emerged from our assumptions about the nature of teaching. For teachers to remain vital, engaged, and committed to teaching, they must have time for dialogue and reflection away from the daily demands of the classroom. Rather than developing curriculum in the school's silent halls during summer recess, we use the school as a learning laboratory while it is in session, testing ideas in an ongoing fashion. And what better way to conduct school-based research than in a functioning classroom?

Teachers in the L/TC have assumed three alternative roles for their own staff development: teacher/researcher, teacher/trainer, and teacher/curriculum writer.

The Teacher/Researcher

A teacher on the team who decided to assume the role of teacher/researcher began by studying the writing of

REVIEW

The Loneliness of the Teacher Leader

MARGE SCHERER

Ted, nationally renowned for his project-based teaching and the director of his own teacher network, is rarely emulated by teachers in his home district.

Gwen, an Instructional Support Teacher (IST) who counsels coworkers in the Madeline Hunter approach to teaching, suspects her efforts are merely tolerated.

Mary, who models numerous innovative strategies in her demonstration classroom, is applauded by university colleagues, but rarely visited by those in her own building.

Although to a person they acknowledge that their roles as leaders have helped them grow professionally and personally, these nonfictional teacher/leaders (pseudonymous to protect the integrity of the research) have serious doubts about their influence on the teachers in the classrooms down the hall — the ones they are supposed to be leading.

Author Patricia A. Wasley documents these case histories in her excellent *Teachers Who Lead: The Rhetoric of Reform and the Realities of Practice* (Teachers College Press, 1991). Well-versed in the literature proposing new kinds of leadership, she poses the reformer's question: Are the leadership positions that actually exist in schools today so problematic that they should be dismantled? In other words, should we start over from scratch? A realist, she answers no. Not only does she see the rich possibilities of these paradoxical situations, but she also thinks that "their wholesale dismissal would only result in recreation of similar positions with similar problems."

Wasley concludes her examination of the effectiveness of leadership positions with a better question: Should not teachers be included in discussions about teacher leadership? When she examines how these positions originated, she finds that Ted's entrepreneurial teacher's role has been largely created by Ted, that Gwen's administrative liaison position has been ordained by administration, and that Mary's model teacher role, originally designed by superiors, has evolved to accommodate her own growing knowledge about how children learn.

Left out of the conversation are the teachers next door — not learning from colleagues and not sharing what they know. Because "a critical factor in the improvement of instructional practice is the sharing of actual practice by adults," fewer students benefit.

Although it sometimes seems that the egalitarian nature of teaching—and the traditional hierarchical nature of leadership — war against learning from colleagues, Wasley doesn't think it has to be that way. She outlines a proposal by which teachers and administrators could work collaboratively over the course of a school year to generate proposals for instructional improvement. Teachers would recommend leadership positions for themselves as they plan how to implement the proposed programs.

Teacher leaders wouldn't be so lonely if there were only more of them. By examining the conditions of actual practice, Wasley points the way toward creating the conditions for more participation in spirited teacher leadership.□

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