recognizes that at least some classroom teachers possess the full range of leadership capabilities described in authoritative theories is essential for successful school reform in knowledge based society (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2002, p. 29).

Parallel Leadership

No single theory was able to conceptualize leadership “in relation to teachers’ core functions,” and none appears to take into account the “maturity and sophistication” exemplified by the “complexity of contemporary teaching” (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & Hann, 2002, p. 31). Therefore, a “new paradigm of the teaching profession will lead to a new paradigm of leadership”… one that distributes leadership throughout the organization and “recognizes the central place of teachers” (p. 27). This new “paradigm of the teaching profession recognizes the capacity of the profession to provide desperately needed school revitalization and the striking potential of teachers to provide new forms of leadership in schools and communities” (p. 3). Defined as “relatedness between teacher leaders and administrator leaders,” parallel leadership provided a “process whereby teacher leaders and their principals engage in collective action to build school capacity” (p. 38). Parallel leadership identified “three distinct characteristics: mutualism, a sense of shared purpose, and allowance for individual expression” (p. 39). As an
outcome of their research on teacher leadership, Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann identified a Teachers As Leaders Framework to conceptualize the paradigm shift required in 21st century schools. The framework was based on their definition of teacher leadership:

Teacher leadership facilitates principled action to achieve whole school success. It applies the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth, and adults. And it contributes to long-term, enhanced quality of community life (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002, p. 10).

The framework presented an “idealized image” of how teacher leaders exerted their influence in the schools and communities studied (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann, 2002, p. 10). Further,

The framework is a hypothetical portrait, because no one teacher leader whom we observed fulfills all six elements. Yet all the teacher leaders whom we studied exhibited aspects of the six elements in some way, at some time during their work. The framework can thus be regarded as both idealized image and pragmatic guide to action (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann, 2002, p. 10 – 11).

It was this portrait of a teacher leader, as well as the notion of parallel leadership that set the stage for the creation of the Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership implemented in this case study (Appendix B).

Whether the school organization embraces transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992), facilitative leadership (Dunlap & Goldman, 1993), democratic empowered leadership (Blasè & Anderson, 1995), synergistic leadership (Covey, 1993), communities of leaders (Barth, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994), distributive leadership (Elmore, 2000, 2006), or Parallel Leadership (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002), these
particular models of leadership appeared to exhibit an interactive relationship between the traditional school administrator and the teacher leader. These leadership models emphasized collaboration and shared power, creating conditions conducive to teacher leadership, and potentially, the expression of the ethic of the profession.

The shift in leadership roles moved stakeholders from a reliance on the power of a top-down system to a system that seeks to “empower others by building a community of relationships that tend to be self-organizing” (Caine & Caine, 2000, p.8). In the current era of accountability, the ability to manage change, and to sustain a culture of learning for students and teachers is essential. Continuous change requires the development of a community that is inclusive, values individual development and achievement, and builds capacity for change while encouraging leaders to continue to grow professionally (Harris, 2002; Leithwood & Menzies, 1998). Both formal and informal leadership structures require teachers to assume responsibility for the work and overall academic responsibility, which in the past have been solely the responsibility of the administration (York-Bare, Sommes, Ghere, & Montie, 2006; Zepeda, Mayers, & Bendon, 2003).

It was this shift in leadership from traditional authority in schools via superintendents and principals to shared and parallel responsibility by and including teacher leaders that opened the door to the application of the ethic of the profession. The literature review provided a view of the foundational components of the ethic of the profession; the need for an ethical framework
derived from rich ethical traditions, inclusion of codes of ethics, an ethical
decision-making model, the historical development of teacher leadership,
policy and reform efforts based on teacher leadership, and the environment
conducive to encouraging teacher leadership. Through the discussion provided
in the literature, a more complete picture emerged of a teacher leader who
implemented and sustained reform in the classroom and the community at
large, while demonstrating a well-established ethical stance. The components
of the ethic of the profession came into focus based on the literature review in
both ethics and teacher leadership. It was this focus, dedicated to discovering
the demonstration of the ethic of the profession through the work of teacher
leaders, which tied this case study to the body of literature. As the rich
descriptions of personal and professional codes, discussion of clash,
dissonance, or tension between and among codes, as well as the identification
of ethical dilemmas unfolded through the study, the link between ethics and
teacher leadership was explicitly explored.

Ethical Perspectives of Teacher Leadership

Contemporary leadership training programs included an emphasis on
confronting issues of values and ethics in light of the changing political,
social, and economic environment (Mertz, 1997; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001,
2005; Starratt, 1997). Educational leadership programs dealt explicitly with
formal ethical concerns through the conceptualization of the ethics of justice,
critique and care. Each of these ethics was considered inseparable from and
complimentary to the other. Three ethical traditions were considered essential background in the creation of ethical schools.

The ethic of justice requires “universal application of principles of justice among individuals in society” (Starratt, 1997, p. 98). The focus is on rules, policies, procedures, fairness, and rights (Beck & Murphy, 1997; Noddings, 1998; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005).

The ethic of critique focuses on similar topics of laws and justice, but extends further by requiring leaders to “speak out against unjust rules and laws and social arrangements on behalf of those principles of human and civil rights, on behalf of a common humanity which is violated through discrimination, disenfranchisement, and an arbitrary denial of equal treatment” (Starratt, 1997, p. 99). Discussions regarding the distribution of power, procedures and guidelines are critiqued to ensure both equity and equality to all.

The ethic of care requires concern and connectedness over time to include all stakeholders (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1998). This ethic “compels us to be proactively sensitive to extending ourselves beyond duty and convenience to offer other persons our concern and attention” (Starratt, 1997, p. 99).

A fourth dimension, the ethic of the profession, placed “students at the center of the ethical decision-making process,” creating a moral imperative to “serve the best interests of the student” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 23). Although currently designated for traditional educational leaders,
utilization of the four-part ethical lens provides a basis for reflective practice and ethical decision-making for all stakeholders working to create ethical schools in the 21st century.

How can ethical schools be created? If the “nature of learning itself is intrinsically a moral activity,” then “leadership within that morally charged environment involves educators in attending to the moral character of what the community is called to do” (Starratt, 1997, p. 95). Further, schools were seen as “moral communities requiring the development of a distinct leadership based on moral authority” (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 57). Finally, “the goal of commitment to a common purpose that rises above organizational detail becomes a moral value” (Leithwood, 1994, p. 204). An ethical school was described as a school in which the well being of students remained at the forefront with explicit, accepted, and openly acknowledged ethics embedded in the daily activities. Ethical schools were characterized by ethical awareness; teachers were sensitive to the ethical implications of their own policies and practices, as well as those of the school and the system. School personnel accepted responsibility for their actions, both individually and collectively; an acceptance of responsibility by each individual for their personal ethics as professionals and for the ethics of the organization as a whole (Forster, 1998). However, ethical knowledge relies on the teacher’s awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the demands placed upon them in an effort to create an ethical school (Campbell, 2003).
A function of ethics was to assist individuals from being swayed by their emotions, personal interests, concerns, and beliefs as they choose “morally sound strategies and activities from a range of variable alternatives” (Beck & Murphy, 1997, p. 40). Morality refers to commonly accepted rules of conduct, patterns of behavior approved by a social group, values and standards shared by the group, and beliefs about what is good and right held by the community with a shared history (King, 2008). Ethics, then, were defined as the critical reflection with the purpose of analysis, criticism, interpretation, and justification of rules, roles, and relations in a society (King, p. 15). Ethical conduct required decision-making and judgment based on sound ethical principles, especially in situations where the decision seemed a matter of choosing between competing or conflicting values (Forster, 1998). Reviewing these competing values provided an opportunity to examine ethical principles gleaned from three traditions of moral philosophy (Kidder, 1996).

The first ethical tradition, utilitarianism, has been identified as a form of consequentialism and identified as a teleological principle. Utilitarianism is defined as “a determination of the value of an act by referring to its moral consequences” (Kidder, p. 27). This normative ethical theory placed the locus of right and wrong solely on the outcomes or consequences of choosing one action over another action, allowing the individual to move past individual interests and take into account the interest of others (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984). Bentham introduced the principle of utility, which recognized the role of pain (evil) and pleasure (good) in decision-making. Mill further added to
the notion and emphasized capability of achieving happiness for the greatest amount of people (Beauchamp & Childress). Utilitarianism is best identified by the maxim *Do whatever produces the greatest good for the greatest number* (Kidder, 1996, p. 23). Utilitarianism requires a cost-benefit analysis to determine who will be hurt and who will be helped by any action (Kidder, p. 23).

The second ethical tradition is in direct opposition to utilitarianism. Deontological principles are the appeal to general principles such as justice, human rights, or respect for persons, placing the locus of right and wrong in autonomous adherence to moral laws or duties (Kidder, p. 23; Beauchamp & Childress, 1984). Deontology is best known by what Immanuel Kant deemed as “the categorical imperative, “*Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law*” (Kidder, 1996, p. 24). More simply stated, the maxim affirmed, “follow only the principle that you want everyone else to follow” (Kidder, p. 24). In addition, deontology takes relationships between people very seriously, not simply relating to each other as “beneficiaries of good” identified in utilitarianism, but rather in more complex way which hold “special moral significance; i.e., parent-child, friend-friend, teacher–student” (Kidder, p. 24). Two key duties were identified as nonmaleficence (don’t harm others) and beneficence (help others) (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984, p. 56). Therefore, to a deontologist, responsibilities to others are more varied and more specific than the
responsibility to promote good or achieve an identified objective (Flew, 1967).

A third ethical tradition espoused an ethic of being guided in each case by care, compassion, and concern for human relationships within any given situation (Kidder, 1996). The Golden Rule provided the time-tested maxim, *Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you* (Kidder, p. 23-24). Kant would contest this maxim’s standing as an ethical principle. However, Kidder believed that for many people it is the only rule of ethics known, and “deserves consideration for the moral glue it has provided over the centuries” (Kidder, p. 23-24).

Ethical theories seek to formulate and defend a system of moral principles and guidelines to assist in the determination of “which actions are right and which are wrong. These action-guides are presumably valid for everyone” (Frankena, 1973, p. 78). King provided a look at the way ethics were enacted in relation to question asked by the individual (2008, p. 6). Characterized as ‘rationalist’, who asked questions related to justice, rights, and duty; the ‘realist,’ who asked questions related to the outcome based on utilitarian principles; the ‘pragmatist,’ who asked questions related to what works best, and the ‘relationist,’ who asked questions from a deontological perspective based on creation of relationships (King, p. 18). In order to transition from individual ethical responses to group ethical responses, the crafting of a system of moral principles lead to the development of a “general moral code” or guiding set of fundamental moral principles and rules.
This general moral code became a professional code, represented as an “articulated statement of role morality as seen by members of the profession” (p. 40). The function of the professional code was to “facilitate relationships of trust and confidence that permit and encourage certain activities to be performed for socially valued ends” (p. 40). The connection to teacher leaders lies in the “development of explicitly stated ethical considerations of moral truth expressed as an attempt to achieve social good through the work of the teaching profession” (Brock, 1998, p. 23). Further, “Social good sought by the teaching profession ought to be the foundation of any framework of ethical standards” (p. 24). Brock stated his position in this way:

The essential “social good” pursued by the profession of teaching is to maximize the learning opportunities that will help enable each individual student to achieve personal excellence in the intellectual, personal, social, cultural, physical, moral, spiritual and other aspects of human development (Brock, 1998, p. 25).

The foundation of ethical principles in the teaching profession included attention to high expectations for student achievement despite temporary or apparent failure, exercising educational leadership by working collaboratively with colleagues to help ensure the goal of the school as a learning community are met, exercising leadership by incorporating issues associated with cultural diversity were uncovered (Brock, 1998, p. 28). The concept of *phronesis*, Aristotle’s term for practical wisdom, was applied to the profession in this way, “the teacher as a professional must display judgment, not just obedience to a rule of system,” by “taking personal responsibility and
therefore, experiencing moral freedom” (Brock, p. 30). In addition, Brock postulates:

Ultimately, however, the primary imperative to act must not merely rely on actions of any external bodies that might properly be established to oversee or regulate the professional behavior of teachers. It must come from within each teacher, be driven by the profession itself, and be exemplified by each individual teacher exercising their ethical responsibilities as a member of what has been described succinctly as a “knowing and caring” profession – teaching (Brock, 1998, p. 32).

Brock’s identification of professional judgment on the part of teachers is consistent with what Forster’s calls for in the development of ethical schools, and is reflected in Shapiro and Stefkovich’s ethic of the profession, connecting the literature with the focus of this case study.

Ethic of the Profession

The ethics of justice, critique and care provide three distinct perspectives for framing ethical decision-making. However, these ethics do not include overt attention to question unique to the profession of teaching, nor do the ethics require educational leaders to examine their own perspectives in light of the of their own personal and professional codes of ethics. This gap was filled by the introduction of the ethic of the profession as a fourth ethical paradigm (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). Previously, professional ethics were viewed as a subset of the justice ethic based on the attention to rules, codes, and principles that fit into the justice ethic. However, as shown previously, codes of ethics created and imposed from a level removed from the classroom, do little to impact the daily interaction in school settings. The crux of the professional paradigm stems from the creation of
personal and professional codes, the identification of the clash between and among codes (Shapiro & Stefkovich). This clash, dissonance, or tension affects personal decision-making, thus greatly impacting day-to-day interactions in schools. In 21st century schools, educational leaders face complex moral dilemmas presented by the diversity of students, parents, and the community. This diversity encompasses race and ethnicity, but also extends to religion, social class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and a variety of learning styles, which must be addressed (Shapiro & Stefkovich). Therefore, the paradigm for the profession expects leaders to “examine professional codes of ethics in light of personal codes and standards of the profession, and then calls on them to place students at the center of the ethical decision-making process” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 23).

While grappling with professional codes of ethics in light of personal codes of ethics in the role of a principal, the researcher noticed that teachers were also looking to personal and professional codes of ethics to solve ethical dilemmas in the classroom. Several interested teachers opened an important dialogue with the researcher about their ethical dilemmas in the classroom. After several in-depth conversations with these teachers, the concept for this research project was conceived. The research design detailed in chapter three provides a blue print for uncovering the ethic of the profession through the work of nine identified teacher leaders in three diverse school districts. The intent of the research was to extend the use of the lens of ethic of the profession from educational administrators to teacher leaders.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Chapter three provides the assumption and rationale for the research design for this qualitative case study. The central tenet of the ethic of the profession is to serve “the best interest of the student” (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2001, 2005, p. 23). Given that, the ethic of the profession appears to have application to leaders in formal roles of educational leadership, as well as those demonstrating teacher leadership. This research design provided an opportunity to analyze the ethic of the profession by examining teacher leaders’ daily practice. Included in this chapter are the research questions, the role of the researcher, collection of data, data analysis procedures, data verification methods, the study outcomes, and the relationship of the outcomes to theory and literature.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in this qualitative case study included the following:  Grand Tour Research Question: Is the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, demonstrated through the work of teacher leaders? If so, how?

The following sub-questions guided the investigation:

- Research sub-question one: Does the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics influence the teacher leader’s practice? If so, how?
• Research sub-question two: How does the teacher leader address conflict, if it arises between personal and professional codes including clashes:

1. within professional codes,
2. of professional codes among educational leaders,
3. between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community (i.e. either the professional community, the school community or the community where the educational leader works)?

• Research sub-question three: Does the teacher leader place the students at the center of the ethical decision-making process to address ethical dilemmas faced in daily practice? If so, how?

Assumptions and Rationale for the Design

This study lends itself to a qualitative design adhering to “…an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). This qualitative case study examined the work of teacher leaders through the articulated framework of the ethic of the profession, to produce “thickly descriptive reports” from multiple perspectives (Yin, p. 15).

In accordance with Yin (2003), triangulation was achieved through the use of the following multiple sources of data. Participants were identified through the Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership (Appendix A) and accompanying Scoring Guide (Appendix B), developed by Crowther,
Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann (2002) to mirror the Teachers as Leaders Framework identified in Chapter 2. Respondents scoring between 21 and 30 on the 30 point scoring guide were identified as having “virtually all of your attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership and parallel leadership” (p. 88). These respondents were considered for participation in the study. Once identified, participants created personal and professional codes of ethics (Appendix C), followed by a semi-structured interview (Appendix D) to discuss the created codes. A second interview (Appendix E) was held to explore an ethical dilemma experienced by the teacher leaders. These multiple sources were utilized to link a data chain of evidence from the database of information to the research questions and the conclusions drawn from the data (Yin, 2003).

Qualitative research offers “an advantage in addressing three practical purposes” which were inherent in this study. First, case studies generate “results and theories that are understandable and experientially credible, both to the people you are studying and to others.” Second, this study identifies the need to “conduct formative evaluations that are intended to help improve existing practice.” Third, this study required “engaging in collaborative or action research with practitioners” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 21). Utilizing this theoretical framework, this study explored the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005) and extended the ethical lens from administrators to teacher leaders.
The questions under study were posed to test the assumptions that the research findings pertaining to the ethic of the profession, derived from those in roles of formal authority in educational leadership (Shapiro & Stefkovich), could be applied to teacher leaders exhibiting leadership from within the classroom. Consistent with the aforementioned advantages of conducting qualitative research, teacher leaders were provided with the opportunity to examine their current practice through the lens of the ethic of the profession (Maxwell, 1996; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005).

Role of the Researcher

The impetus for this research study was derived from an intense interest in developing teacher leaders who are able to assist students in meeting the demands of the 21st century school system. Inherent in this task was to understand the ethical framework that teacher leaders use as a lens for ethical decision-making in their daily practice.

This researcher is employed as an elementary principal in a suburban Pennsylvania school district. Through the process of completing this qualitative case study, it is apparent that the roles of principal and researcher are similar in several ways. As a principal, numerous parent meetings, telephone calls, and impromptu visits begin with an ambiguous purpose, but end with some semblance of clarity and resolution. Similarly, research requires perseverance in ambiguous, tedious tasks. Clarity of topic and identification of data are essential in both roles. Effective communication skills are a necessity in the principalship, and in the role of researcher. The
ability to see the big picture, ramifications of spur of the moment decisions, and the domino effect are also common threads in both venues. The lessons learned as a principal were applied to the research process of data collection, with emphasis on clarity of issues and the ability to pose thoughtful questions designed to reveal insights and patterns on the part of the respondents.

Ethical issues addressed included researcher bias and confidentiality. Researcher bias was continually addressed, as the researcher remained detached from the teacher leaders who were employed in neighboring school districts. Comparisons made between the researcher’s experience with teacher leaders, as it pertains to the data collection and data analysis, received careful thought to reduce conclusions that were affected by the researcher’s reactivity to the data or topic. In instances where the data collection or analysis had the potential to be compromised, the dissertation committee was consulted for assistance.

