Table 1.1 The Teachers as Leaders Framework

Teacher leaders . . .

Convey convictions about a better world by

- articulating a positive future for all students
- contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference

Facilitate communities of learning by

- encouraging a shared, schoolwide approach to core pedagogical processes
- approaching professional learning as consciousness-raising about complex issues
- synthesizing new ideas out of colleagues' professional discourse and reflective activities

Strive for pedagogical excellence by

- showing genuine interest in students' needs and well-being
- continuously developing and refining personal teaching gifts and talents
- seeking deep understanding of significant pedagogical practices

Confront barriers in the school's culture and structures by

- standing up for children, especially disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups
- working with administrators to find solutions to issues of equity, fairness, and justice
- encouraging student "voice" in ways that are sensitive to students' developmental stages and circumstances

Translate ideas into sustainable systems of action by

- working with the principal, administrators, and other teachers to manage projects that heighten alignment between the school's vision, values, pedagogical practices, and professional learning activities
- building alliances and nurturing external networks of support

Nurture a culture of success by

- acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishments and high expectations
- encouraging collective responsibility in addressing schoolwide challenges
- encouraging self-respect and confidence in students' communities

in action" (Murphy, 2005, p. 46). But, he also noted that a number of significant understandings are now in place, including three that we regard as particularly significant:

- Barth's contention (2001) that community development via teacher leadership nurtures democracy (as cited in Murphy, p. 56).
- Katzenmeyer and Moller's assertion (2001) that, as teachers begin to believe in their leadership capabilities, they take on increased

As Generation Y begins to impact more upon communities and the world of work, new forms of educational leadership in general, and teacher leadership in particular, must surely be encouraged to evolve, morph, and mutate. Indeed, case studies of the work of teacher leaders at Greenhills and Minnemanka, as examples, would suggest that a degree of morphing is already occurring in the way that teacher leaders adjust their actions to suit the changing characteristics of both contexts and students.

Moreover, our case studies make clear that teacher leaders may be found in both advantaged and disadvantaged schools; in denominational, private, and public schools; at all grade and year levels; and across all subjects and disciplines. The teacher leaders with whom we have worked reflect a wide range of dispositions, political allegiances, religious affiliations, personalities, ages, and other characteristics. Teacher leaders as individuals have in some cases preferred classical approaches to teaching and learning while in other cases their natural inclinations have been technological, futuristic, or humanistic.

We have observed that teacher leadership in communities beset by violence, apathy, and disillusionment is quite different in its value orientation, as well as its practice, from teacher leadership in schools with a large proportion of students who are privileged materialistically, culturally, and socially. In the former, teacher leadership has often involved action to uplift students' capacity to engage confidently with the broader world. In the latter, it has been more likely to entail sensitizing students to critical problems confronting the world and encouraging them to reflect on possible ways of addressing those problems in contexts quite different from their own. In both instances, barriers invariably have to be confronted, trust established, networks created, and successes celebrated. How these actions are approached and undertaken might be very different in different situations and with different individual teacher leaders.

It goes without saying, therefore, that attempts to identify teacher leaders in advance of observing them and working with them in their contexts has been, in our experience, unsuccessful. We tend to resist the popular view that teacher leadership can be defined by identifiable personal or professional attributes. Profiles of teacher leadership such as the following, which were very helpful a decade ago, may now have served their purpose:

> The composite teacher leader is warm, dependable, and self-effacing with a genuine commitment to the work of colleagues and the school. She 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 for 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, pp. 23–24)

In the late 1990s, it was decided by the school staff and school board that a key issue for our school was the lack of consistency in relation to behavior management. However, there were other areas of concern. Most notably, our literacy results indicated room for serious improvement in the areas of writing and reading comprehension.

At this point the principal and council agreed to identify a school facilitator to identify, initiate, and coordinate a suitable school development process. It was also decided at this early stage that the serious involvement and leadership of the principal would be critical, as would the leadership of a representative Project Management Team. Volunteers were called for, and ten staff accepted. This step in hindsight seems to have been the right one.

Basically, our three year journey followed four stages:

Diagnosis (2000)

We obtained diagnostic survey instruments from a highly reputable educational consulting agency. The results of the surveys revealed that Johnsonvale was strongly supported by all three stakeholder groups—staff, parents, students—and was widely regarded as achieving very sound outcomes for students. But concerns were also identified by the Project Management Team and ratified by the staff:

- the lack of a vision that provided the school community with inspiration and purpose
- teachers' concern that school planning processes were not sufficiently inclusive
- a shared concern of students and teachers that physical infrastructures were inhibiting effective teaching and learning
- highly individualized (indeed, balkanized) teaching approaches, and a lack of reinforcement and consistency across the grade levels, particularly for low-achieving students.

