Jack of all trades, master of none: A teacher research inquiry of teachers' perspectives surrounding the context of professional development

Alicia Meno

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JACK OF ALL TRADES, MASTER OF NONE:
A TEACHER RESEARCH INQUIRY OF TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES
SURROUNDING THE CONTEXT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A Dissertation in
Curriculum Studies

by

Alicia Meno

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

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We approve the thesis of Alicia Meno.

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ABSTRACT

This inquiry explored one group of teachers' experiences in an innovative professional development opportunity, known as Book Talk, and its implications for understanding and defining professional development. This study further examined professional development and its relationship with the school's organizational structure. A qualitative, teacher research methodology, with a phenomenological orientation framed this inquiry.

Book Talk was a site-based, teacher-directed initiative designed to break isolation and develop collegiality among teachers. The Book Talk model of professional development promoted a collaborative environment, in which teachers developed trust to share and work together to inquire about children's literature. The participating teachers recognized that when time was provided for professional development and professional development was directed by teachers, significant implications for collegiality, learning, and change evolved. The collaborative model of Book Talk supported the new paradigm of professional development that promotes collegial interaction, continuous learning, and building a community of teachers who are both learners and experts.

Book Talk teachers reported that significant professional development is limited in the current organization of schools because social, political, cultural, and structural influences invade the professional context of teachers and can impede professional development. These influences surround the teachers'
understandings that: 1) Teachers work in isolation; 2) Teachers are pressured by time; 3) Teachers are subordinates, thus outsiders of the educational context control teachers, their work, their knowledge, and their development; 4) Teachers teach from mandates and prescriptions, thereby automating teachers' practice; 5) Teachers are expected to meet society's demands, hence teachers' roles are expanding; 6) Teachers lack power, and in return teachers' voices are silenced and teachers are ignored in the educational context.

Findings of this inquiry indicate that several changes must occur to enable teachers to assume a greater role in the professional development context: 1) A change in relations of power in the educational context, 2) A structural change in schools, teaching, and learning, 3) A change in the organizational schedule of the teaching day, and 4) A change towards teacher-generated learning for all teachers - veteran teachers and future candidates.
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all those who continue to teach and will one day teach because they care, believe in children, and spread optimism in the educational setting. This dissertation is especially dedicated to the participating teachers who are truly jacks-of-all-trades. I am proud to be their colleague.
This inquiry explored one group of teachers' experiences in an innovative professional development opportunity and its implications for understanding and defining professional development. This study further examined professional development and its relationship with the school's organizational structure. Through a qualitative, teacher research methodology, with a phenomenological orientation, I gathered descriptions of the participating teachers' experiences directly from those teachers in my dual roles of teacher and researcher at my site (Doerr & Tinto, 1999; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Van Manen, 1990; Ulichny & Schoener, 2000). This inquiry emerged from my own professional development participation in a teacher collaboration known as Book Talk. Book Talk and its collaborative model supported the new paradigm of professional development that promotes collegial interaction, continuous learning, and building a community of teachers who are both learners and experts (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Holmes Group, 1995; Matlin & Short, 1992; NFIE, 1996; Senge et al., 2000).

Book Talk was a site-based, teacher-directed initiative designed to break the common isolation and develop collegiality among teachers. Unique to this professional development model was its design. The Book Talk model of
professional development promoted a collaborative environment, in which teachers developed trust to share and work together to inquire about children's literature. Book Talk supported the growing number of researchers who consider professional development as a process that should be self-directed (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Kennedy, 1990; Nystrand, 1991).

However, Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) recognize that "although teacher development, cooperation, and empowerment may be the talk that trickles down from state and local administrators, centralization and standardization constitute the given path on which teachers find they now walk" (p. 4). Currently, lawmakers, policymakers, the Board of Education, and administrators participate and contribute to creating and defining professional development because professional development occurs within the organizational context of schooling (Caldwell, 1997; Day, 1997; Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996). Because the Book Talk model was employed within the immediate context of the school and its organizational structure, this inquiry examined professional development in light of the teachers' immediate context, which was significantly influenced by the school's organizational structure. A formal definition of the school's organizational structure is described in the Definition of Terms found in Appendix B.

Book Talk was created in response to the school's participation in an Annenberg Grant titled, Project TEAM (Teachers Engaged as Mentors). Appendix F provides a copy of the Grant Proposal, in which all school names
have been omitted to assure anonymity. The history, purpose, and organization of Project TEAM are provided at this point to give the reader a context for understanding the origin and focus of Book Talk. My role and relationship with the Annenberg Grant and the context of my inquiry are also described to identify the teacher-researcher of a qualitative, teacher research study.

Background of the Annenberg Grant

Project TEAM was a four-year program that relied on the internal resources of the school and the professional teaching staff for reorganization and revitalization of instruction. It utilized “external resources to assist teachers, principals, and parents to build on existing strengths and to mobilize all constituents to make the greatest possible effort to improve the learning environment of the school not just during the regular school day, but all day long” (Appendix F, p. 7).