In addition to being aware of researcher reactivity, three broad principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice were practiced (Belmont Report, 1979). The principle of respect for persons maintains that all participants were treated as autonomous agents. Once a teacher agreed to participate in the study, informed consent was obtained. All participants were informed of the expectations prior to the study and voluntarily agreed to participate in the case study research. The principle of beneficence required that all participants were treated in an ethical manner throughout the case study research. For example, participants had the opportunity to verify all
transcribed versions of interviews in which they participated. In one case, Kim, the suburban elementary participant, did not convey her thoughts accurately and contradicted herself during the first interview. Kim was given the opportunity to read the transcript of the interview. Kim did not ask for the interview transcript to be amended. The principle of justice was afforded to all study participants. In order to avoid a potential ethical concern, participants were not used from the researcher’s district of employment.

Confidentiality was maintained during the data collection phase, analysis and discussion of results. Even though student information was not evaluated in the study, participants changed student names to ensure no personally identifiable information was disclosed. Likewise, participants were not asked to disclose information which was personal in nature. Interviews were conducted in a private location. The interview data, artifacts, and research database were kept secure throughout the research process, ensuring participant confidentiality.

Population

Three school districts in south-central Pennsylvania were chosen for study in order to uncover similarities and differences in neighboring school districts and the researcher’s own school district. Once identified, district superintendents were contacted to gain permission to conduct this case study research. When contacted initially, one district superintendent reported that teachers would be unwilling to participate in the study. Therefore, another district was chosen to participate. A fourth district superintendent was
contacted, and gave permission for teacher leaders to be identified as study
participants. The participating districts were identified as districts A, B and C.
Table 3.1 compares the three participating school districts based on
enrollment, students who applied for free and reduced lunch (socio-economic
indicator; SES), type of district, and status of Adequate Yearly Progress
(AYP) as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, commonly
referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Table 3.1

School District Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Socioeconomic Status</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>6,375</td>
<td>75.7% Free/Red.</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Corrective Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No schools met AYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>13.3% Free/Red.</td>
<td>Exurban</td>
<td>Met AYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All schools met AYP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>15.7% Free/Red.</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High School did not meet AYP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant Pool

Permission was obtained to contact three building principals in each
chosen district; urban, suburban, and exurban. Principals provided an
invitation to participate in the online survey to all faculty members in their
buildings. Teachers who volunteered to participate completed the survey
online. Out of the initial pool of 36 respondents, nine teachers were chosen to participate in the study. These identified teachers scored within the range of 21 to 30 points, out of a possible 30 points, on the Self Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership (Appendix A). This instrument will be described in detail later in this chapter.

Table 3.2 shows the total number of faculty member in each building, the total number of respondents, and the range of scores on the online survey (Appendix A).

Table 3.2

*Participant Pool*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Faculty per Building</th>
<th>Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Range of Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Elementary – 50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18 - 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle School – 90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School - 120</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Elementary – 55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle School – 63</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18 - 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School - 70</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Elementary – 33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17 - 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle School – 45</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20 - 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School -100</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8 - 28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The urban elementary pool had three respondents. One did not have a qualifying score. The respondent with the highest score (26) was contacted and agreed to participate in the study. One urban middle school teacher responded. The respondent had a qualifying score (24), was contacted, and participated in the study. Three urban high school teachers responded. Two had qualifying scores. The respondent with the highest score (28) was contacted, and participated in the study. All contacted respondents chose to participate in the study.

The exurban elementary pool consisted of three respondents. Two had qualifying scores. The respondent with the highest score (28) was contacted, and participated in the study. The exurban middle school pool consisted of four respondents. Two respondents did not have a qualifying score. One respondent had a perfect score of 30, was contacted, and participated in the study. The exurban high school pool had eleven respondents, the most of any district or level. However, only three participants had qualifying scores. The respondent with the highest score (28) was contacted, and participated in the study.

The suburban elementary pool consisted of three respondents. Two had qualifying scores. The respondent with the highest score (28) was contacted, and participated in the study. The suburban middle school pool consisted of two participants. One respondent did not have a qualifying score. The other did (27), was contacted, and participated in the study. The suburban high school pool consisted of eight respondents. Three respondents had
qualifying scores. The respondent with the highest score (27) was contacted, and participated in the study.

**Participant Descriptions**

Ben was nearing the end of his teaching career in the urban district. He taught in the same department, social studies, at the same high school for his entire career. With three years left until retirement, Ben appeared to be vested in his school and his students. He was active on his school’s improvement committee. He tutored students during his planning period, and attended sporting events to show his support for the students. Ben reported that he “finds fulfillment” in his chosen career and was “not looking forward” to retirement. He planned to substitute teach in his district and a neighboring district after retirement. Although nearing the end of his career, Ben felt the need to “continue expanding” his knowledge so that he “is cognizant of what new ideas have been generated in the field”.

Sara was a second career teacher in the urban district. Her first position was as a librarian in the town’s public library. Her love of both children and books drew her to education. She completed her elementary certification and then went on for a master’s degree in library science. She worked in an elementary school in her chosen district for fifteen years, three in grade three, and twelve as the librarian. When her principal made her aware of the need for a librarian at one of the middle schools, she willingly agreed to the move. Sara had been working in her current position for six years. She noted that “my role as a teacher is one of providing nurture” and “individuals
should have equal access to shelter, food, safety, and health care, despite their economic level.”

Sue was teaching for nine years in the urban district. During that time, her assignments were in first and second grades. Her current teaching position was with a self-contained classroom of English Language Learners (ELL). Her twenty students include a wide range of English ability levels; from students who were hearing English for the first time, to those children with advanced skills who would be exiting the ELL status. Sue was passionate about her chosen profession, indicating that her position required “a calling” as opposed to “merely a job.” She spoke about family issues and concerns, and opportunities that she took to meet with families inside and outside of school hours. Sue lives in the community with her students, and felt strongly that she needed that “connection to the neighborhood” in order to fully understand and serve her students to the best of her ability.

Beth was teaching for fifteen years in the exurban district. As the high school mathematics department chair, she feels that she is at “the top” of her game. She is the advisor to the National Honor Society, advisor to the school newspaper, and serves on the mathematics curriculum committee. Outside of school, Beth is pursuing an advanced degree at a local college and planning to teach at the collegiate level. Beth appeared self-assured, focused, and “no nonsense” in her approach to teaching and to life. Her interviews were concise, her responses were “to the point” and her dilemmas illustrated her attention to issues of equity for advanced students.
Ruth was teaching for eleven years in the exurban district. She appreciates the middle level concept of teaming and cooperation. She expressed deep concern for her students, especially those who “don’t fit in or conform” to the norm. Ruth spoke of her religious convictions and wore a cross necklace at both interviews. Her beliefs were evident in her interviews. Her care and compassion for her students were evident in her interview responses. Ruth strives to “live out” her values in her “everyday life, the school setting, and at home”. She had an ever-present smile and seemed to be very happy with her current position and home life. Ruth epitomizes the middle school teaming philosophy as she carries her beliefs throughout her areas of influence.

Jim was a gung-ho, early career teacher in the exurban district. He was teaching in an elementary school setting for five years. Prior to that, he served a tour of duty in the Marine Corps. Jim was focused, highly motivated, and serious about making a difference in his chosen profession. In addition, Jim is a new father and lives in the community where his school is located. Jim believed in “speaking out against injustice” in his school setting. He had a “heart for those less fortunate” than him. He expressed gratitude for his family, career, and country during his interviews. His focus of concern centered on English Language Learner students and equal access to educational opportunities.

Lisa was a third year Learning Support teacher in the suburban high school. Her enthusiasm and excitement about student relationships was
contagious. Lisa seemed to be very reflective about the dilemmas she and her inclusion students faced on a daily basis. Lisa’s responsibilities include supporting her learning support students in the general education math class, in addition to providing a study skills class for her identified students. She spoke of “enthusiastically sharing” her love of learning with her students, which caused her to feel “exhausted but fulfilled” at the end of the day.

Sally had eighteen years of classroom experience, all of them in special education, but only six in her current position as an inclusion teacher in the suburban district. She works in a co-teaching model with another teacher. The students are grouped, but the teachers work so cohesively that “you can’t tell which one of us is the regular teacher and which has a special education degree.” Sally has been paired with “four inclusion teachers in six years,” but despite the lack of continuity, appears to enjoy her role. The teachers loop from grade six to seven with the student roster in tact, “except for move-ins with an IEP.” She exudes a quiet confidence in her ability to meet the needs of both her teacher and her students. She enjoyed her role as a mentor teacher and believes that her “knowledge of the law and huge bag of tricks” assist her in meeting the setting demands.

Kim was teaching for eleven years in the suburban district. She is working on her master’s degree at a prestigious university in a neighboring state, which causes her to utilize her time “effectively and wisely.” During her interviews, Kim was intensely focused on the needs of the students in her classroom. She seemed to have a “heart for those less fortunate,” which was
illustrated in her interviews. She was especially concerned with issues surrounding students who were “at-risk” in the learning environment. Kim spent time and money in her classroom, and was eager and willing to share the ideas that “promoted self-esteem and learning.” Her future plans included working in the community to address “issues of social and economic injustice.”

See Table 3.3, which describes participant characteristics in greater detail. Descriptions include teacher and district, years of experience, subject or grade level taught, gender, scores on the on-line survey, and if the participant held an advanced degree.

Table 3.3 - Participant Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher &amp; District</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Level Subject or Grade</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Survey Score</th>
<th>Advanced Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 – Ben</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>High-History</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 - Sara</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Middle-Library</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 - Sue</td>
<td>4-10</td>
<td>Elementary-Grade 2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 - Beth</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>High-Math</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5 - Ruth</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Middle-Math</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6 - Jim</td>
<td>4-10</td>
<td>Elementary-Grade 5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7 - Lisa</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>High-Learning Support</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C8 - Sally</td>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>Middle-Learning Support</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C9 - Kim</td>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Elementary-Grade 2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instrumentation

**Pilot Study.** All instruments were tested in a school district in the same geographic region with the three districts chosen for study. Volunteers developed Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics. The interview protocols were piloted with the volunteers to ensure that the protocol provided data directly related to the study questions. The interview protocols were designed to be “fluid rather than rigid” (Yin, p. 89), allowing for clarification and discussion during the interview. The pilot study provided an opportunity for the researcher to adjust to the fluid style of the in-depth interview format, which was used for the study. The interview questioning technique of the researcher was modified through the pilot, but the protocol remained as written.

**Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership**

The Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership was chosen for the study administered to all participants (Appendix A). As identified in Chapter 1, teacher leadership and parallel leadership reflect the “essence of the work of teachers designated as leaders in their schools, communities, and profession” (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 10), paralleled by Shapiro and Stefkovich in their description of the ethic of the profession (2001, 2005). The rationale for survey selection for this case study was based on the portrait of a teacher leader identified by Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Haan as “valuing teacher who enhance student outcomes and elevate the quality of life in their schools and communities” (2002, p. 11), the basic central tenet of the
ethic of the profession identified as the need to serve “the best interest of the student” (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2001, 2005, p. 23).

The survey and accompanying scoring guide (Appendix B) offered criteria for the evaluation of responses based on the tenets of teacher leadership as expressed by Crowther, et al. (2002). The survey provided the respondent with the opportunity to use a Likert scale to evaluate belief statements. The scale ranges from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” and responses are assigned point values for each response. Based on the 30 point scoring guide created by Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann, scores between 21 and 30 revealed teachers who expressed “virtually all your attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership and parallel leadership” (2002, p. 88). Given the similarities to the description of the ethic of the profession, respondents who scored between 21 and 30 points were considered for participation in this case study (Appendix B). The respondents with the highest scores from each building were contacted, and agreed to participate. The survey was placed onto a secure online database for ease of participant response.

**Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics Worksheet**

Participants were required to complete personal and professional codes of ethics by identifying five to ten ideals which guided their personal and professional lives (Appendix C). This exercise required participants to expound on how their ideals connected with the development of their personal and professional codes of ethics (Shapiro, 2004). Two professional codes were
provided as a reference; the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession (NEA, 1978) and the Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators (Pennsylvania School Code, 1949). Responses were submitted via email.

Interview Protocol I

The first in-depth, semi-structured interview was conducted within a week of the participants submitting their personal and professional codes of ethics, using the Interview Protocol for Participants I (Appendix D). The interview probed two of the three research sub-questions;

- Research sub-question one: Does the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics influence the teacher leader’s practice? If so, how?
- Research sub-question two: How does the teacher leader address conflict, if it arises between personal and professional codes including clashes:
  1. within professional codes,
  2. of professional codes among educational leaders,
  3. between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community (i.e. either the professional community, the school community or the community where the educational leader works)

Interview Protocol II

Each participant was given approximately two to three weeks to reflect upon an ethical dilemma faced in the participant’s professional practice which required professional judgment and ethical decision making skills. A
second semi-structured interview (Appendix E) was conducted to probe research sub-question three:

- Does the teacher leader place the students at the center of the ethical decision-making process to address ethical dilemmas faced in daily practice? If so, how?

**Procedures**

*Data Collection*

Data rich in detail and generated in context were collected. Four sources of data were utilized. Sources included responses to the Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership (Appendix A), creation of a personal and professional code of ethics (Appendix C), and two semi-structured interviews. The first semi-structured interview detailed the creation of personal and professional codes, noting any clash, dissonance, or tension between codes (Appendix D). The second semi-structured interview focused on an ethical dilemma faced by the participant in daily practice which centered on a student issue requiring professional judgment and ethical decision-making by the participant (Appendix E). The in-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing a “constant line of inquiry” consisting of a “guided conversation rather than structured queries” (Yin, p. 89). All data collection instruments related directly to the grand tour research question which focused on the work of teacher leaders:

- Is the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, demonstrated through the work of teacher leaders? If so, how?
Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis primarily involves classifying items, persons, events, and the properties which characterize them (Creswell, 1998). Categorical analysis occurred by classifying data into logical groups or continua. Concepts emerged across the data set and allowed for subsequent comparisons of these data to the concepts or themes which initially emerged. In order to facilitate the process of analysis, data were coded originally by concepts that were then grouped into categories based on their similarities (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Once this primary coding was completed, these data were secondarily coded to search for deeper connections and more precise clarification of the phenomena reported.

After these major themes were unpacked, secondary coding allowed for integration of themes within, between and among these data to examine the context, events, and effects of the development of codes. Next, relationships were identified based on the central and recurring themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The goal of this final coding was to find an explanation that has emerged from these data. Throughout this process of coding, saturation points were reached and the coding ceased.

Methods of Verification

A case study protocol and database were developed for use during the data collection phase (Yin, 2003). Data were collected from multiple sources of evidence to create data triangulation. Construct validity was established during the data collection phase by seeking a convergence of evidence based
on survey participation, document creation, open-ended interviews, and reviews by the respondents. Internal validity was addressed through explanation-building, addressing rival explanations, and pattern-matching during data analysis. The validity and reliability threats were continually addressed to ensure the accuracy and quality of this case study research. Reliability was addressed by ensuring that the study results could be replicated by making the steps operational. As is true of most case study research, this study was not designed to ensure external validity; therefore, caution should be exercised when attempting to generalize these findings to any other population.

The following multiple measures were implemented in an effort to minimize errors and biases in the case study. The case study protocol was developed to relate directly to the grand tour and research sub-questions. As teacher leaders responded to the activities and interview protocols, data were compiled and analyzed, allowing for the development of categories. The researcher thoroughly reviewed both supporting and discrepant data. Continual categorizing of these data allowed for retaining or modifying the conclusion. Comparisons were included when identifying the link between teacher leaders across the varied contexts, and when uncovering an understanding of the complex social phenomenon of ethical teacher leadership.

In accordance with Maxwell (1996), the following strategies were employed to reduce validity threats. As a test of developing theories, data rich in description
was continually compared. Descriptive note taking took place during all interviews and conversations with participants. Member checks were implemented after each interview as an opportunity to rule out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what was said and the perspective of what occurred.

Outcome of the Study and its Relation to Theory and Literature

This study was based on Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2001, 2005) articulation of the ethic of the profession. According to Shapiro and Stefkovich, the ethic of the profession provides “a fourth ethical lens for reflecting on, then dealing with, dilemmas faced by educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 11). The “major factors that converge to create the professional paradigm” which include “individual professional codes, standards of the profession, professional codes of ethics, ethics of the community, personal codes, professional decision making, clashing codes, and professional judgment which all center around the best interests of the students (p. 24). This case study was conducted to extend this fourth ethical lens to the work of identified teacher leaders.

Two definitions of teacher leadership, taken from the existing body of literature, combine to create a portrait of a teacher leader who exhibits the identified components of the ethic of the profession:

The composite teacher leader is warm, dependable, and self-effacing with a genuine commitment to the work of colleagues and the school. S/he has well-honed interpersonal skills which are exercised with individuals and groups of colleagues, as well as with students. In addition, the teacher leader possesses the technical skills required to program improvement and uses them in concert with a broad knowledge base about education policy, subject matter, the local community, and the school’s students (Leithwood, Jantzi, Ryan & Steinbach, 1997, p. 23-24).
In addition, the following definition of ethical teacher leaders adds the dimension of the ethic of the profession also articulated by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2002, 2005):

> Teacher leaders need to explicitly reflect upon and internalize an ethical standard, which includes an understanding of the purposes of regulations, and are aware of ethical conduct in decision-making and judgment, especially in situations where it seems to be a matter of choosing between competing values. Ethical principles are pursued in a context where an emphasis is placed on the value of each person in a concrete, particular sense. Priority will be given to the quality of human relationships within the school and community. These relationships should be characterized by trust, respect and concern based on an understanding and awareness of each other as a real and unique person (Forster, 1988, p. 6-7).

By combining the two aforementioned definitions for teacher leaders, the literature provides evidence to support the study results that extend the ethic of the profession to the work of teacher leaders.

As an extension of Shapiro and Stefkovich’s (2001, 2005) work which is typically applied to educational administrators, this study established the link between the existing knowledge base on teacher leadership and the use of a multiparadigm approach by teacher leaders when making ethical decisions. This study illuminated the ability of teacher leaders to move beyond the use of a single ethic of justice, critique, or care, to apply of lens of the ethic of the profession. The inherent value in the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics, the examination of ethical dilemmas based on these codes, and the use of the lens of the ethic of the profession proved to be a viable means of problem solving for the nine teacher leaders participating in this case study.
Summary

The ethic of the profession has been directly applied to educational administrators (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). This case study is an extension of the work of Shapiro & Stefkovich. The activities planned for the case study were designed to shed light on the decision-making process of teacher leaders. Multiple sources of data were collected, coded, and analyzed. Categorical analysis was applied to identify emerging themes in these data. The rich descriptions the teacher leaders provided about their work extended the understanding of the use of the ethic of the profession from administrators to teacher leaders by illustrating a nuanced decision-making process highlighted the ability of these teacher leaders to implement the ethic of the profession as a lens for ethical decisions facing teachers on a daily basis.

Chapter four will delineate the analysis used for this case study and chapter five will include a discussion on the salient findings, limitations of the study, and implications for future research.
This case study investigated the ethic of the profession by asking teacher leaders to develop their personal and professional codes of ethics. Typically this line of research is applied to school administrators; however, this investigation extended this line of research to teacher leaders. Further, this research provided an opportunity to analyze the use of the lens of ethic of the profession by examining teacher leaders’ daily practice. To achieve this goal, a grand tour research question was developed: Is the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, demonstrated through the work of teacher leaders? If so, how?