Envisioning (2001–2003)

After more than a year of brainstorming, debating, and voting, a very simple five-word vision statement was decided upon as our image of how we wanted to see ourselves and be seen by the outside world:

Together We Achieve the Extraordinary

Following the adoption of our vision statement, we turned our attention to the analysis of our teaching and learning practices. We determined to address the area of written literacy, which had been a concern for the school community for several years. We undertook an audit of the uses that were being made of various strategies in our classrooms. Four focus questions guided our professional conversations:

- What do you do in your classroom that is most effective?
- What makes it so effective for you?
- What educational thinking supports your strategies?
- How do these strategies bring the Johnsonvale vision alive?

Alliancing and networking are not new concepts. Indeed, they were primary characteristics of nineteenth-century business organization. What is new is the capacity of some institutions to disseminate meaningful new knowledge to their communities and to other organizations, thereby demonstrating to them some fundamental dynamics of a knowledge society. This aspect of alliancing, which we have labeled *synergistic,* seems particularly suited to twenty-first-century schools as we envision them and a core function of metastrategic principalship.

Function Five: Culture-Building and Identity Generation

As was outlined in Chapter 3, "identity" as a manifestation of culture-building has no reality other than the meaning that organizational members, and other observers, ascribe to it. It is a social construction that reflects values, aspirations, needs, and experiences. We also indicated in our analysis of culture-building in Chapter 3 that the complex, multidimensional nature of "culture" is such that responsibility for its development should be shared across a broad spectrum of the school community.

The various dimensions of school culture that have been identified by authorities such as Schein (1992)—*artifacts, values, assumptions,* for example—can indeed be managed and shaped, both constructively and negatively. Of particular relevance in this assertion is that, while student self-perception has long been widely regarded as one of the prime determinants of academic achievement, high expectations are not necessarily a feature of the culture and identity of many schools, particularly those in disadvantaged contexts. This implies, in our view, a duty of care role that is inseparable from the culture-building function of the twenty-first-century principalship.

The school principal who initiated and stood behind use of the term "extraordinary" in the school's vision statement (Johnsonvale) clearly accepted this responsibility. The same could be said of the Adams College principal's decision to use the provocative statement "be brave" in the Adams school vision, and also of the Greenhills principal's widespread use of the school "Success breeds success" motto. Principals at these schools recognized that school culture is influenced by a range of variables that impact on student well-being and that they can influence through their own actions—students' sense of efficacy, teachers' perceptions of students' sense of efficacy, and teachers' sense of their own efficacy.

The teachers and students in Snapshot Five who came to "see their school as a distinctive educational place, one that they are shaping, especially through their class contributions to our *Minnemanka Teaching is . . .* and *Minnemanka Learning is . . .* initiatives" did so substantially because their principal recognized the importance of a culture of active participation. When the principal stated that "A recent survey of parents, staff and students has shown a significant turnaround in perceptions of the school and also growth in aspects of student engagement and attitudinal

CLASS Exercise 12: Parallel Leadership in Diverse Scenarios

How might the dynamics of a school staff impact upon the application of parallel leadership in a school developmental process?

In this exercise, you explore the ways that human variables—the personalities, values, skills, and experiences of the principal and teacher leaders—might influence the development and implementation of a school development project.

Key reference: How Parallel Leadership Works in Schools, Chapter 3.

Sustaining Teacher Leadership Into the Future

CLASS Exercise 13: Linking Metastrategy and Teacher Leadership in Practice

What happens when the principal and teacher leaders come together to apply parallel leadership values and processes to resolve a real-life school challenge?

In this exercise the cumulative outcomes of the CLASS Plan to date are put to the test of practical usefulness.

Key references: Teachers as Leaders Framework, Chapter 1; Metastrategic Principalship Framework, Chapter 4; and Linking Parallel Leadership and Successful School Capacity-Building, Chapter 3.

CLASS Exercise 14: Staff Meeting

How might you apply your insights and capabilities regarding teacher leadership and parallel leadership to invigorate one of your school's essential functions (the staff meeting)?

Key reference: Chapter 1–4.

CLASS Exercise 15: Six Months Later and Beyond

Where to from here?

This exercise provides an opportunity for you and your colleagues to reflect on the impact of leadership development efforts on your school's revitalization processes. You then transfer your focus to the period ahead, and how you might extend your successes into possible future activities.

Key reference: Linking Parallel Leadership and Successful School Capacity-Building, Chapter 3.