The following sub-questions guided the investigation:

- Research sub-question one: Does the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics influence the teacher leader’s practice? If so, how?

- Research sub-question two: How does the teacher leader address conflict, if it arises between personal and professional codes including clashes:
  1. within professional codes,
  2. of professional codes among educational leaders,
  3. between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community (i.e. either the professional
community, the school community or the community where the educational leader works)?

- Research sub-question three: Does the teacher leader place the students at the center of the ethical decision-making process to address ethical dilemmas faced in daily practice? If so, how?

Based on qualifying assessment scores, nine participants were selected from a larger pool of respondents from three south central Pennsylvania school districts. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to assist with the analysis of the recorded and transcribed interviews. Field notes were taken at the time of the interviews and assisted with the accurate description of the participants by pseudonym. All interviews were held in the participants’ classrooms and were conducted face-to-face. The first activity given to the participants was the creation of personal and professional codes of ethics. An in-depth interview, approximately one hour in length, explored the personal and professional codes of ethics, as well as any clash, dissonance, or tension between codes.

**Categorical Data Analysis**

In order to frame the discussion about participants’ development of the personal and professional codes of ethics, an explanation of a critical ethical dilemma was explored during the second in-depth interview. The ethical dilemma was a key factor providing the context for understanding themes identified in both interviews. Categorical analysis was used to identify critical terms, key events, and themes through the open coding process. Primary
coding was employed to begin the process of analysis. Segments of the interview were analyzed to identify concepts which were grouped into categories based on similar characteristics (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). These identified categories represented the phenomena which were analyzed across cases. Similarities were identified, and the properties, or characteristics that define the categories, were developed. Patterns in the data began to emerge by outlining the properties and dimensions of the categories. Once category saturation became apparent with the redundancy of emerging information, new patterns were explored.

Secondary coding provided an understanding of causal and generic relationships in the data. Subcategories were created to uncover a more precise understanding of the observed phenomena. Subcategories included the cause and context of the event, the manner in which the event occurred, and consequences of the event (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In essence, these data were deconstructed during primary coding and synthesized during the secondary coding. Hypotheses were then developed to test and explain the observed phenomena.

Further examination of these data resulted in tertiary coding which linked the central concept through statements of relationship found in these data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The central category occurred frequently in the data and reflected a theme common to all categories. The process allowed for the integration of categories to form an explanation of the observed phenomena. The final result was the development of a conceptual model
which highlighted the decision-making process uncovered through the primary, secondary, and tertiary coding processes.

The complex nature of the data analysis required attention to the ethical lenses of justice, critique, and care, which were evident in the data. These data were further divided to identify the justice, critique, and care ethics, as well as to identify, and then move beyond these ethics to implement the use the lens of the ethic of the profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). Following the categorical analysis, a cross-case analysis within and among all participant interview data was examined to further reveal patterns uncovered in the interview data.

Analysis of Participant Responses

Ben

As mentioned in the participant description in Chapter 3, Ben was a veteran social studies teacher in an urban district who also served as his school’s attendance monitor. Although he anticipated retiring within the next three years, Ben took an active role in the school improvement committee and showed his commitment to his students by supporting their after school events.

Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe the basic tenets of his personal code of ethics, Ben offered the following description:

Always leave family or personal problems home or away from the school community or environment. Always strive to treat everyone equally, no matter what the circumstances. Always strive to do one’s best in every situation.
Ben expressed the basic tenets of his professional code of ethics in this way:

Treat every student and staff member with courtesy and with the dignity they deserve. I will continue expanding my knowledge so that I am cognizant of what new ideas have been generated in my field. To be accessible to all students as much as time and professional commitments allow. Never allow hidden personal prejudices to affect my dealings with students.

Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Ben’s personal code of ethics revealed three categories of response including living intentionally, implementing the “Golden Rule,” and believing in oneself. Ben’s responses illustrate his commitment to living out his personal beliefs through his work. Field notes show that during the interview process, Ben was animated, interested in the research project, eager to share his beliefs, and clearly illustrated his work through his choice of words. Based on his responses, Ben appeared to pull from the ethic of care and the ethic of critique when creating his personal and professional codes. Throughout the interview, Ben also relied on the ethic of justice when he related to issues of fairness and equality for all students.

Coding of Ben’s professional code of ethics revealed the following categories of response; responsibility to students, creating a climate conducive to learning, and continual professional growth. During the selective coding process, responses revealed that Ben’s dedication to family, the school district, and to his students linked the central category of the data analysis, the best interest of the student, to Ben’s responses from both interviews.
Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethic

When asked to describe any areas of clash between his personal and professional codes of ethics, Ben remarked:

I would say that one has to be judicious in what you say; whereas you feel you may want to say or do something else. I mulled it over and was ready to put pen to paper and see what came out! I like that the idea of using scenarios to test whether one code wins over the other...I had not considered that, and it was reassuring as a professional, to have the professional code win out.

Ben relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between his codes:

A fight broke out in the classroom; kid picking on another kid. My gut instinct was to punch the kid that had caused the problem. I know it sounds harsh, but let me explain. It was Rosa Parks Day, Dec 1, 2006. I always started out my class with important events in history. I brought up the fact of Ms. Parks not giving up her seat. A black girl in the back of the room piped up saying, ‘They make too much of her. There are other people just as important as she was.’ A black guy jumped up out of his seat before I realized what was happening. He leveled four punches in her face; he hit her in the chin, broke her nose, and loosened up two teeth. I put him in a headlock, and held on to him until he calmed down. The senseless violence is really upsetting and makes it difficult to do little more than react in the moment. My professional code of treating others with respect, and not allowing hidden prejudices to affect my judgment won over the need to see justice immediately for the girl who was really injured.

Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Ben identified the clash between his personal and professional codes through an incident of physical violence in his classroom. Ben stated that his professional code of ethics was chosen to resolve his clash between the codes. It was interesting to note that Ben responded to an act of violence with a violent thought, despite reporting...
that he felt offended by the senseless violence in his classroom. When reflecting on
the clash, Ben noted, “…it was reassuring as a professional, to have the professional
code win out”.

Based on synthesis of data from Ben’s interviews, Ben faced dilemmas in his
daily practice which caused him to consider his personal code of ethics, his
professional code of ethics, and the clash between these codes prior to making an
ethical decision. Ben was completely candid in his response and related the incident
and his thoughts without regard for how it made him look.

*Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision*

Following the creation of his personal and professional codes of
ethics, Ben faced an ethical dilemma while serving as the school’s attendance
monitor. He described the ethical dilemma in this way:

A basketball player at the High School could not play in an
important game because he had too many tardies. A teacher
forged a note excusing him for the latest tardy. As an
attendance officer, I accepted the note, thinking that it was
legitimate. Later on that day, I found out through my sources,
that the note was forged. I reported the student to the coach.
The coach supported my decision, and the student did not play
in the game. I then reported the teacher to the proper school
authorities.

Ben noted a clash between his personal and professional codes of ethics as he
considered an alternative course of action other than the one he chose:

I considered not informing the coach of the infraction for a
short period of time, but realized that it violated my
professional ethical code. I needed to do the right thing for the
student; it sets the tone for his future, and I wanted to be a
positive influence for him. The student did not play in the
game, and the coach was not happy that he had to enforce the
situation, but he agreed that it must be done. I reported the
teacher to the principal, and the school board found out and just ‘scolded’ the teacher.

Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

In Ben’s dilemma, two themes emerged from the data including regard for student welfare, and issues of fairness. Ben pulled from both the ethic of justice and the ethic of care in his responses. Ben speaks of fairness often, relying heavily on the ethic of justice. In addition, he felt strongly that his actions would leave a lasting imprint on his students, thus implementing the lens of the ethic of care. Ben identified the following deciding factors in his ethical decision making process:

The student was repeatedly tardy, so the pattern was set into motion. I had seen this teacher make the same kind of mistake in other situations and I felt that I wanted to make certain that it wasn’t a reflection on my code of ethics as attendance monitor.

Best Interest of the Student

Ben noted the overriding factor in his ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

By doing the right thing, it gave me the opportunity to sleep well at night. I supported the student by allowing him to live with the consequences of his decision, I preserved the integrity of the program (athletic and educational) and I made certain that my personal integrity was still in tact.

Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

Through his description of the dilemma, and his need to demonstrate “doing the right thing,” as a model for his students and colleagues, Ben relied upon the ethic of justice, and the ethic of care, and then implemented the lens of the ethic of the profession. He clearly reflected on which code to implement
by considering alternative courses of action, which defined the clash between codes for him. As a result, Ben chose the course which would support the best interest of the student, as well as attention to ensuring that the other teacher’s actions were not impacting Ben in his position as attendance monitor. Ben’s resolution to his ethical dilemma exemplified the themes of regard for student welfare and fairness, which in turn, supported his ethical decision making process based on the best interest of the student.

*Sara*

Sara was a second career teacher in the urban district. Prior to working in the public education, she was employed as a librarian in the town’s public library. Her love of both children and books drew her to education. Sara was deeply committed to supporting the students in her building and assisting them to find the joy of reading “great literature”. Sara noted that her personal and professional codes of ethics were closely aligned. She exemplified this in her comments from her personal code, “My role as a teacher is one of providing nurture,” and her professional code in which she expressed, “individuals should have equal access to shelter, food, safety, and health care, despite their economic level.” Both of these statements exemplify the ethic of care.

*Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics*

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics, Sara offered the following description:

Accept all individuals, every human has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; each person should honor
one another’s religious or spiritual beliefs; individuals should have equal access to shelter, food, safety, and health care, despite their economic level.

Sara expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

[I have a ] commitment to develop students who are life long learners; commitment to provide leadership in professional development of fellow instructional staff; commitment to provide equal educational opportunities to all students no matter their race, sex, color, religion, social and cultural background, economic background, or sexual orientation; commitment to provide materials to students to present various points of view, and not to censor materials provided to grade levels; commitment to uphold principles of intellectual freedom, and resist any effort to censor library materials; commitment to recognize intellectual property rights; and a commitment to protect each library user’s right to privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the school’s responsibility to protect the student from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.

Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Sara’s personal code of ethics revealed three categories of response including unconditional acceptance, care of and for others, and living intentionally. Sara’s responses demonstrate her strong belief in our nation’s Constitution and founding principles, captured in field notes following her interview. As a second career teacher, Sara took her role seriously and approached all situations with care and concern for others as her primary obligation and responsibility. She was dedicated to providing a safe environment conducive to learning. Sara was clearly aligned with the tenets of the ethic of justice, but interspersed in her responses were elements of the ethic of care.
Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sara remarked:

I don’t seem to have a clash between my personal and professional beliefs, but rather between my personal and professional codes and those of the people I work with which led me to realize my position as being a role model and leader by providing professional development and support to my fellow instructional staff members. It is a big responsibility which I take very seriously.

Sara relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

Because I feel strongly that we need to accept all individuals, which includes students and staff, the clash occurs when I am placed in a situation where I have to stand up for my beliefs and the way I interact with students which differs from the way other staff members treat students. I work hard to model my beliefs through my interactions with students. I speak my mind, despite what is popular, and I make an effort to listen and respond accordingly to everyone I meet. For example, when students want me to allow them to only use electronic resources I patiently explain that they need to be familiar with how to research information from books, as well as the internet. It is an unpopular decision these days, but I must uphold my own beliefs that empowerment comes through understanding how to find and use resources effectively.

Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Sara identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through her discussion with students regarding internet research. Sara articulated that her professional code of ethics was chosen to solve her clash between her code and other professionals’ codes of ethics. When reflecting on the clash, Sara noted, “I speak my mind, despite what is popular, and I make an effort to listen and respond accordingly to everyone I meet.” Based on
synthesis of data from Sara’s interviews, Sara faced dilemmas in her daily practice which caused her to consider her personal and professional code of ethics, the clash between her codes, and the clash among codes of others prior to making an ethical decision. In the end, Sara reports that the alignment of her codes provided the support she needed to “realize [her] position as being a role model and leader by providing professional development and support to fellow instructional staff members. It is a big responsibility which [she] takes very seriously.”

Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sara faced an ethical dilemma while serving as the school’s librarian. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

I had to figure out how to confront someone about her actions without making it a racial incident. The incident involved preferential scheduling in the library to African-American faculty members. This happened several times in the early spring of the 2006-2007 school year. The individuals involved included white faculty members who did not have equal access to the library, my African-American aide, and me. I am the supervisor of the library. After confronting my African-American aide, she did indeed admit to giving preferential scheduling to African-American faculty members. We had a serious conversation, during which I shared my beliefs regarding my commitment to provide equal educational opportunities to all students, which must extend to the professional staff as well. Although my aide was angry with me at the time, we had a subsequent conversation where she shared with me that previous incidents of discrimination from white to African-American individuals caused her to use the same tactic to help African-American people. She did apologize to me.
Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

In Sara’s dilemma, two themes emerged from the data including regard for educational equality, and issues of fairness. Based on these themes, Sara employed the ethic of justice and the ethic of critique. It is interesting to note that statements from Sara’s personal and professional codes indicated the use of the ethic of care, as well. Sara identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

My personal code makes me who I am and what I do at school, but my professional codes is strongly rooted in fairness and equity, so they are aligned. If I had to choose, I guess I would say that the professional code wins out – I must uphold my professional principles first and foremost in situations which arise regularly. I was surprised at the number of times other staff members see things differently than I do. I realized that my work in this district is more of a calling and that’s why I choose to stay even though it would be easier to work in a less demanding district.

Best Interest of the Student

Sara shared the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

Uncovering the library situation and finding out what led to the aide’s actions helped me to understand my professional responsibility is to provide leadership to everyone I come in contact with. I realized there are greater issues here than just the use of the library – rather, the issues of race and interpersonal relationships are more complicated, and more global. It brought me to the realization that my professional responsibility is bigger than I realized. I must always think of what is best for the students and teachers I come in contact with every day. I am here for a reason, and that reason is to be a role model for everyone I work closely with every day.
Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

Sara noted that her codes were closely aligned, but the codes of others she came in contact with at school defined the clash for Sara. Through her description of the dilemma, and her need to “uphold [her] professional principles first and foremost,” Sara implemented the ethic of justice. In addition, she identified a need to, “…always think of what’s best for the students and teachers I come in contact with every day,” exemplifying the ethic of care. By incorporating these two ethics and adding the elements of the profession, Sara chose the course which would support both the best interest of the student, as well as attention to the professional responsibility she felt as a role model for students and staff alike. This reflective course of action supported Sara’s ethical decision making process based on the best interest of the student.

Sue

Sue was teaching for nine years in the urban district. She was passionate about her chosen profession, indicating that her position required “a calling” as opposed to “merely a job.” She spoke about family issues and concerns, and opportunities that she took to meet with families during and outside of school hours. Sue lived in the community in a neighborhood with many of her students. Sue felt strongly that she needed that “connection to the neighborhood” in order to fully understand and serve her students to the best of her ability. Her dedication to her family, her students and their families, and to her profession was evident in her interview responses.
Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics,

Sue offered the following description:

My personal code of ethics came from my family, my moral values and my active lifestyle within a church. My family did a wonderful job of raising a respectable and moral daughter. My parents’ motto was, ‘Do unto others as you would want others to do unto you.’ Every time we were out in public my parents made it clear that how I behaved, acted, dressed, and socialized was a reflection of my own character and how people would view me as a productive citizen. I was taught to always tell the truth no matter if would hurt someone else’s feelings. Being untruthful was not part of my character.

Sue expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

My professional code of ethics stems from my belief in my personal code of ethics. I am a professional, educated woman, who at many times, is the only stable person in my students’ lives. I am a role model, and try to instill role model like behaviors onto my students. I need to be a leader for my colleagues, as well as my students. I have a commitment to strive for excellence, as well as to continue my education. I make my students feel safe and non-threatened in our learning environment. I have an open door policy, so that any time my students or their parents need to discuss matters with me, they are welcomed to do so. Personal reflection on professional matters, listening, collaboration, and trying new ideas are part of my professional code of conduct.

Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Sue’s personal code of ethics revealed three categories of response including morality, the “Golden Rule”, and honesty. Sue’s strong desire to be a role model for her students and their families came across in her interview responses and in field notes. Sue’s commitment to her students is exemplified by her living and worshiping in the community where she taught. Sue’s family is of critical importance to her, and spilled over into her “open
door policy for students and their parents.” Sue held a strong belief in reflection, which was stated clearly in her professional code of ethics, interviews, and relayed through the field notes. Sue was “dedicated to providing a role model for her students and their families.” Her interactions with families and actions in the community were thoughtful and deliberate.

_Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics_

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sue remarked:

Most of the time, my professional judgment correlates and meshes with my personal thoughts and ethics; however, there are one or two instances where I might be thinking, ‘What is that parent thinking?’ But overall, I would say my professional and personal beliefs are aligned.

Sue relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

When we dismiss our students, we make sure that the students get handed off to the parents. I had a parent that was yelling out the car door, ‘Come on, come on, come on!’ I told him, ‘Sir, can you please park the car? There are plenty of parking spaces. I don’t feel safe and I don’t feel comfortable letting your child out into the middle of the street.’ He thought that I was undermining him as a parent. When he came up to the door, I thanked him for parking. He became very aggressive, and very verbally combative. I knew I had to stand there and smile, and tell him, ‘I’m sorry you feel that way, but this is the rule’. Personally, I just wanted to tell him, ‘Park your car. Please take care of your child.’ I came in and talked to my principal, and let her know that I was one hundred percent professional about this. But, personally, I just wanted to tell this man, ‘This is what you need to do all of the time’.
Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Sue identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through an incident of a parent’s non-compliance with school rules regarding student dismissal. Sue expressed that her professional code of ethics was chosen to solve the clash between the codes. When reflecting on the clash, Sue noted,

Sometimes I might have said something to a friend or a parent, and then I come back, and I sit and I think, ‘Was that the right thing to do? Did I handle it the correct way? Did I hurt someone’s feelings?’ So I do a lot of personal reflection just to see if there was anything I could have changed or fixed or maybe done a little bit differently for the next time.

When analyzing her interview data, there was no evidence of a clash between Sue’s codes, rather, Sue had identified a personal preference in how to confront a parent in a difficult situation. When expressing the incident, Sue was bothered by the parent’s reaction, as well as her own strong response. She felt her gut reaction would have been unprofessional and rude; therefore she opted to modify her response in the moment. Therefore, this did not represent a clash in codes, but an internal struggle relating to how this teacher expressed dissatisfaction with a parent’s actions in relation to student safety.

Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sue faced an ethical dilemma in the classroom. Sue’s response was one of helplessness, anger, and frustration. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:
The Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) is causing me a problem. We are having early dismissal for our children, kindergarten through second grade. We are losing ten hours of instruction; they lost ten hours of instruction so that we can help with the PSSAs. I feel only mildly helpful to the teacher. I’m sure she’s glad I’m there; I monitor the children when they take their bathroom break, when they get their drink beforehand. But the rest of the time, it’s just not useful for me to be there. So I just feel so frustrated. My principal’s thought on it is that ‘we’re all in this together’. I agree with that. But now I feel like my kids are hurting. When my kids go to take the PSSA, they will have thirty hours less instruction time over the course of three years. I feel like it’s just not right. The student and the parents are losing out. It’s just not right!

Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

In Sue’s dilemma, three themes emerged from the data including regard for student welfare, issues of education equality, and issues of fairness. These themes include attention to the ethic of justice, the ethic of care, and the ethic of critique. Sue felt strongly that the children and parents were suffering as a result of this decision, which required her to respond in some way. Sue identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

The more I thought about it, the more unfair it seemed for the younger children. I believe that the PSSAs are important, but they can’t define our entire school year. Once we hit school improvement, everything will change. I know they are just trying hard to keep our school off the list…I’m not certain that sacrificing next year’s scores for this year will be an effective strategy.

Best Interest of the Student

Sue noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process and summed it up in the following statement:
It was about speaking up for the children, the kindergarten to second grade children, especially. I don’t think that we’re maintaining equality for the all students at this school, which is one of my main reasons for being here. I will continue to speak up for those who are unable to do so. In this case, it’s the kindergarten to second grade children who are not tested, but who are sacrificing their instructional time for the older children.

Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

Through her description of her dilemma and her need to “be a leader for [her] colleagues as well as [her] students,” Sue implemented the lens of the ethic of care, as well as the ethics of justice, and critique. She felt strongly that her students’ education was being compromised by the district decision, and boldly shared her opinion. Sue moved beyond the ethics of justice, critique, and care, and employed the lens of the ethic of the profession. By speaking up for those without a voice, Sue clearly demonstrated the best interest of the student was paramount in her decision-making process. Sue’s ability to critically reflect upon her daily practice provided her with the internal landscape to accurately frame her ethical decisions. In addition, she looked beyond the current school year to see the ramifications of a district decision on her students in the future, and spoke up when given the opportunity to do so. Clearly illuminated in her interview was Sue’s commitment to her students and to her chosen profession.

Beth

Beth was teaching for fifteen years in the exurban district. Beth was the high school mathematics department chair, advisor to the National Honor Society, advisor to the school newspaper, and served on the mathematics
curriculum committee. Beth appeared self-assured, confident in her decision-making ability, focused, and “no nonsense” in her approach to teaching and to life. Her interviews were concise, her responses were “to the point” and her dilemmas illustrated her attention to issues of equity for advanced students.

Beth’s primary paradigm appeared to be the ethic of justice. Themes of justice were repeated throughout Beth’s interviews. Her concern for her students and their unique abilities was evident in her responses, as well as in her ethical dilemma.

*Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics*

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics,

Beth offered the following description:

Honest, fair, and direct – once I heard my son describe me to a girlfriend using these three words. I believe I am an honest person and I treat people fairly in each situation. I am very direct with my comments based on observation and past experience.

Beth expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

I try to always place my decisions based on being honest, fair, and direct. Honest – any situation can be skewed to regard the truth from each person’s perspective. I am honest based on the information I know. I expect others to be honest with me. Fair - each situation needs to be fair to the people involved. For example, don’t say things that you know are hurtful and not true about someone. Direct – I don’t like when someone is trying to explain something using jargon that is not relevant to the situation. I like the situation to be explained exactly how it is from all perspectives. For example, when a student shares a story concerning someone else but lets out the part he or she played in the scenario, I am not happy. I stand by my religious beliefs but I am directed with these three simple words.
Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Beth’s personal code of ethics revealed two categories of response including honesty, and fairness. Beth revealed the need for her to live within the confines of rules and regulations on one hand, but on the other hand, to look for fairness within the structure in which she operates. Beth expected her students to accept responsibility and wanted them to live with the consequences of their actions. Beth noted that her codes were based on the same three principles. Field notes indicate that she was implementing “tough love” by holding after school detention for several students making up work, as well as conducting a tutoring session for a student who moved into the district on both interview dates.

Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Beth remarked:

I work hard to keep my codes simple and the same in all areas of my life. I do not believe there are any clashes between my codes when I am in control of the situation. I can react and respond in a consistent fashion. However, in the public school realm, there are times when things are out of my control.

Beth relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

I have seen students who seemed to be on the fringes, or almost bystanders, get the same punishment, even expulsion, from being in the wrong place at the wrong time. In one particular case, a girl was given a razor blade in the bathroom by another student who was a known ‘cutter’. Instead of handing it over to a teacher or principal, the girl hid the blade behind the toilet. Both the student who brought the blade and the student who hid the blade were expelled and are attending an alternative
educational placement. I had that girl who hid the blade in class...she is so upset and mortified, so are her parents. It really seemed harsh to me. But I understood the need for her to learn a valuable life lesson from this incident.

**Analysis of the Clash between Codes**

Beth identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through a discussion of rules and regulations imposed by the school and the lack of control the classroom teacher had over these rules. Beth had a grasp on the idea of ethical dilemmas from multiple perspectives. In her example, she felt sympathetic toward the girl who chose not to turn in her friend, but understood the need for a “life lesson’ for the girl despite harsh consequences. Beth’s ability to think through both perspectives allowed her to remain supportive, yet firm to those around her, and strong in her own beliefs.

**Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision**

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Beth faced an ethical dilemma with a learning support colleague. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

The dilemma centers on scheduling AP classes. I am assigned to teach the higher level math classes. In the block schedule, I have 3 classes per day, plus one prep period. I was teaching calculus and honors calculus at the same time; I just can’t turn them away. Then, last semester, a student asked if I could provide AP Calculus AB, followed by AP Calculus BC. The student promised that she could work completely independently, with only a few times to check in when she didn’t feel comfortable with the material. The dilemmas was not whether to teach the students all at the same time, that was a given. The dilemma was how to respond to a faculty member, a learning support teacher, who teaches a replacement class with an aide, and was complaining about the lack of time and preparation available to her every day. I’ve felt bothered by the comparison; if I had an aide, I could do half a dozen different
things with students, including making my own elective course where one does not exist. I knew that I would have to confront the teacher at some time; I just couldn’t stand the complaining any more. I waited until there was no one else in the faculty room and began the conversation. The teacher got defensive and threw the ‘gifted’ nature of the students I work with back in my face. I calmly stated my concerns with her constant complaining, and about my intention to ask the principal for aide support.

*Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession*

In Beth’s dilemma, two themes emerged from the data including educational equality, and issues of fairness. Beth’s primary lens appeared to be the ethic of justice. Her dilemma, and the response to it, signified her need to make certain that decisions were made with fairness in mind. The justice perspective allowed her to address her concern with her colleague, while the ethic of justice and the ethic of critique addressed her need to support her students, despite current district practice. Beth identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

The deciding factor was the willingness of AP teachers to go above and beyond to assist students to take courses which prepare them for a bright future. The need to address a complaining teacher was critical for me; it’s been my experience that negativity like that breeds more negativity. My code of ethics demanded that I address it...or I would not be true to my convictions. In the final analysis, though, the need to give the advanced students a voice was my ultimate decision to address the situation.

*Best Interest of the Student*

Beth noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

The overriding factor for me was the need to stand up for students who are getting shortchanged by the system which
can’t support too many courses; as well as the need to assist a colleague in seeing the destructive nature of her constant complaining.

Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

Through her description of the dilemma, and her need to be “very direct with my comments based on observation and past experience,” Beth implemented the lens of the ethic of justice. In addition, she also used the ethic of critique to address the concern of scheduling and the use of instructional aides at the building level. Beth employed the ethics of justice and critique when she chose to address the complaining colleague and request support for the gifted students under her care. This moved her decision-making lens to the ethic of the profession. She continued to rely on the justice paradigm, but added the dimension of critique by asking what’s best for the gifted students when compared to the learning support students. Through further examination, Beth’s resolution to her ethical dilemma exemplified the themes of regard for educational equality and fairness, which in turn, supported her ethical decision making process based on the best interest of the student.

Ruth

Ruth was teaching for eleven years in the exurban district. She appreciates the middle level concept of teaming and cooperation, although she mentioned struggling with certain teammates during both interviews. Ruth spoke of her religious convictions and wore a cross necklace at both interviews. Her beliefs were evident in her interviews Ruth strives to “live
out” her values in her “everyday life, the school setting, and at home”.

Embedded in the field notes was Ruth’s calm and secure demeanor. She spoke easily about her students and family, and mentioned several times that her professional code of ethics was rooted in her personal code, especially in her strong desire to create an environment of continual learning and understanding between her students and teammates.

**Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics**

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics, Ruth offered the following description:

> I have three - See everyone the way God sees them; Treat others with grace, love, and mercy; and Prioritize: Faith, Family, Friends, and Career.

Ruth expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

> My professional code stems from my personal code, especially my first, Proverbs 22:6 – ‘Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.’ Second, create a climate in which all persons are welcomed and valued. Third, maintain integrity in all areas dealing with students, faculty, and families. Fourth, respond instead of react. Fifth, celebrate achievements, no matter how small.

**Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes**

Coding of Ruth’s personal code and professional codes of ethics revealed two categories of response including living intentionally, and following the “Golden Rule.” Ruth’s responses for her professional codes were rooted in her personal code of treating others according to her beliefs and prioritizing her life to live out her beliefs at home and at school.

Throughout the discussion, Ruth exhibited the strong desire to make certain
people understood where her priorities were, and that she would continue to express herself while living within the tenets of her personal code of ethics.

Ruth’s responses aligned her with the ethic of care.

**Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics**

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Ruth remarked:

I have worked hard to make my personal and professional codes the same, but at times the rules of a public school sometimes get in the way of my personal code.

Ruth relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

Working on a five member team can really be challenging. Each person brings to the team his or her own experience and professional beliefs. On my team we often have lively disagreements especially about grading and discipline. I have one member of my team who thinks as I do, so many times we have worked together to either provide evidence for our teammates or go off on our own to complete an activity the way we think it should be done. Usually I have to go with my strong personal beliefs.

**Analysis of the Clash between Codes**

Ruth identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through problems among her team of five teachers. Ruth’s clash illustrates the clash of professional codes among educational leaders. In working though her concerns with her teammates, Ruth was always willing to act as a mediator and share her professional view. In addition, Ruth understood that other team members were approaching the situation differently, so she was careful to state her beliefs, but not to impose them on others. Ruth felt her personal code
would “always win out in a clash” due to her strong personal beliefs which she carried over into the workplace. Her willingness to consider the needs of others allowed her to use the ethic of care with both adults and students.

_Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision_

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Ruth faced an ethical dilemma with her teammates regarding an emotional support student’s ability to remain in mainstream classes following a disciplinary action. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

This particular student was identified during the previous school year and placed in the Emotional Support classroom. He responded so well to the structured environment that he received the opportunity to join the regular education math and English classes. Unfortunately, students and the English teacher were unwilling to see that he had made a change and gave him a hard time – in each interaction with others he felt others were picking on him including the teacher. The incident occurred in the third marking period of the 2006-2007 school year. Things finally came to a head – the students refused to allow the child to participate in a group activity in English class and the teacher was unable or unwilling to support the child. The student got angry, stood up, pushed his desk (attached to the chair) into the group, yelled obscenities, and left the room. The teacher called the office and the student was found in the Emotional Support classroom.

_Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession_

In Ruth’s dilemma, three themes emerged from the data including regard for student welfare, the need for educational equality, and issues of fairness. The ethics of justice, critique, and care converged to clarify Ruth’s position during the critical event. The tenets of Ruth’s personal and professional code clearly align her with the ethic of care. In addition, she is
very concerned with educational equality for students, requiring her to view some situations from the justice, and critique paradigms. However, Ruth identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

The Social Studies teacher and I believe that the best interest of the student was served. Equally important, the team was able to disagree, but remain professional. I found this encouraging. I realize that we all have different perspectives, but when we focus on students and do the right thing, it all works out just fine.

*Best Interest of the Student*

Ruth noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

A vigorous debate took place on our team regarding what course of action should be taken with the student – the team was split with two advocating no mainstreaming, two advocating continuation of his current mainstream with support, and one “on the fence.” The Social Studies Teacher and I suggested that he be placed into another section where the students would have higher tolerance for his differences. In the end, he was placed in another section where he continued mainstreaming successfully. I appreciated the team conversation, the support of the Emotional Support teacher, and the flexibility of student movement between sections to make certain that what we are doing is best for all students.

*Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession*

Through her description of the dilemma, Ruth stated she worked hard to be consistent because her “personal and professional codes [are] the same, but at times the rules of a public school sometimes get in the way of my personal code.” Ruth’s codes were rooted in the ethic of care, but she understood that the role of the public school teacher caused her to reflect on
her personal and professional codes. She was keenly aware that others did not share her thoughts, so she set about to “provide evidence” of her position and use dialogue to assist her teammates in making a decision. It was her intent to provide a solution which would support both the team and the student, utilizing elements of the ethic of critique, as well as demonstrating care for her students and teammates. Ruth’s continuous need to include her teammates in “vigorous dialogue”, followed by the need to “do the right thing” for students, exemplified how she moved beyond the other ethics to use of the lens of the ethic of the profession.

Jim

Jim was an enthusiastic, early career teacher in the exurban district. He was teaching in an elementary school setting for five years. Prior to that, he served a tour of duty in the Marine Corps. Jim was focused, highly motivated, and serious about making a difference in his chosen profession. Included in field notes, Jim expressed gratitude for his family, career, and country. His concern was to “make a difference in the lives of his students everyday.” Jim’s focus during both interviews centered on English Language Learner students, and equal access to educational opportunities for these students. His personal code of ethics was strong, and he struggled with rules and regulations he felt were imposed on him by the school district.

Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe the basic tenets of his personal code of ethics, Jim offered the following description:
• Be last – I try to make sure those around me have been satisfied before myself. Live with intentionality. Know what it is I do and why I do it. Make a plan and set the course. Hold true to that course through adversity, and your life will find completeness.

• Treat people graciously by remembering that everybody is someone’s somebody. How would I like people to treat my wife, my mother, my father, and those I love?

• Give grace and accept grace. Before I cast judgment I try to remember I could be in a different pair of shoes. When my situation is tough, I need to let go of pride and accept the grace of others.

• Life is about people everyday; how we treat them, what we share with them, what we take from them, how we leave remembering us and feeling about the world.

• Don’t compromise. Our world is one that tells you that you can’t be this or that; you can’t do this or that; if you feel this way or that you won’t be liked. Our world is in a culture war because people have been compromising a little everyday. These little compromises have led to major shifts in socially acceptable behavior.

• Don’t take yourself too seriously. The world was here with all of its problems before I arrived, and it will continue long after I leave. Make my mark on the world for the better; be the best I can and be satisfied.

• One day at a time. Embrace the season I am in. I may not have another one. If and when the seasons of life change, go willingly and embrace what is being offered. I used to iron my clothes a week in advance, and now I iron them a day or two ahead. I don’t want to iron for my own funeral.

Jim succinctly expressed the basic tenets of his professional code of ethics in this way:

I’d say, and this got a little difficult, I wasn’t sure...I kind of have it as one list. I didn’t divide it. I’d like to say they are the same, but they aren’t as easy to uphold in my professional life as they are in my personal life. So I’d say that they are professional and personal, but they are a lot harder to uphold professionally. I work at it daily, and think about it often. Personally and professionally, I always want to be my best.
Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Jim’s personal and professional codes of ethics revealed three categories of response including living intentionally, believing in oneself, and service to others. Jim wanted his personal and professional codes to be the same, as he was “looking for continuity in [his] world.” Jim was highly self-reflective and noted that he strived to “make sure that everything I do has a purpose.” Jim’s responses revealed that he was experiencing difficulty in the professional realm when his codes bumped up against rules and regulations. Jim strived to live out his codes in the workplace and in the community. Embedded in Jim’s interviews were his ideals, which included “role models like Rudy Juliani” and “writing editorials or calling in to Gary Sutton’s talk show where you’ll often hear my ‘two cents worth’ on there.”

Jim’s codes reveal responses primarily rooted in the ethic of care. However, the ethic of critique was represented by his need to act when his codes were not consistent with the school district. In addition, the ethic of justice was evident in Jim’s strong sense of educational equality for all students.

Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe any areas of clash between his personal and professional codes of ethics, Jim remarked:

I’d have to say that my personal and professional codes are the same, but the clash comes in because the things that you want to do through your personal code of ethics are hard, due to the structures of leadership, bureaucracy, responsibilities, and restrictions; there’s a lot that goes into it that makes it hard. So I think that the clash comes from working within the system. For example, our mission statement says that our driving force is students. But that’s
not really true because we’re limited by budgets, what boards will let us do. The driving force, in theory, is students, but actually it’s not. It’s a lot of other little things. So my personal code of ethics might clash with the profession’s code. The reality of working in schools is that we can’t always keep every student first.

Jim relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between his codes:

The state mandates for what you do for ESL students is a lot lower than what you must do, for example, for an IEP student. While we have three learning support teachers for about fifty IEP students who are here full time everyday, we have one ESL teacher for ten to fifteen ESL students. The teacher is only here in the morning. So, I guess, where it clashes with my ethics is that since I was part of the mission statement writing team, I had to write one statement. But everyday I come to work and I know that kids aren’t really my driving force; I know I’m not allowed to live up to that. But if I said, ‘We need more teachers for ESL. The students are not getting what they need out of the education system,’ then people would say, ‘Well, we don’t have the money,’ or ‘we don’t want to hear it,’ or ‘don’t rock the boat.’

Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Jim identified the clash between his personal and professional codes through an incident of educational inequality in his classroom. Jim felt strongly that the English Language Learner students needed more support than what he was able to provide. After asking for support, Jim realized that his request would be denied. In an effort to support the students and address the bureaucracy surrounding English language services, Jim felt compelled to action. His story continues in his ethical dilemma, demonstrating his single minded focus and commitment to students.
Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision

Following the creation of his personal and professional codes of ethics, Jim faced an ethical dilemma as a classroom teacher. He described the ethical dilemma in this way:

Throughout the 2006-2007 school year, I had three students in my classroom who speak little or no English. Services are provided on a very sparse basis; I feel inadequately prepared to handle the needs of these students. I went to the administration by writing a letter to the principal and speaking at an administrative team meeting to bring the issue to the forefront.

Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

In Jim’s dilemma, three themes emerged from the data, including regard for student welfare, educational equality, and issues of fairness. Jim’s overarching perspective came from the ethic of care, as identified by his combined code. However, Jim also relied on the ethic of critique, and the ethic of justice to gain perspective for his ethical dilemma. Due to his need to support both the district philosophy and the students in his classroom, Jim felt conflicted by the competing values of the ethical lenses. He relied on reflection to assist him in coming to terms with a course of action. His personal beliefs were very strong, and came across clearly as Jim identified the deciding factors in his ethical decision-making process:

I felt the issue was brought to the attention of those who have the means to change the situation. My objective will be achieved only when all students receive the educational opportunities they deserve. I just can’t live with the idea that we state one thing in our mission statement, and then don’t follow it up in our classrooms. I must speak my mind and see if I can correct this situation.
Jim noted the overriding factor in his ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

My number one tenet is ‘life is about people…it’s about people every day, how we treat them, what we share with them, what we take from them, how we leave them remembering us and feeling about the world’. Sometimes I can’t give the kids the learning that they need, because I don’t have the resources that I need to give them where they need to be. So I leave them short…short of feeling and being who they should…shorter than I’d like to leave them.

Through his description of the dilemma, and his need to exemplify the district mission, he notes that “our mission statement says that our driving force is students. But that’s not really true because we’re limited by budgets, what boards will let us do. The driving force, in theory, is students, but actually it’s not.” Jim implemented the lens of the ethic of care, followed closely by the ethic of critique. The reflective nature of his impassioned speech, clearly illustrates Jim’s depth of commitment to understanding the system and working within it to meet the needs of the students entrusted to his care. In addition, his willingness to serve on district committees to clarify the school’s mission and values moved him past the other ethics into the realm of the ethic of the profession. By addressing what he felt was inequality for English Language Learners, he asked question related to the ethics of justice, critique, and care, but ended up going beyond to ask what the profession would expect him to do. Spurred to action, Jim talked with his immediate supervisor, and set a plan to address the problem with “those in a position to
do something about it.” Although Jim felt his personal and professional codes were aligned, he was moved to action by the needs of his students, despite his need to support the district through committee work to create the mission statement. Jim kept the best interest of the students in mind by continually reflecting on the ethical dilemmas faced in his daily work. By moving beyond the use of a single ethical lens, Jim exemplified the use of the ethic of the profession.

Lisa

Lisa was a third year Learning Support teacher in the suburban high school. She was very clear about her responsibility to her students and providing support in the inclusion setting in which she taught. Lisa held reflection high on her list of “daily activities geared to being [her] best.” Lisa worked in a co-teaching model of high school mathematics. She completed student progress monitoring weekly and taught a study skills class for her identified students. Lisa spoke of “enthusiastically sharing” her love of learning with her students, which caused her to feel “exhausted but fulfilled” at the end of the day.

Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics, Lisa offered the following description:

- My mother instilled in me ‘The Golden Rule…Do unto others as you would have them do unto you’. I think everyone should abide that no matter what situation you’re in, whether in school or out in the work place.
- Respect is another key thing for me. By showing them respect, I usually get that respect back and can personalize
better with them, and understand and learn their skills and abilities better that way that way.

- Giving more than you receive, that’s routine for me. Every once in a while, you get that student who you connect with and see that really big change, so that really means a lot to me.
- Believe in yourself. You always need to stand up for what you believe is right. You have to be willing to fall as well as stand up.

Lisa expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

> I really love my number one…equality is not always fair, each student learns differently, each student has the right personal attributes, so as long as you’re teaching them up to their potential, I think that that’s success. Stand up for yourself. Students need to stand up for themselves, especially my students with special needs. They need to let their teachers know, ‘I get these accommodations. I get these modifications.’ They need to understand their disability and be able to tell that to anyone so that that can better understand them as a student. Personal reflection really helps me a lot to see why I do things the way I do.

*Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes*

Coding of Lisa’s personal code of ethics revealed three categories of response including the “Golden Rule,” living intentionally, and belief in oneself. Her personal codes are reflected in her professional codes. Coding of Lisa’s professional code revealed three themes including fairness, personal reflection, and educational equality. As a new teacher, Lisa seems to understand the role she plays for her high school students and teachers with whom she interacts. Lisa takes this seriously, and used reflection regularly to improve her craft. Lisa’s responses placed her personal code of ethics squarely in the ethic of care. Her professional code included tenets of the ethic of care, the ethic of justice, and the ethic of critique.
Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Lisa remarked:

Well, my clashes seem to stem, not so much from my own codes, but from the difficult position other teachers place me and my students in when they are reluctant to follow the IEP modifications recommended by the team. My personal code, ‘Do Unto Others’ and my professional code of ‘Equality is not always fair’ seems to be a big problem for some faculty members around me.

Lisa relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

One particular student was not doing well in math. The teacher didn’t want to follow the recommended accommodations because he felt that this student was getting away with less work and that it ‘wasn’t fair to the other students in the class.’ I tried to explain that the skills needed to be scaffolded to assist the student in filling the gap until the student could work on the current material, but that fell on deaf ears. I was very frustrated with the situation.

Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Lisa identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through student performance in the mainstream classroom. Lisa articulated her strong sense of educational equality for her students in both her professional code and through her clash between codes. The clash among educational professionals seemed to frustrate her greatly. She worked to assist the teacher to understand the need to follow the student’s Individualized Educational Plan. When the teacher chose not to do so, Lisa went to her supervisor, and to the principal. The clash she felt spurred her to make choices based on the
needs of her learning support students. Lisa’s codes required her to implement
the ethic of care, as well as justice, to ensure that the student received his
required modifications.

**Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision**

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of
ethics, Lisa faced an ethical dilemma as she was moving to her first class of
the morning. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

The incident occurred one morning. I saw a student I knew
standing outside the cafeteria door, trying to get into the
building. According to the school rules, he is supposed to
enter the building through the front doors after the late bell
rings, since those doors are monitored by the secretaries.
My dilemma was to whether to open the door and assist a
student whom I knew, or follow the school rules which
would cause him to be even later. I did not open the doors.
I felt badly and knew that if it were me who was running
late, I would have wanted someone to open the door for
me, rule or not. Ethically, however, I was not able to do so
and the student was forced to walk around to the building
to enter in the front doors. I hoped that the student would
realize that he had to follow the rules, and make certain to
be on time for school.

**Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession**

In Lisa’s dilemma, two themes emerged from the data including
regard for student welfare and issues of safety. Lisa described her personal
code in light of the tenets of the ethic of care, evident in this interaction.
However, concern for following the rules, was equally important to Lisa. This
demonstrated the ethic of justice. Lisa’s need to be a role model, in this
instance for a student, and in the previous event, for a colleague, demonstrated
her need to attend to the justice paradigm. Lisa identified the following
deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

This was an opportunity to see everyday incidents in the
light of ethical principles; I suppose it worked as
intended...at least as the rule regarding door safety was
intended. Part of my professional code is ‘Personal
Reflection is Necessary.’ This incident gave me the
opportunity to reflect on why rules are important and the
consequences of following or breaking the rules really do
set a president for future behavior. If I got into the habit of
assisting students to come in, the rule may have lost its
meaning for me and the students. By enforcing it, I
provided a role model for the student and reinforced the
notion that this rule was made with everyone’s best
interest at heart...safety.

**Best Interest of the Student**

Lisa noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process
was summed up in the following statement:

I really had to think of the consequences for the student if I
opened the door. He may believe that all rules are made to
be broken, or that he was able to circumvent rules when
someone is there to bail him out, or that the rule was
unimportant and just a nuisance when he was running late.
In addition, I had to think about the consequences for
me...if I get into the habit of bending or breaking rules
with students, my authority with them will begin to erode
and I may begin to have difficulty enforcing any rules with
them. I really needed the time to reflect on this everyday
incident and realize again just how important the little
decisions we make are to what I am trying to accomplish
with students.

**Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession**

Through her description of the ethical dilemma, and her strong need
to enact her professional code of ethics with regard to student safety, and
demonstrate personal reflection, Lisa implemented the lens of the ethic of
justice, and the ethic of care. She was mindful of the example she was setting and took that responsibility seriously. In fact, through reflection on the dilemma, Lisa was afraid that she would “get into the habit of bending or breaking rules with students.” Her strong sense of educational equality for learning support students, as well as her need to be an effective role model for her students, demonstrated her need to incorporate the ethics of justice and care. Lisa moved beyond these two ethical lenses to use the ethic of the profession by keeping the needs of students central in her daily practice.

**Sally**

Sally has eighteen years of classroom experience, all of them in special education, but only six in her current position as an inclusion teacher in the suburban district. She works in a co-teaching model with another teacher. The students are grouped, but the teachers work so cohesively that ‘you can’t tell which one of us is the regular teacher and which has a special education degree’. Sally exudes the confidence of a veteran teacher and was excited to talk about her personal and professional codes of ethics. She enjoyed her role as a mentor teacher and believes that her ‘knowledge of the law and huge bag of tricks’ assist her in meeting the demands of the middle school.

**Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics**

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics, Sally offered the following description:

First and foremost, I have a commitment to identifying and addressing the needs of each child. Allow myself to live in this moment. Allow myself to feel whatever I am feeling and know that it is valid. Kindness is key...towards loved
ones, colleagues, people I just meet and myself. Be empathetic in thoughts and in actions while maintaining the integrity of truth. Be aware that self-forgiveness is treating myself kindly. Pay it forward. I believe that kindness is intertwined with love...for the beauty that surrounds us, for the weak and neglected, for those who have no one to love them, for our loved ones, cherished friends, colleagues and students. Service to others; it is our responsibility as shareholders of this world to do our part, no matter how small. Put myself in the shoes of others. Ask myself to consider all aspects of a person’s situation, strengths and weaknesses, and see the good in them and in their actions. Take people as you find them, accepting them for that they tell you they are, without judgment. Be honest with myself, no matter what the cost or hurt. Accept myself for who I am, and love myself despite my flawed humanity.

Sally expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

[I hold] a commitment to identifying and addressing the needs of each child paramount. I am grateful for the opportunity that they give to me to partake in their life and learning. Promote a positive classroom climate, which facilitates mutual respect and academic, social and emotion growth, and learning. Enable students to become active participants in their own learning. Respect fellow faculty and staff. Recognize that none of us are smarter than all of us. Implement research, proven, effective curriculum interventions for each child. Do what is best for each child based on data compiled through the ethical administration of testing and use of materials. Maintain a strict professional code of conduct in regards to confidentiality and behavior.

**Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes**

Coding of Sally’s personal code of ethics revealed four categories of response including living intentionally, honesty, belief in oneself, and service to others. Her personal code included multiple references to self and others, and revealed her outlook on life. Sally’s espoused codes place her squarely within the ethic of care. Coding of Sally’s professional codes of ethics
revealed three categories of response including a commitment to the needs of her students, respect for faculty, staff and students, and maintaining professional codes of conduct. In this way, Sally referred primarily to the ethic of care, but included the need to view her work through the ethic of justice, as well. Sally was thoughtful and inclusive in her codes. Field notes indicate her excitement to talk about her codes of ethics and her current practice. She was the first of the participants to respond to set up both interviews, and was very enthusiastic in her responses to the interview process.

*Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics*

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sally remarked:

> I sometimes think that, as far as the discipline goes, the soft heart may take over a little more than it should at times. I think that as I’ve gotten older, I’ve gotten a better balance. But sometimes I think when I was a younger teacher, it could be really a problem for me. I started with emotional support students for eight years, and that was really hard. This is the plain out truth…it was just difficult.

Sally relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

> There are actually many of those. I can think of one in particular. I had a student come in one day with a boot print on his face. I said, ‘Chris, what happened?’ He said, ‘My dad kicked me.’ He told me the whole story; that he didn’t move fast enough when he bent over to pick something up, and so his dad kicked him with the steel-tipped boot. So I said, ‘You know, I’m going to have to report this to the authorities, because I’m watching out for your safety.’ And he said, ‘Well, that’s why I told you.’ He also told the counselor. We both reported it; we’re mandated reporters.
Analysis of the Clash between Codes.

Sally identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through an incident of regard for student welfare, and safety. Her need to care for the students entrusted to her was evident in her story and through the field notes which document her anguish when retelling the event. In the end, Sally needed to move into another position as her personal code of empathy and kindness did not mesh with the behavioral expectations of the emotional support classroom setting. However, she clearly carried the events with her and was able to identify her need to move into a “less stressful” classroom setting. Her personal and professional code continue to require her to act with “a commitment to identifying and addressing the needs of each child” which she notes that she is able to do in the co-teaching model of instruction in the suburban district.

Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Sally faced an ethical dilemma regarding a student who did not make progress in the classroom. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

We have a student who has been with us for two years that was previously tested went through the IST process, and found to be non-exceptional. They felt that the interventions were appropriate, but he has made no gains whatsoever. His mom is such a nice person, when we’ve come together, she just says, ‘Well, we’ll wait and see.’ This time the mother asked what we would do. You know, we really can’t say what we would do, because then we’d have to pay for extra testing or outside counseling. So I said, ‘Well, you know what your rights as a parent are that we could initiate IST again, or your right as a parent is to request direct testing. Whatever you would like us to do,
we will do.’ I just said it that way. So she asked, ‘The IST takes a long time?’ I said, ‘Yes, it does. It probably wouldn’t be finished until next year if we start it now.’ So she went home and wrote a letter.

Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

In Sally’s dilemma, three themes emerged from the data including regard for student welfare, issues of fairness, and educational equality. Sally was clearly frustrated with the system, and promoted the ethic of care for a student struggling in his current academic situation. In addition, her need to ensure that the student received the help he needed accessed an ethic of justice response from Sally. Sally identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

We’re treating this boy as if he has a learning disability; we’re doing all of these interventions, and we’re really not seeing a lot of growth, so that tells me there’s something else going on, you know? And it’s been going on for a while. He’s made personal progress; it’s small, but in the big assessments, like 4Sight and PSSA, it’s not looking like its going anywhere. So I have some data that I use to show things, but I don’t have data to show that this kid needs anything but help. Out of all the kids, regular and special education, he scores the lowest; that tells me something exceptional is going on. The child will be tested because his mother wrote the letter. Since she did that, it’s mandated by special education law.

Best Interest of the Student

Sally noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

What is in the best interest of the student…now and in the future? I have the privilege of being with them for two years and I think I really know them as a student and as an individual. What is going to happen next year when he doesn’t have that same support? People won’t take that in
to consideration since he doesn’t have an individualized educational plan. I think that a kid that doesn’t have that to back him up, he’s just going to be lost. He’s got a lot of data to show that he’s struggling academically, so I’m hopeful the testing will show a discrepancy and he will get the help he needs.

**Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession**

Through her description of the dilemma, and her need to “enable students to become active participants in their own learning,” as well as to “show respect to fellow faculty and staff,” Sally implemented the lens of the ethic of care. Sally was concerned that the data would not provide the academic assistance the student required in the next grade level, so she took matters into her own hands. Her strong sense of fairness and educational equality also played out in the scenario. The ethic of critique provided her with an answer to the question, “What will happen to him next year?” Sally’s strong desire to provide care and educational equality for her student spurred her to action. In this way, she incorporated the other ethics, and shifted into the ethic of the profession. She fought against a clash of professional codes among educational leaders, and between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community. She let her care for the students, and her concern for the educational equality guide her decision making. In the end, Sally used the lens of the ethic of the profession to assist her in her daily practice.

**Kim**

Kim was teaching for eleven years in the suburban district. According to field notes, Kim was intensely focused on the needs of the students in her
classroom. She seemed to have a “heart for those less fortunate,” which was illustrated in her interviews. She was especially concerned with students who were academically “at-risk,” and the district process in place to provide support to struggling students. Kim spent time and money in her classroom, and was eager and willing to share the ideas that “promoted self-esteem and learning.” Kim related her personal and professional codes to her spheres of influence, enacting them equally in her family and in her classroom. Her dilemmas supported her need to respond to daily situations with “hard work”.

**Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics**

When asked to describe the basic tenets of her personal code of ethics, Kim offered the following description:

> When I started sifting down through it, it seems like honesty and hard work are the two primary things. Everything else kind of fits in somewhere in there, but without those two components, I don’t believe I am as centered. I think certainly, treating everybody with respect, having integrity for what you’re doing, and letting many people know that they can count on you and you’re dependable, is critical. All these things just fit right into honesty and hard work.

Kim expressed the basic tenets of her professional code of ethics in this way:

> In my paper, it will tell you that I actually think that they are both the same thing. I truly do. No one should be kidded before they get married, before they have children, it’s hard, hard work. You have to communicate with others, so I carry that into my personal life and certainly within my professional career. You’ve got to be honest with those kids, and honest with the parents. There are many nights I’m up until 10 at night working on papers, and then I get up and I’m here at 7 in the morning. It’s hard, hard work. I’m willing to do it day after day because, for me, both of my codes fit nicely together. It’s who I am and who I want people to see me as.
Analysis of Personal and Professional Codes

Coding of Kim’s personal code and professional codes of ethics revealed three categories of response including honesty, believing in oneself, and service to others. Demonstrated in these responses were the ethics of care and of justice. According to these data, Kim works hard to keep her personal and professional codes aligned. Field notes include references to her ability to exude excitement and compassion when discussing her codes of ethics. Kim strives to give of herself to those around her. She is clear about her commitment to her students and works to be professional in all her dealings in the classroom.

Clash between Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

When asked to describe any areas of clash between her personal and professional codes of ethics, Kim remarked:

I think that happens all the time. My goal for each of my students is to have all of them meet with success. That’s not always possible. You do the best you can with them. And so, if there’s a conflict for me, that’s where it’s at, because I know that in my heart, I need to do every thing I can with my kids.

Kim relayed the following scenario when asked to describe a concrete example of a clash between her codes:

I found out one of my students didn’t qualify for learning support because he’s meeting potential. The harder I work with him, the longer it’s going to go on this way. But if I stop working so hard with him, he will eventually receive learning support services. To me that doesn’t meet my expectations for what I should do as a teacher. I ended up going with my voice; I need to stay true to who I am, and that means that I need to give this child as much support as
I can. He will eventually qualify further down the road, but maybe he won’t be so far behind because I gave him basic information. I do hear from other teachers that I just need to let it go, but I just can’t; it’s not who I am.

Analysis of the Clash between Codes

Kim identified the clash between her personal and professional codes through an incident of educational equality and clashes between educational professionals and in the classroom. Kim’s concern stemmed from the clash between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community regarding students who did not qualify for learning support services. Her personal and professional codes of ethics required her to assist the student in meeting with success, despite the district commitment to the discrepancy necessary for learning support placement. Kim did what she needed to do to stay true to her codes; she chose to work with the student despite conversations with others to let him fail. In the end, her personal and professional codes remained aligned and she worked to keep the best interest of the student at the center of her decision making process.

Critical Event Requiring an Ethical Decision

Following the creation of her personal and professional codes of ethics, Kim faced an ethical dilemma while hosting two college students in the classroom. She described the ethical dilemma in this way:

During the spring semester, two students from Penn State York were assigned to my classroom. One was well dressed, and seemed to be experienced with children. The other was clearly uneasy in the classroom. I should have seen it coming, but I did not. The second student was late, she wore inappropriate clothing, smelled like smoke, and she spoke with the children using ‘street language.’ Clearly, she did not understand the
power of her actions in the classroom, or the heavy weight of responsibility teachers bear. Early on, I tried to hint, but that didn’t work. I even tried to talk with the other girl assigned to my classroom, but that didn’t work either. Finally, I just had to come out with it…and say hard things for her to hear about her clothing and language. I had to talk with her several times the first week, and several more times over the remaining weeks. I finally had to speak to the professor to tell him that she would not take direction. The professor sent me an email saying that he spoke to her and that she would receive a lowered grade in the class. I felt bad, but couldn’t run the risk that children would be influenced by this person as a teacher.

*Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession*

In Kim’s dilemma, two themes emerged from the data including issues of discipline, and fairness. In this incident, Kim responses emanated from the ethic of justice, the ethic of critique, and the ethic of care. Kim needed to use the ethic of critique to decide, in her own mind, if she could let the college student act unprofessionally in her classroom. Once she made the decision to act, Kim responded through the ethic of care. However, when that approach was not successful, Kim needed the justice paradigm to solidify her decision to call the professor. Finally, her decision-making process led her back to her combined code of ethics based on the ethic of care; care for her students, care for the college student, and care for the integrity of the college program. Kim identified the following deciding factors in her ethical decision making process:

I could have done nothing. I tried talking to her friend, and tried beating around the bush. Finally, I had to confront her about these things that were bothering me. After all, it is MY classroom and she was a visitor. I talked to the girl first, then to the professor. These were my only options in order to let her know that she would have to make significant changes if she hoped to become a teacher.
Best Interest of the Student

Kim noted the overriding factor in her ethical decision making process was summed up in the following statement:

For me, the responsibility of taking on college students is a huge responsibility. I believe that I need to give back, and assist in preparing the next generation of teachers for this difficult task. It seemed to me that this particular student was unprepared for the challenge. She needed me to help her understand what teaching entails. It’s certainly not a career for everyone. I really thought about how I would feel if my own child had this person as a teacher. She was ill prepared to face the challenges of teaching. My decision was based solely on what is best for children.

Analysis of the Application of the Lens of the Ethic of the Profession

Through her description of the dilemma, and her need to demonstrate her codes “fit right into honesty and hard work,” Kim implemented the lens of the ethics of care and justice. Her decision to accept college students into her classroom was based on her need to “give back and help prepare teachers for the future,” which accessed the ethic of care. On the other hand, when the college student was setting a poor example for the students in her classroom, Kim’s need to be honest became the overriding factor in her ethical dilemma, which supported the lens of the ethic of justice. Kim was able to place herself in other positions to view the ethical dilemma; that of a parent hearing about the problem over dinner, the other college student working in the classroom who is working hard to fulfill expectations, and her own role as a mentor. It was unacceptable to Kim, so she was spurred to action. In this way, Kim moved beyond the use of a single ethic to solve her dilemma. She viewed the
dilemma from the broader ethic of care and justice position, crossing over into the ethic of the profession. By staying true to her values and codes and by moving beyond the use of a single ethical lens, Kim truly enacted the lens of the ethic of the profession.

The Conceptual Model

The in-depth examination of participants’ interview data revealed a pattern that was synthesized in a conceptual model (See Figure 1.) These data clearly illustrated a fluid process which flowed between the internal process of examining personal code and the professional code, and the influence of external codes of the profession, between and among colleagues, and the standards and practices set forth by the community. Participants examined a critical event that required ethical decision-making, which set the reflection process in motion. Participants juggled internal and external implications of codes, as well a clash, dissonance, or tension the participant felt between codes. This grappling triggered an ethical dilemma for the participants, which required them to use the ethical lenses of justice, critique, and care, and ultimately, lens of the ethic of the profession, to gain clarity for the decision-making process. Results of the categorical analysis provided major themes from the decision-making process. These themes included issues of fairness, originating from the ethic of justice, regard for student welfare, emanating from the ethic of care, educational equality, derived from the ethics of justice and critique, student safety, incorporating the ethics of justice and care, and issues of discipline, which combined the ethics of justice, critique, and care.
Without exception, each participant identified a combination of these themes that influenced their decision-making process. Despite differing deciding factors which influenced their personal decision-making processes, reflection on codes and clashes was important. This intense reflection generated connections to the ethics of justice, critique, and care, but moved beyond the implementation of a single lens to consider the expectations of the profession, and the outcome of the decision based on the best interest of students (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). The best interest of the student prevailed as the overriding decision-making factor for these participants.

The conceptual model served as the framework for the previous discussion of each participant’s ethical dilemma response and decision-making process. Participants’ personal and professional codes of ethics, the clash, dissonance, or tension between and among these codes, a critical event requiring an ethical decision, and evidence of the use of ethical lenses were synthesized from data compiled and analyzed from the in-depth interviews. The complex nature of these analyses required attention to identify the elements of the multiple paradigm approach which included the ethical lenses of justice, critique, and care.

It should be noted that post data analyses resulted in modifying the conceptual framework to reflect internal and external landscapes that influenced the ethical decision making by participants. The internal landscape was influenced by personal and professional codes, while the external landscape was influenced by the codes of colleagues, the profession, and/or
the community. In addition, a continuum of conflict was described through the data as a strong conflict such as a clash, through participant dissonance with codes of others and the community, to merely tension between codes. Analysis revealed that in order for participants to use the lenses, they must first resolve any clash, dissonance, or tension that occur within the internal and/or external landscapes, and work through the fluid process of wrestling with the ethical dilemma when a clash, dissonance, or tension occurred.

Summary of Categorical Analysis

Categorical analysis was implemented as the primary means of data analysis. The process allowed for the integration of categories to form an explanation of the phenomenon. The final result was the development of a conceptual model which highlighted the use of the ethical lenses of justice, critique, care, and the profession, which were uncovered through the primary, secondary, and tertiary coding processes of the constant comparative data analysis. Participant interview data were analyzed, and presented through the lens of the conceptual model. The model illustrated the participant’s need to grapple with their codes, and clash, dissonance, or tension between and among codes before making an ethical decision. The following section will provide a cross-case analysis within and among all participant interview data to further uncover patterns.
Figure 4.1 Conceptual Model: Teacher Leaders and the Ethic of the Profession

- **Critical Event**
  - requiring an ethical decision

- **EXTERNAL:** Codes of Colleagues, of the Profession, & Community

- **INTERNAL:** Personal & Professional Codes of Ethics

- **Clash, Dissonance, or Tension Between Codes**

- **Ethical Dilemma**

- **Use of an ethical lens for decision-making**

- **Deciding Factors in the Ethical Decision Making Process (themes):**
  - Fairness, Regard for Student Welfare, Educational Equality, Safety, and Discipline

- **Best Interest of the Student**
  - Representing use of the Ethic of the Profession
Cross-Case Data Analysis

Once the individual participant analysis was completed, patterns in the data emerged across cases. The data were analyzed by dividing the data by type across all cases investigated. When a pattern from one data type was corroborated by the evidence from another, these findings strengthened the patterns that were emerging from the interview data (Yin, 2003). Evidence which conflicted required deeper probing of the differences to identify the cause or source of the conflict. In all cases, the data were reviewed critically to produce analytic conclusions which addressed the original research questions. The proposed conceptual model provided the framework for the cross-case analysis, which examined the following sets of data:

- districts; urban, exurban, suburban
- levels; elementary, middle school, high school
- teacher experience level; novice, mid-career, experienced
- gender
- codes; viewed as the same; viewed as different
- value participants found in creating codes
- clashes of codes
- participant-identified critical event
- ethical dilemma themes
- participant reflection (what they would do differently)
Analysis Across Districts

After exhaustive cross-case analysis, a sole pattern emerged from examining data across districts. The use of the multiple paradigms, including the ethic of justice (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998), the ethic of critique (Foster, 1989; Giroux, 1991; Shapiro & Purpel, 1995), the ethic of care (Barth, 1988; Beck, 1994; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992), and the ethic of profession (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005) were identified as a means for these nine teacher leaders to make ethical decisions. In all cases, participants incorporated the ethics of justice, critique and care, and moved beyond the single paradigm emphasis to embrace the tenets of the ethic of the profession. The articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics, the need to address the clash, dissonance, or tension between and among codes, and the drive to keep the best interest of the students at the center of the decision making process was evident in the cross-case analysis. Consistent with the findings from the categorical data analysis, participants across all districts were able to identify a clash, dissonance, or tension in their personal and professional codes of ethics, or between their personal and professional codes and the codes of colleagues, which was illuminated by the introduction of an ethical dilemma in daily practice. The decision-making process of all participants focused on the best interest of students across all districts regardless of the type of dilemma presented. Further, analysis of the differences in data patterns across districts yielded dilemmas involving
interactions with other adults in the educational setting, as well as dilemmas directly involving students.

A pattern unique to the three participants from the exurban district emerged from the interview data: a marked change in the district’s demographics, with the district experiencing increased enrollment of students who were more culturally and economically diverse and the perceived impact these demographic changes were having on teacher’s daily work. Data analysis of these participant dilemmas exemplified the themes of educational equality, pulled from the ethic of justice and the ethic of critique, and fairness, which emanated from the ethic of justice. Ethical decision-making centered on the need to be fair with the availability of educational opportunities, and ensure educational equality through appropriate coursework for all students. Participants moved beyond the use of a single ethic to solve the dilemmas. Viewing the dilemma from the broader ethics of justice and critique lenses assisted the participants in crossing over into the ethic of the profession, marked by the need for reflection on personal and professional codes to solve the clash that existed. It appeared the changing demographics helped magnify the issue of equality of services provided to English Language Learners. Jim explained the “fairness” pattern observed pattern uncovered in the exurban data as:

[Exurban district] is a wealthy school district. And then you’re located next to a school district like [Urban district]. Here we have a rich successful school district, a wealthy school district. And then you have a very poor, struggling school district. In our society, that’s not supposed to exist anymore. One mile apart, students can get a great education
and one mile away, they can’t. There’s a lot of responsibility that goes along with working in a place like [Exurban District].

Similarly, a second pattern emerged in the cross case analysis of the suburban district data analysis. All suburban district participants noted a dilemma involving special education students. Data analysis uncovered themes including student safety, drawing upon the ethics of justice and care, educational equality, drawing on the ethic of justice and critique, and fairness, drawing upon the ethic of justice. Ethical decision making centered on the clashes between codes among educational professionals, and between the professional codes of ethics, customs, or practice set forth by the community, clearly aligned with the ethic of the profession. The other ethical paradigms entered into the decision-making process; however, the ethic of the profession supported the teacher leaders to move beyond these ethics to center on the expectations of the profession with regard to the best interest of the student. The analysis of these data indicated teacher leaders see a need to support students at all levels who are struggling academically. Kim identified her district in this way:

I think that we have a diverse economic population. Ethnically speaking, probably not as much, although we do have a small population of Hispanic and African American, but we’re still primarily Caucasian. What we do have a large number of children who can’t seem to reach proficiency on the PSSA. We started out at 40% basic and below basic, and we’re still there. We can’t seem to make much academic progress.

It is interesting to note that two of the participants teach learning support, while the third, a regular education teacher, spoke about a dilemma
based on a student who did not qualify for learning support services. Clearly, these teachers are concerned with issues of educational equality across all levels.

**Analysis Across Levels**

Data analysis conducted on clashes between codes, critical events, and ethical dilemmas yielded no significant patterns between the elementary, middle school, and high school participants. Without exception, all participants’ responses to the ethical dilemmas they identified and relied on the use of the ethical paradigms of justice, critique, care, and the profession as a means to make decisions. Further, cross case analysis of the personal and professional codes of ethics revealed similar themes or patterns across all levels based on the responses of participants. The following cross-case analysis, by level, identifies patterns that were noted in the responses of participants. To be noted as an identified theme, at least two of the three participants in each level indicated the item which was revealed during the analysis of their personal or professional code. Additionally, the following analysis will include excerpts from the transcribed responses used to identify the major themes derived from the interview data.

**Elementary School**

Three themes emerged in the personal codes of the elementary participants including self-reflection (Beck & Murphy, 1997), honesty, and acting as a role model for students (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Three themes also emerged from the professional codes of the elementary participants
including living out core values from the personal code in the professional
code, acting as a role model for students, and honesty. The values of honesty
and acting as a role model for students appeared in both data sets. This was
due, in part, to the fact that two of the three elementary participants defined
their personal and professional codes as identical, not as two separate codes.
Kim illustrated this point when she shared,

If nothing else, the more you value what you do, the more
you sit down and look at what your core values are, and
what it is that you want to project to people as who you are.
I think it’s neat to be able to see that in writing, to actually
see what I believe in, and who I am when I model for kids
what I expect them to do. If I expect them to be honest,
then I have to model that for them every day. I try really
hard to be my best and I expect that of my students, too.

_Middle School_

Two themes emerged from the personal codes of the middle school
participants including acceptance of all individuals, and service to others. Sara
exemplified these themes in the following quote:

Because I feel strongly that we need to accept all
individuals, which includes students and staff, the clash
occurs when I am placed in a situation where I have to
stand up for my beliefs and the way I interact with students
which differs from the way other staff members treat
students. I work hard to model my beliefs through my
interactions with students. I speak my mind, despite what is
popular, and I make an effort to listen and respond
accordingly to everyone I meet.

Three themes emerged from the professional codes of ethics including
commitment to students (York-Barr & Duke, 2004), respond instead of react,
and maintain integrity (Kidder, 1996). All of the middle school teachers’
responses had a theme of commitment to student learning, growth, and development. This student centered philosophy exemplified current middle level philosophy. In addition, all middle school participants were clearly aligned as teams and worked together to meet the varying needs of their students. This quote from Sally exemplifies the tone of the middle school teachers’ commitment to students:

First and foremost, I make a commitment to identifying and addressing the needs of each child. I am grateful for the opportunity that they give to me to partake in their life and learning. I always aim to promote a positive classroom climate, which facilitates mutual respect, and academic, social, and emotional growth and learning. Implement research proven, effective curriculum and interventions for each child. Do what is best for each child based on data compiled through ethical administration of testing and materials.

High School

Analysis of the data from high school participants yielded two themes from the personal codes of ethics which included reflection (Beck & Murphy, 1997), and enacting “The Golden Rule” (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you; Kidder, 1996). One participant stated that personal and professional codes were the same, which allowed a similar theme in the professional code of ethics, reflection, and treating everyone in a fair, equal, and honest way. The following quote from Ben illustrates the high school participants’ themes:

I feel that by spending time in reflection, I am better aware of my own hidden prejudices and can work to rid myself of them…or at least to recognize and try to acknowledge them. I aim to treat every student and staff member with courtesy and with the dignity they deserve. Working here has taught me that I really can’t judge a book by its cover.
There is value in uniqueness and I am aware of that and even seek it out. I want every one to feel that they are worthy of my time, my interest, and my support. I hope that I can look back on my career and feel that I have helped the students and faculty that I came in contact with.

An interesting similarity was also noted in field notes on high school participants. Each participant was brief, concise, and to the point in their interview responses, more so that the elementary or middle school participants. All three formed succinct responses during code creation, and were brief when explaining the ethical dilemma during the interviews. Despite variables in years of service, gender, and subject area, these participants shared a common ability to carefully select words to illustrate their purpose with brevity.

*Analysis Across Experience Levels*

*Novice Teachers*

One participant was included in the category of novice teacher; identified as teachers who had five or less years of experience. Lisa, the suburban high school teacher, was a third year teacher. Her ethical dilemma centered on a decision to break or follow the building rules, relying on the ethic of justice (Kohlberg, 1981; Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998). The dilemma illustrated her need to examine decisions based on her professional code. Through her ethical dilemma, Lisa realized that the best interest of the student was served when she upheld the building rules and followed her professional code of ethics. Through reflection on her need to be an effective role model for her
students, Lisa demonstrated her need to move beyond the ethics of justice and to use the ethic of the profession in her daily practice. Lisa’s dilemma differed from the other eight participants in that she did not interact with the student or other adults when facing her dilemma. Her struggle was internal; her decision based on enacting her professional code of ethics. She felt this way about her decision:

Part of my professional code is “Personal Reflection is Necessary.” This incident gave me the opportunity to reflect on why rules are important and the consequences of following or breaking the rules really do set a precedent for future behavior. If I got into the habit of assisting students to come in, the rule may have lost its meaning for me and the students. By enforcing it, I provided a role model for the student and reinforced the notion that this rule was made with everyone’s best interest at heart…safety.

Mid-career Teachers

Five participants were considered to be mid-career teachers, identified as teachers who had six to fifteen years of experience. Sue, urban elementary teacher, taught for nine years. Beth, exurban high school teacher, had fifteen years experience; the most years of experience in this category. Ruth, exurban middle school teacher, taught for eleven years. Jim, exurban elementary teacher, had five years experience; the least years of experience in this category. Kim, suburban elementary teacher, taught for eleven years. Similarities in these data exemplified the theme of educational equality, centering on the ethics of justice (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998), and critique (Foster, 1989; Giroux, 1991; Shapiro & Purpel, 1995); these teachers
advocated for their students based on their core beliefs that all students should have equal access to educational opportunities. Beth shared her frustration about the inequality in educational opportunities for her gifted students in this way:

I really wanted to get equity for my AP students who were willing to work under adverse teaching conditions. I only allow students who are capable of the amount of independent work necessary to take the courses. I wanted equity and equality for all students, not just those with behavioral or learning problems. Don’t get me wrong, they deserve support…however, the bright kids aren’t treated equally. I just needed to stand up for them, to give them a voice.

Differences in these data pointed to the number of students that were involved in the issue of equality; three of the participants were concerned about dilemmas that had far-reaching implications and affected more than one student, while the other two participants each identified dilemmas that affected a specific student. These data patterns were clear; this group of mid-career professionals was confronted by ethical dilemmas that required them to address issues of educational equality across all settings, and at all levels. It appears these more experienced teachers were fortified with years of on-the-job training that afforded them multiple opportunities to observe a range of educational quality, which likely assisted them with determining the course of action when faced with ethical dilemmas involving special education, English Language Learners, and issues of diversity. Jim illustrated this point when he shared:

The state mandates for what you do for ESL students is a lot lower than what you must do, for example, for an IEP student.
While we have three learning support teachers for about fifty IEP students who are here full time everyday, we have one ESL teacher for ten to fifteen ESL students. The teacher is only here in the morning. So, I guess, where it clashes with my ethics is that since I was part of the mission statement writing team, I had to write one statement. But everyday I come to work and I know that kids aren’t really my driving force; I know I’m not allowed to live up to that.

These mid-career teacher leaders used reflection on their codes of ethics, the clash, dissonance, or tension between and among codes, and the expectations of the profession which kept the students squarely at the center of the decision-making process. Without exception, all mid-career dilemmas focused on a variety of needs from gifted students to learning support and English Language Learner students. These data shows that the mid-career teacher leaders used the lens of the ethic of the profession in their daily practice.

Veteran Teachers

Three participants were identified in this category, with experience ranging from eighteen to thirty-two years. Similarities in these data revealed the theme of student welfare, stemming from the ethic of care (Barth, 1988; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992; Beck, 1994), and professionalism, a subset of the justice paradigm (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998). Although two teachers were from the urban district, the data disclosed that the experience level, not the district, made a difference to the participants. All three noted personal integrity, being a role model for students and other teachers, and doing the “right thing” based on serving the best interest of students. All three
indicated long range thinking by expressing concern for a specific student, as well as the impact on the student in the future. By placing the student at the center of the decision-making process, these experienced teachers expressed the need to “stand up for what is right,” and to “be true” to individual beliefs, no matter what the cost, in keeping with their need to demonstrate professionalism in every encounter. Ben exemplified this best when he discussed his ethical dilemma:

The problem really required my professional code of ethics to win over the personal, as in the moment it was happening; I wanted to hurt that boy. The senseless violence is really upsetting and makes it difficult to do little more than react in the moment. My professional code of treating others with respect and not allowing hidden prejudices to affect my judgment won over the need to see justice immediately for the girl who was really injured.

Gender

The gender breakdown for participants was two males; one exurban elementary teacher and one urban high school teacher. Seven participants were female; urban middle school and elementary teachers, exurban high school and middle school teachers, and suburban elementary, middle school, and high school teachers. Interestingly, both male teachers expressed strong concern for regard for student welfare, with a strong emphasis on the ethics of justice and care. In contrast, four of the seven female participants voiced strong concern for issues of fairness, emanating from the ethic of justice. The stereotypes associated with gender will be further discussed in chapter five.

Analysis of Codes

Combined Codes
Three participants viewed their personal and professional codes of ethics as one in the same. The elementary and high school teacher in the exurban district, as well as the elementary teacher in the suburban district identified their codes as the same. The language was consistent across all three participants, and described how to “treat others”. The following brief discussion described participants with combined codes.

For participants who identified their personal and professional codes as combined, to appeared this conclusion allowed them to reduce any cognitive dissonance when faced with ethical dilemmas. Further, a close examination of these three participants revealed a conscious effort on the part of each not to delineate these codes, even when pressed by the researcher to try to parse out different aspects of their combined codes. Jim, from the exurban district, summed up his sentiment stating,

I kind of have it as one list. I didn’t divide it. I’d say they are the same, but they aren’t as easy to uphold in my professional life as they are in my personal life. So I’d say that they are professional and personal, but they are a lot harder to uphold.

The exurban high school teacher, Beth, summed her codes up in three words: honest, fair, and direct, emanating from the ethic of justice (see page 90). Her brief response contained an explanation of the application of the three words in her personal and professional life. Her interview responses chronicled her attempts to enact these tenets in her personal and professional life.
In contrast, the exurban elementary teacher, Jim, chose eight descriptors to share his personal and professional codes, emanating from the ethic of care (see pages 99 - 100). Each descriptor included a phrase and an explanation of the application from his life and/or teaching. Four statements centered on the participant’s thoughts about treating others; while four statements spoke specifically about how he planned to live and work. The codes were laid out in an understandable fashion and were reiterated in his interview responses.

The suburban participant, Kim, shared a short narrative to explain her rationale for her codes. She identified the codes as her “core values” (see page 119). She included seven statements in her codes, all of which were actions which she planned to take to ensure her codes were the same in her personal and professional life. Both elementary participants included “intentionality” in words and deeds, treating others with “respect,” and “staying true” to personal beliefs (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996).

*Two Distinct Codes*

Six participants shared two distinct codes which included descriptors to identify their personal versus professional codes. One similar theme was expressed in all personal codes, the “Golden Rule” (Kidder, 1996), and treating others with kindness and respect. Professional codes contained three recurring themes including reflection and commitment to personal growth, maintaining “integrity” and “respect” when dealing with students, and creating a “climate of learning” for the students (Katzenmeyer & Moller,
1996). Although the codes continued many descriptions of the participants’ values, the themes were communicated clearly through the written codes and through the interview data. Throughout the interviews, these participants continually demonstrated reflection on their codes. For example, participants referred to the personal code, then juxtaposed that with their professional code. Ben, urban high school teacher, illustrated this observation:

I feel that by spending time in reflection, I am better aware of my own hidden prejudices and can work to rid myself of them...or at least to recognize and try to acknowledge them. I thought my codes were the same, but as I look at them now, some are clearly personal and some clearly professional.

Analysis of Code Clashes

Clashes between personal and professional codes of ethics were highlighted by the researcher to help guide the participants through their ethical decision-making process. Upon further examination of this phenomenon, it was evident that some participants were unclear with the definition of a clash, based on their response to the question, “Are there any areas of clash between your personal and professional codes of ethics?” As an example, Sue, urban elementary school participant, stated:

And I had a parent that was yelling out the door, ‘Come on, come on, and come on!’ I told him, ‘Sir, can you please park the car? I don’t feel safe and I don’t feel comfortable letting your child out into the middle of the street.’ Well, he did not like that. He thought that I was undermining him as a parent, which I was not. When he came up, I told him, ‘Thank you very, very much for parking.’ I did that professionally. Now, as a person outside of work, I probably would not have thanked him because I would have thought that that was the right thing for him to do. But as a professional, I thanked him and I said, ‘I thank you. It
was not only for your child, but for the safety of everyone.’
And he did not like that at all.

Reflection by the researcher found evidence in two other participant interviews of possible misunderstandings. Sue stated that she had a clash, which upon examination, was actually a difference between her desired response and her actual subdued response to a parent.

Further, Ruth and Sara described a clash; however, this clash was not between their personal professional codes, but a difference in their code and the codes of their colleagues. During her interview, Sara, urban middle school participant, was unable to identify a specific incident to describe the clash between her codes and the codes of colleagues. Instead, she used the perceived difference between her codes and the codes of her colleagues to see herself as a role model in her school setting. Sara explained:

I don’t seem to have a clash between my personal and professional beliefs, but rather between my personal and professional codes and those of the people I work with which led me to realize my position as being a role model and leader by providing professional development and support to fellow instructional staff members. It is a big responsibility which I take very seriously.

Ruth, exurban middle school participant, on the other hand, spoke of several minor incidents which led her to believe that the clash existed between her codes and the codes of her teammates. She related her concerns in this way:

Working on a five member team can really be challenging. Each person brings to the team his/her own experience and professional beliefs. On my team we often have lively disagreements, especially about grading and discipline. I have
one member of my team who thinks as I do. Many times we have worked together to either provide evidence for our teammates or go off on our own to complete an activity the way we think it should be done.

In actuality, these incidents may have provided the participants opportunity to reflect on their codes and strengthen their personal beliefs, values, and ethical stances.

*Analysis of Critical Events*

Secondary teachers were more likely to identify scheduling issues as critical events, while expressing concern for students. Further, middle school participants identified critical events involving students mainstreamed from the emotional support classrooms, setting up a critical event which involved other faculty members. In both high school and middle school incidents, concern for student welfare spurred the participants to action.

Several differences emerged from these data. The urban elementary event involved a district-wide decision to send kindergarten through second grade students home for half-days during the Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) test (see page 87). This was the only district-wide critical incident. The elementary participant in the suburban district faced a critical event involving inappropriate actions by a college student in the classroom, the only event which involved pre-service teachers (see page 119). The urban high school teacher faced a critical event involving a forged note by another professional which impacted a student athlete (see page 77). The final critical event, faced by the exurban elementary participant, revolved around educational equality for English Language Learners (ELL) which caused him...
to speak to the administrative team (see page 103). These critical events involved other educational professionals, but required the participants to enact their personal and professional codes of ethics, despite the clash. All participants voiced their opinion in an attempt to correct the situation which required an ethical decision to be made.

*Analysis of Ethical Dilemma Themes*

The categorical analysis yielded five dilemma themes. These themes included issues of fairness, originating from the ethic of justice, regard for student welfare, emanating from the ethic of care, educational equality, derived from the ethics of justice and critique, student safety, incorporating the ethics of justice and care, and issues of discipline, which combined the ethics of justice, critique, and care. Cross-case analysis of the themes uncovered fairness in the data as reported in seven of the nine participant interviews, regard for student welfare was found in six interviews, educational equality was uncovered in the data from five interviews, while issues of safety emerged from the data in two interviews, and discipline emerged from the data in one participant interview. Further analysis of the issues of fairness and regard for student welfare found that these issues surfaced in all districts, and at all levels. These findings indicate that ethical dilemmas faced by these participants required the implementation of the ethic of the profession to address serious issues of fairness, regard for student welfare, and educational equality.
Participant Reflection

When responding to a question in Interview I, all nine participants felt that the creation of personal and professional codes of ethics was a valuable exercise. Four participants used the term “very valuable,” while two stated the exercise was “extremely valuable;” one participant identified the exercise as “valuable,” one stated it was “enjoyable,” and one participant felt the exercise was “interesting.” This agreement across all participants in all settings seems to substantiate the value for teacher leaders to articulate codes of ethics. Once created and valued, the participants referred to their codes when asked to identify a clash between and among codes. In addition, the critical event requiring an ethical decision magnified the clash, dissonance, or tension between and among codes and enabled participants to further explore their decisions based on two different codes.

Further, in response to a question in Interview II, seven of the nine participants responded that they would “do nothing differently” if faced with the same ethical decision. The final two participants responded that they would “speak up sooner” if faced with a similar ethical dilemma. Although the critical events, codes of ethics, and dilemma themes were different, participants consistently expressed a need to respond with an ethical decision based on their code of ethics. The analysis yields support for the conceptual model as a frame to understand the use of the ethic of the profession as a guiding force in the ethical decision-making process for these nine teacher leaders. The process appeared to be similarly applied by all participants.
Summary

This research effort helped to conceptualize the decision-making process tackled by teacher leaders when faced with an ethical dilemma. Categorical analysis revealed themes which led to the development of a conceptual model, while cross-case analysis further identified patterns in these data. This chapter analyzed individual participant data paralleling the connection to the patterns making up the conceptual model. Overall results indicated teacher leaders, regardless of geographic location, years of experience, or level of students taught, were more cognizant of their personal and professional codes of ethics when faced with an ethical dilemma. It was also found that teacher leaders, as a matter of course, are concerned with the best interest of the students, which illuminates the lens of the ethic of the profession. The teacher leaders who participated in this study proved to be thoughtful in their responses, which revealed dilemma themes highlighted in the conceptual model.

Chapter 5 will discuss the implications of this research, how the findings may be applied, and recommendations for further research with teacher leaders.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this case study was to extend previous research on the ethic of the profession to teacher leaders. This line of research was typically applied to school administrators (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005), but was used for this research effort to determine if teacher leaders use the lens of the ethic of the profession when faced with ethical decision making. Historically, teachers were considered mere “laborers” in a system that paralleled factories during the industrial age, where teachers were relegated to their classrooms, with little input into the management or leadership of schools. The concept of teacher leadership was born from the reform movement, which was imposed on school systems through legislation. The need for continual academic achievement, and school improvement resulted in the need for teacher leadership development. Early waves in the teacher leadership movement focused on characteristics exhibited by teacher leaders. Traits, behaviors, settings, or events were studied as key contributors to the effectiveness of an individual leader (Blaise & Blaise, 1994; Maxcy, 1991). However, these explanations of leadership were proven to be inadequate. If the reliance on individual characteristics, settings, or events were unable to fully explain the development of effective teacher leaders, what other factors need to be available to support teacher leaders as they lead from within the classroom?
The research findings of this case study pointed to one conceptual model that identified teacher leaders used when confronted with ethical dilemmas. As an ethical framework, the ethic of the profession required teachers to move past the exhibition of characteristics of effective teacher leaders to examine the internal landscape of “formulating and examining...professional codes in light of individual codes of ethics,” the “standards set by the profession,” and required teacher leaders to “place students at the center of the ethical decision-making process” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 23). The ethic of the profession provided a lens for “reflecting on, and then dealing with, dilemmas faced by educational leaders” (p. 11). It is this depth of attention to ethical decision-making which will assist teacher leaders in their daily work. The ethic of the profession becomes the link that connects this ethical paradigm to the work of educational administrative leaders, and extends this lens to the work of teacher leaders.

Summary of Findings

The case study was conducted in three school districts, urban, exurban, and suburban, located in south central Pennsylvania. Three teacher leaders were identified from each school system via an online survey. One elementary, one middle school, and one high school teacher from each district was identified, selected, and participated in the study. Respondents developed personal and professional codes of ethics, participated in an in-depth interview to discuss their codes, and identified clash, dissonance, or tension between codes. A second in-depth interview regarding an ethical dilemma from each
participant’s daily practice was analyzed for patterns and themes. The summary that followed was a result of categorical analysis, which first required primary, then secondary, followed by tertiary coding, to begin to analyze these data. A conceptual model emerged from the constant comparative data analysis. The conceptual model illuminated several factors apparent in the interview data; teacher leaders wrestled with the internal clashes, dissonance, or tension between their personal and professional codes, with the external clashes, dissonance, or tension within professional codes, with professional codes among their colleagues, and between the professional code of ethics and customs and practice set forth by the community (i.e. either the professional community, the school community or the community where the educational leader works). With the introduction of a critical event requiring an ethical decision, participants grappled with the situation, and used multiple paradigms to come to grips with their dilemmas. The ethics of justice, critique, and care were evident in the interview data. However, in all nine cases, participants moved past the reliance on one ethical paradigm to apply the lens of the ethic of the profession in the decision-making process. Data analysis provided themes resulting from the use of these ethical lenses. These themes included issues of fairness, originating from the ethic of justice, regard for student welfare, emanating from the ethic of care, educational equality, derived from the ethics of justice and critique, student safety, incorporating the ethics of justice and care, and issues of discipline, which combined the ethics of justice, critique, and care. Additional examination of
these data clearly pointed to the placement of students at the center of the ethical decision-making process, moving the participants beyond the ethics of justice, critique and care, and into the paradigm of the ethic of the profession. All nine participants in this case study referred to the multiple paradigms to address ethical dilemmas, but in the final analysis, relied on the ethic of the profession to assist their reflection, wrestling, and decision-making when faced with ethical dilemmas in their daily practice.

Clearly evident in the responses of these teacher leaders was the ability to think deeply about the ethical dilemmas they were facing. The quandaries they grappled with were complex in nature, requiring the study participants to critically weigh the options available to them. By employing more than one ethical lens, teacher leaders considered several options prior to choosing a course of action. The conceptual model, uncovered in the categorical analysis of interview data, illustrated the internal and external landscapes that influenced participant’s ethical decision-making process. The internal landscape was influenced by the creation of personal and professional codes, while the external landscape was influenced by the codes of colleagues, the profession, and the community. By first resolving any clashes, dissonance, or tension that occurred within the internal and/or external landscapes, the participants grappled with ethical dilemmas when there was a clash, dissonance, or tension between codes. In this way, the participants demonstrated a sophisticated and nuanced approach when solving the paradoxes presented in their daily practice.
Further scrutiny of these data was conducted using cross-case analysis for variables introduced by interview data. The cross-case analysis was conducted in light of the review of literature. Cross-case analysis included ten comparisons, including analysis across districts, urban, exurban, suburban; analysis across teaching levels, elementary, middle school, high school; analysis across experience level, novice, mid-career, experienced; analysis across gender; analysis of codes, viewed as the same or viewed as different; analysis of the value participants found in creating codes; analysis of participant-identified critical events; analysis of clash, dissonance, or tension between and among codes; analysis of dilemma themes; and analysis of participant reflection (what they would do differently). The cross-case analysis yielded patterns similar to those uncovered through the categorical data analysis. In this way, the patterns from one data type were corroborated by the evidence from another, which strengthened the patterns that were emerging from the interview data (Yin, 2003).

The following discussion provides a summary analysis of the grand tour and sub-questions presented for this case study.

Grand Tour Research Question

As an extension of previous research, the grand tour question posed the following: Is the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, demonstrated through the work of teacher leaders? If so, how? Through the analysis of interview data, participants revealed a prevailing concern for fairness, students’ welfare, educational equality, safety,
and student discipline. Although typically applied to educational administrators, this research effort confirmed that the ethic of the profession was demonstrated through the work of the teacher leaders selected for this study. When responding to critical events that triggered ethical dilemmas, these participants habitually used their personal and professional codes of ethics to determine a course action. Further, a clash, dissonance, or tension between their personal and/or professional codes, and the codes of colleagues, often resulted in the need for ethical decision making. It should be noted that participants identified a fluid process of comparisons between personal and professional codes to assist in making these ethical decisions, as well as relying on collegial support when faced with a dilemma.

*Research Sub-Question One*

Without exception, all participants reported finding value in the exercise of articulating their personal and professional codes of ethics, which motivated them to reflect on their daily practice. The researcher cautiously extends these findings to daily practice, to answer affirmatively research sub-question one: Does the articulation of personal and professional codes of ethics influence the teacher leader’s practice? In order to determine *how* the personal and professional codes affects teacher leaders, the researcher relied on self-report data which also suggested teachers continued to apply the components of the ethic of the profession as expressed through the recall of critical incidents and responses to the ethical dilemmas. The application of these components was evident even when participants noted that their codes
were one in the same, which presented difficulty when parsing personal versus professional ideals and values.

*Research Sub-Question Two*

Research sub-question two inquired: How does the teacher leader address conflict, if it arises between personal and professional codes including clashes? Resolving clashes, dissonance, or tension between personal and professional codes implied internal struggle, while clashes, dissonance, or tension with codes of others implied external struggles. Both scenarios presented a similar resolution, which was delineated by the conceptual model. Teacher leaders described a process whereby they juggled the options presented by the opposing codes. The process of juggling these scenarios appeared to result in a more definitive understanding of the participants’ ethical stance and their confidence in their ethical decision making.

*Research Sub-Question Three*

Research sub-question three inquired: Does the teacher place the students at the center of the ethical decision-making process to address ethical dilemmas faced in daily practice? If so, how? Based on the critical incidents offered by participants, categorical analysis of repeated themes, cross-case analysis of interview data, and subsequent actions taken by participants, these teacher leaders clearly focused on placing students at the center of the ethical decision-making process. The lens of the ethic of the profession was evident in themes of fairness, students’ welfare, educational equality, safety, and student discipline.
Recommendations for Future Research

To specifically address the need for ethical school leadership at the administrative level, a number of writers in educational administration suggest training in ethics for potential administrators (Beck, 1994; Beck & Murphy, 1994; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005; Starratt, 1994; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998). Potential administrators spend time grappling with ethical concepts through coursework, devoting time to the opportunity to reflect on complex ethical dilemmas, and clarifying their own individual attitudes and beliefs which become the backbone of individual leadership styles.

Administrative coursework in ethics illuminates paradigms which include “ethics emanating from diverse traditions that have impact on education in general and educational leadership in particular” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, p. 10) from the following three viewpoints: justice, critique, and care. By employing the ethical lenses, educational leaders were given a framework upon which to base ethical decisions and hone decision making skills.

Of interest was the information contained in the literature indicating administrative reliance on the ethic of justice, due to concerns with upholding the law (Beauchamp & Childress, 1984; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998). Administrators implementing a continuous school improvement model were noted to reflect on the “more abstract concepts of fairness, equity, and justice; if exceptions are to be made, under what circumstances; and the rights of individuals verses the greater good of the community” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 13). Teacher
leaders in this study identified five themes which guided the decision-making process. These themes included issues of fairness, originating from the ethic of justice, regard for student welfare, emanating from the ethic of care, educational equality, derived from the ethics of justice and critique, student safety, incorporating the ethics of justice and care, and issues of discipline, which combined the ethics of justice, critique, and care. The ethic of justice was the sole component of one of the five themes, and an element of three of the four remaining themes. It appeared that the ethic of justice provided a foundation for the decision-making processes of these study participants.

Questions for further research arose from this conclusion: Were these teacher leaders acting as quasi-administrators? Did their leadership roles place them into situations which required a broader perspective or adherence to particular rules and policies? Future research could explore similarities in role expectations between teacher leaders and administrators; and further, to compare dilemma responses between the two groups to parse out ethical frames. These data are clear; 21st century schools operating in a continuous improvement model will require ethical decisions to be made by teachers, as well as administrators.

Also evident in the themes expressed by these participants was the ethic of care. According to the literature, the ethic of care grew out of the ethic of justice, and advocated “placing students at the center of the educational process and need to be nurtured and encouraged” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 16). The ethic of care was presented by a number of writers,
including Barth, 1988; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992; Beck, 1994, as a “way to respond to complex moral problems facing educational leaders in their daily work” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 17). Traditionally, women were seen as more focused on care and concern (Beck, 1994; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992). However, these data indicate that the ethic of care was evident in the paradigm implemented by the two men in the study. Interestingly, four of the seven women participants relied heavily on the justice paradigm. Further study could provide insight into the phenomena by equalizing gender to further uncover the lenses used in ethical decision-making. If the dilemma was constant for all participants, the data may yield data patterns to support or refute the gender stereotype in the educational setting.

Although the link between the ethic of the profession and the work of the nine teacher leaders participating in this case study is clear, further research is required. To qualify for this study, participants had to meet teacher leadership eligibility criteria. The criteria required attitudes, values, and beliefs that aligned closely with the identified characteristics of teacher leadership articulated by Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann, (2002, p. 88-90). An extension of this research would lead researchers to include all teachers in a school setting. As researchers seek to further uncover the nebulous construct of teacher leadership, the need for continuous improvement in schools will likely shape the research conducted with teacher leaders.
The need for ethical study is evident and necessary. Preservice teachers should have the opportunity to explore the components of the ethic of the profession prior to entering the profession. In addition, the need for ethical education and study for practicing teachers is evident. The development of a training session could provide explicit teaching on the ethic of the profession as a tool for effective decision-making. Following the session, a study of ethical decision-making of participants would indicate the value of this session.

Participants in this study found the articulation of codes valuable. Further study could delve into the development of codes of ethics, and then how to tease out values which make up the difference between personal versus professional codes. To test the strength of the personal and professional codes, further research could manipulate several of the current study variables. Possibilities include framing the dilemma for participants, and staging the conflict between colleagues, among codes set by the profession, or the standards set by the community. Controlling for these variables could provide the researcher with the opportunity to focus on the importance of the ethical dilemma as a catalyst for ethical decision-making.

Additionally, variables of the dilemma manipulation could include attention to decision-making process outcome affecting one student versus many students to uncover any impact on how the dilemma is resolved. Moreover, the length of time which the students were affected may impact the ethical decision-making process. Understanding the deciding factors teachers
use in ethical decision-making process will support reform initiatives and are, therefore, worthy of further study.

Beyond the scope of this research effort, but of interest for further study are the concepts of teacher leadership and school reform efforts. Historically, teachers were seen as mere pawns to assist educational leaders in enacting legislative reforms. However, the research demonstrates that the current wave of teacher leadership includes attention to collegial relationships and school-based reforms. The effectiveness of initiatives would appear to be directly related to the influence teacher leaders have on their colleagues. In addition, the effectiveness of teacher leadership depends on the culture of the district, the culture of the building, and the flexibility of the supervising administrator. However, it can be argued that effective reform efforts must bubble up from teachers to be most effective, and teachers must find value in their reform efforts. Therefore, the nature of leadership, ethical decision-making, and the culture around teacher leadership warrant further exploration.

Finally, further study of ethical teacher leadership may lead to another form of the conceptual model. The results of this study demonstrate ethical decision-making on the part of these nine participants. Changes in the sample size, the demographics of the participants, and the inclusion of a variety of teachers in the study would provide results that are more generalizable to other populations in other locations. It is the hope of the researcher that further forays into the nature of teacher leaders and the use of the ethic of the profession as a lens for decision-making will add to the current body of
literature and serve as a model for effective reform initiatives based on the best interest of students.

Overall Summary

In the current era of accountability, the ability to manage change and to sustain a culture of learning for students and teachers is essential. Continuous change requires the development of a community that is inclusive, values individual development and achievement, and builds capacity for change while encouraging leaders to continue to grow professionally (Harris, 2000; Leithwood & Menzies 1998). The optimal environment conducive to teacher leadership requires a shift from a reliance on administrative power to a system that seeks to “empower others by building a community of relationships that tend to be self-organizing” (Caine & Caine, 2000, p.8). Both formal and informal leadership roles require teachers to assume more responsibility for the work of student achievement, which in the past has been solely the responsibility of the school administrators (Zepeda, Mayers, & Bendon, 2003).

It is this shift in leadership from traditional authority in schools via superintendents and principals to shared and parallel responsibility by, and including teacher leaders, that opens the door to the application of an ethical lens to frame decision-making (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005). The literature review provided a review of the foundational components of the four ethical paradigms. The ethic of justice addressed questions which stemmed from the rule of law, and concepts of fairness, equity, and justice (Beauchamp
& Childress, 1984; Kohlberg, 1981; Sergiovanni, 1992; Starrat, 1997; Strike, Haller & Soltis, 1998). The ethic of critique stemmed from critical theory, and was intended to uncover educational and societal inequities, including issues of oppression, power, privilege, authority, voice, language, and empowerment (Foster, 1989; Giroux, 1991; Shapiro & Purpel, 1995). The ethic of care conveyed a third ethical perspective as a direct response to the justice-based approaches, and prompted questions regarding values such as loyalty, trust, and empowerment, with a focus on diversity, listening, observation, and responsiveness to others (Barth, 1988; Beck, 1994; Gilligan, 1992; Noddings, 1992).

Finally, the ethic of the profession provides “a fourth ethical lens for reflecting on, then dealing with, dilemmas faced by educational leaders” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, 2005, p. 11). The ethic of the profession included attention to the issues raised by the ethical paradigms of justice, critique, and care. In addition, the ethic of the profession posed questions regarding standards of the profession, and provided a frame for ethical decision making to address the best interest of the students who may represent highly diverse populations. Shapiro and Stefkovich maintain the ethic of the profession provided administrators with a lens which encourages an “understanding oneself as well as others,” an opportunity to “reflect upon concepts such as what they perceive to be right or wrong and good or bad, who they are as professionals and as human beings, how they make decisions, and why they make the decisions they do” (p. 21). These components include
the need for an ethical framework derived from rich ethical traditions, codes of ethics, and an ethical decision-making model. Through data analyses of the nine participants in this study, as well as the discussion provided in the literature, a more complete picture emerges of a teacher leader who can implement and sustain reform in the classroom and in the community at large, while demonstrating a defined ethical stance.

As an extension of Shapiro and Stefkovich’s work with administrators and the ethic of the profession, this case study research examined the work of teacher leaders. The rich descriptions of delineated personal and professional codes, discussion of clashes, dissonance, or tension between and among codes, and the identification of ethical dilemmas unfolded through the categorical analysis; the identification of multiple ethical paradigms were revealed through these data. A conceptual model, also uncovered through the constant comparison analysis, illustrated a fluid process of reflection on and grappling with, personal and professional codes of ethics, codes of the profession, codes of other colleagues, and practices of the community which necessitated ethical decision-making. Participants identified a critical event, clash, dissonance, or tension between codes, and the need to address an ethical dilemma. Cross-case analysis of ten comparisons between and among all participant interview data yielded further delineation of these data patterns. Deciding factors in the ethical decision-making process pointed to themes of fairness, regard for student welfare, educational equality, safety and discipline, all centering on the best interest of the student. Use of the multiple
ethical paradigms of justice, critique, and care were identified through participant responses. In every case, the participants shifted from a single ethical perspective to include the identified aspects of the ethic profession. The final analyses of these data illustrated that teacher leaders who participated in this case study relied on the multiple ethical paradigms of justice, care and critique, but in a nuanced way, moved beyond the single ethical paradigm approach. By creating personal and professional codes of ethics, and grappling with the clashes, dissonance, or tension between and among codes, participants identified the need to keep students at the center of the decision-making process. In this way, the case study research extended the ethic of the profession from administrators to the work of these nine teacher leaders, all of whom demonstrated the ethic of the profession as a means to solve ethical dilemmas in their daily practice.
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SELF-SURVEY TO ASSESS READINESS FOR LEADERSHIP

Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in the initial stages of this case study research. This project will examine how the ethic of the profession, typically applied to administrators, is demonstrated in the work of teacher leaders. The study will compare how teacher leaders in one urban and two suburban settings articulate personal and professional codes of ethics, identify the clash between personal and professional codes, and identify instances in daily practice that require ethical professional judgment and decision-making essential to their leadership role in the school. This survey will determine the final selection of three research participants from your district. Again, than you for your interest and participation. C. Renehan

Name ___________________ School _________________ Date __________

Please respond to the statements below by marking the response to indicate your feelings about each statement. (Place an X or a check mark on the line.) All responses will be kept strictly confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching is as important as any other profession.</td>
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<td>Part of being a teacher is influencing the educational ideas of other teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders.</td>
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<td>Teachers should be recognized for trying new teaching strategies whether or not they succeed.</td>
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<td>Teachers should participate actively in educational policy making.</td>
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<td>Good teaching involves observing, and providing feedback, to other teachers.</td>
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<td>Administrators are potential source of facilitative assistance for teachers.</td>
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<td>Respond to the Statements below</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>Teachers are responsible for encouraging a school wide approach to teaching, learning, and assessment.</td>
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<td>Teachers can continue with classroom instruction and, at the same time, be a teacher leader.</td>
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<td>Teachers should allocate time to help plan school wide professional development activities.</td>
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<td>Teachers should know how organizational work and be effective at getting things done in them.</td>
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<td>Mentoring new teachers is a part of the professional responsibility of a teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An active role in decision making about instructional materials, allocation of learning resources, and student assignments is one of a teacher’s responsibilities.</td>
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<td>An educational leader should convey optimism to students, colleagues, and parents.</td>
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<td>Teaching means standing up for all students, including those who are marginalized and disadvantaged.</td>
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<td>Teachers have knowledge and skills that can help their fellow teachers succeed with students, and these should be incorporated in professional development efforts.</td>
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APPENDIX B

SCORING PROTOCOL FOR SELF-SURVEY TO ASSESS READINESS FOR LEADERSHIP

Name _________________________________________________

School ____________________________ Date _______________

Scored by _________________________ Date________________

1. Count the number of times strongly disagree was chosen. 
   Multiply by –2 and write the number here: _______

2. Count the number of times disagree was chosen. 
   Multiply by –1 and write the number here: _______

3. Ignore the number of times no opinion was chosen.

4. Count the number of times agree was chosen. 
   Write the number here: _______

5. Count the number of times strongly agree was chosen. 
   Multiply by 2 and write the number here: _______

6. Calculate the total score by adding the numbers. 
   Write the total here: _______

Key: If the total points equal

21-30 – Virtually all your attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership.

11-20 – The majority of your attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership.

1-10 – Some of your attitudes align with the tenets of teacher leadership. Several don’t.

Less than 1 – Few of your attitudes, values, and beliefs align with the tenets of teacher leadership.

(Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson & , 2002, p. 88)

Respondees who score between 21 and 30 points will be considered as candidates for participation in the case study. Respondees who score 20 points or less will not be considered candidates for this case study.
APPENDIX C

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS WORKSHEET

Developing Your Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics

The intent of this research is to uncover the ethic of the profession through the work of identified teacher leaders. This ethical framework assists in the clarification and resolution of ethical dilemmas. Since your score on the Self-Assessment questionnaire identified you as a leader in your school, your thoughts and opinions are critical to this research project.

- Please take time during the next two weeks to articulate your Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics following the guidelines below.

- Once your codes are completed, please contact me to set up a time for an interview and observation of your classroom.

- Your codes must be completed by December 1, 2006. The researcher will collect your completed work at the interview, scheduled at your convenience during the weeks of December 4 – 15, 2006.

Thanks, again, for your thoughtful attention to the development of your personal and professional codes of ethics. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Most sincerely,

Cynthia L. Renehan
Email – clrenehan@wyasd.k12.pa.us
Telephone – Work – 717-792-3902
Fax – 717-792-6646
**Personal and Professional Codes of Ethics**

1. Think of 5 – 10 ideals you try to live by in your life at home (your personal code of ethics) and in your life at work (your professional code of ethics). You will be asked to articulate the codes by writing them out, one code per page. Be as honest as you can. If you will be uncomfortable sharing any particular point of your code with the researcher, please leave it out. *(Source: Shapiro, March 15, 2004, Analytical Studies in Administration: Ethics in Educational Administration; Temple University)*

2. You may want to write your ideals out in a bulleted list with phrases, in paragraph form, or in a similar fashion to the Ten Commandments. There is no required format or length for the code.

3. Be as thoughtful and inclusive of your own ideals as you can.

4. The *NEA Code of Ethics of the Education Profession (1977-1978)* and *Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators* from the PA School Code have been provided for your reference. Please do NOT model your code after either of these two documents…they are provided as a resource to stimulate thinking. As a researcher, I am deeply interested in your thoughts and ideals.
APPENDIX D

FIRST INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PARTICIPANT

Interview I With Identified Participant

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this case study research. I sincerely appreciate your valuable time. I’m certain that your responses will enhance my study.

Introduction/Access Information

1. With your permission I’d like to tape record this interview to spend more time talking and less time writing.
2. I’ll be transcribing your responses, and will submit the transcript for your review. All the info will be kept strictly confidential.
3. You can stop me at any time, and return to a response to add information, should you want to.
4. These are semi-structured questions. I will follow your lead to get a little more information.

Protocol

5. Describe for me your position and the make up of your school.
6. Since you have completed the exercise on development of personal and professional codes of ethics, how valuable was the exercise to you?
7. What do you feel are the basis tenets of your own personal code of ethics?
8. What do you feel are the basic tenets of your own professional code of ethics?

9. Are there any areas of clash between your personal and professional codes of ethics? Can you provide a concrete example of a clash between codes? Describe what led to the situation. Exactly what was done that was especially effective or ineffective? What was the outcome or result of this action? Why was this action effective? Did you reach a compromise, or did one code win out over the other?

10. Is your action (to the example above) applicable to all instances of clashes between codes? Probe response.

11. What was the most surprising revelation you had while you were completing this exercise?
APPENDIX E

SECOND INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PARTICIPANT

Interview II With Identified Participant

Once again, thank you for your valuable time. I sincerely appreciate your assistance with my case study research.

Introduction/Access Information

1. With your permission I’d like to tape record this interview to spend more time talking and less time writing.

2. I’ll be transcribing your responses, and will submit the transcript for your review. All the info will be kept strictly confidential.

3. You can stop me at any time, and return to a response to add information, should you want to.

4. These are semi-structured questions. I will follow your lead to get a little more information.

Protocol

5. Since our last conversation, have you had the opportunity to reflect on an ethical dilemma faced in your professional practice which required you to use professional judgment and ethical decision-making skills?

6. If so, please describe the ethical dilemma. Probe response to glean the following information from the participant:

7. Please describe the problem by including the date, those involved, any pertinent background information relevant to the problem, and a description of the participant’s role in the dilemma.
8. Please describe the outcome of the dilemma. What did you hope to accomplish through your course of action?

9. Please describe the alternative courses of action which you considered. What were the specific outcomes of each alternative? Did the possible outcome affect your course of action?

10. Please describe the strategy implemented to address the dilemma. What specific action did you take in an attempt to achieve the desired outcome?

11. Please describe the results. Were your objectives achieved? What happened as a result of your action?

12. Did your plan work as you intended? If so why? If not, why not?

13. What critical events, decisions, and situations influenced the outcome?

14. Were there any unintended consequences which you didn’t foresee when you chose the course of action?

15. What would you do differently, if anything?

16. What do you see as the overriding factor in your decision-making process?
APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title: Teacher Leaders: Demonstrating the Ethic of the Profession

Investigator's name: Cynthia L. Renehan

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Temple University

I am currently engaged in a six-week study of teacher leaders in order to uncover the Ethic of the Profession as demonstrated through the work of identified teacher leaders. As an outcome of their work with educational leaders, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2001, 2005) articulated the concept of the ethic of the profession, which addresses “major factors that converge to create the professional paradigm” (2001, p. 24). These factors include “individual professional codes, standards of the profession, professional codes of ethics, ethics of the community, personal codes, professional decision making, clashing codes, and professional judgment which all center around the best interests of the students” (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2001, p. 24). Evidence of the Ethic of the Profession will be measured through several activities that participants will complete over the six-week study to take place from January 5 to February 20, 2007.

In order to qualify as a participant, you have already scored a 21 or higher on the Self-Survey to Assess Readiness for Leadership questionnaire, which was pre-approved by the superintendent. Participation in the study will require you to complete a variety of activities generated from your current professional practice.

The activities include:

1. Development of personal and professional codes of ethics, which includes articulation of 5 – 10 ideals the participant tries to live by in life at home (personal code of ethics) and at work (professional code of ethics). Approximate time commitment will be one hour.

2. Participation in a sixty-minute (approximate time) in-depth interview regarding the clashes between personal and
professional codes of ethics. Approximate time commitment will be one hour, scheduled at the participant’s convenience. Approximate time commitment will be one hour.

3. Description of one critical incident through a second in-depth interview which will include attention to the problem, outcome desired, alternatives considered, strategy implemented, results, and assessment.

4. Follow up meeting to share final results of the study. Approximate time commitment will be one-half hour scheduled at the participant’s convenience.

The data you provide will be audio recorded anonymously and anything you say during the interview will be held in the strictest confidence. The data will be stored in a secure cabinet until the completion of the study and then destroyed. All identities in the final report will be disguised.

I welcome questions about the research at any time. Your participation in the study is on a voluntary basis. You may discontinue participation at any time with no consequence or penalty.

Questions about your rights as a research subject may be directed to Ms. Ruth Smith, Office of the Vice President for Research, Institutional Review Board, Temple University, 3400 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19140, (215) 707-3249.

Signing your name below indicates that you have read and understood the contents of this Consent Form and that you agree to take part in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Signature</th>
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<th>Investigator’s Signature</th>
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Figure 4.1 Conceptual Model: Teacher Leaders and the Ethic of the Profession

Design:

- Critical Event requiring an ethical decision
- Clash, Dissonance, or Tension Between Codes
- Use of an ethical lens for decision-making
- Ethical Dilemma
- Best Interest of the Student Representing use of the Ethic of the Profession