The main objective of the program was to consistently reduce the percentage of students achieving below grade level. Specifically, it addressed the areas of reading, writing, language arts, mathematics and science according to priorities of the school’s School Improvement Plan (SIP). This objective was met through curriculum alignment and improving instruction.

The four main goals of the grant were: 1) breaking teacher isolation, 2) restructuring time, 3) reducing class size, and 4) creating systemic change. According to the Annenberg Grant, “sustained systemic change is most likely to
occur when teachers are empowered to direct change” (Appendix F, p. 14). Project TEAM was based on the premise that breaking the isolation between teachers is necessary to improve practice. To meet the goal of breaking teacher isolation, teachers engaged in collaborative opportunities to extend their educational experience, knowledge, and practice within the teaching culture. The focus of the grant encouraged teachers to continue their professional development and to share their expertise with other teachers through team meetings, study groups, and mentoring activities.

Project TEAM was introduced to teachers at my school during a meeting on a final day of the 1996-97 school year. The instructional coordinator and principal, who partially authored the grant proposal, briefly explained the purpose of Project TEAM and its opportunity to employ grant money for teachers' professional development. The administration was asking for teachers' suggestions and input in organizing professional development activities for the following school year. I, a classroom teacher of ten years, was not accustomed to making decisions about my own professional development practices or how to spend grant money, especially in matters of professional development. My colleagues also expressed the same state of confusion. Looking back now, it was ironic, and telling, that teachers did not have any role in the grant's inception or even a rudimentary understanding of the grant, although the grant was developed for teachers. This key point will be taken up later in Chapter V.
After the meeting, I was asked by the instructional coordinator to prepare a lesson to share with other teachers for the beginning of the new school year, and she informed me that a stipend would be provided for my preparation time. As I thought about her request, numerous lessons flashed before me, as did the fear of describing a lesson to other teachers. Although I had plenty of lessons to share and I had known my colleagues for the past three years, I did not have the experience and practice in sharing with other teachers. Her request was unique to my usual teacher duties, and I had never been paid for any type of preparation time.

The grant budget allowed for teacher participants of professional development activities to receive a stipend of ten dollars per hour. All participation in professional development activities as implemented by the Annenberg Grant was voluntary, as well as paid. Usually, teachers are not paid to participate in professional development activities, so it was necessary to examine Book Talk teachers' motivation for their participation, which will be taken up later in Chapter VI. I appreciated the fact that I was going to be paid for sharing my lesson with other teachers, and I agreed to do it. At the beginning of the new school year, five teachers, including myself, shared their lessons with the faculty on a Board of Education designated professional development day. The teachers and their lessons defined the professional development day because the Annenberg Grant provided the opportunity for teachers to direct the
professional development day as a result of the school's obligation to the goals of the grant.

The Annenberg Grant also provided external resources to the school by creating a university partnership. To focus on the goal of improving reading at my site, two university reading specialists visited the school on a weekly basis for the first year of the grant's implementation. The first visit was an information sharing-session that informed the specialists of our teacher interests and needs. The specialists were passionate about adolescent literature and began introducing us to various junior level novels and authors. We, the reading specialists and the teachers, including myself, collectively decided to read and discuss a junior novel for our next session. We agreed to continue our professional development through an informal, weekly book club, which became known as Book Talk. Little did I know at this time that Book Talk would become the focus of this inquiry and my colleagues would become the participants.

Book Talk met weekly before school on Fridays from 8:00-9:00 and was consistently attended throughout its four years by an average of nine teachers, including myself. The participants of this inquiry included four teachers and the instructional coordinator who most frequently participated in Book Talk. The participants, who formed and represented a group, are referred to as Book Talk teachers throughout the text. Prior to Book Talk, my relationship with these teachers could be described as cordial, semi-professional, or non-existent. As Book Talk progressed, a respectful, professional, collegial, and personal
relationship developed. The members of Book Talk, my colleagues, and this specific collaborative, teacher-directed professional development model at my site are the focus of this study.

Even though the Annenberg Grant was initiated by the administration, Book Talk was created by teachers for teachers. Book Talk was multi-level, cross-curricular, and sought to familiarize awareness of good children's literature and children's authors. We, the teachers and myself, informally shared and exchanged information and experiences related to children's novels and teaching practices. Hence, Book Talk evolved as a teacher-generated discussion.

The following discussion supports the call for innovative, collaborative professional development models to assist teachers in their learning and growth. The unique features of Book Talk, coupled with the importance of understanding professional development from teachers' perspectives, make this inquiry a timely and significant study.

Significance

This study is significant in three ways. First, the study offers an opportunity to examine an innovative professional development model with unique features. Second, the study addresses the paucity of specific studies available that focus on teachers' reflections and involvement in professional development models. Third, the design of the study allows the participating
teachers to contribute their voices to the current literature about professional development.

Some suggest that a major problem with U.S. education is the gap that exists between educational policy makers and classroom practice (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; McLaughlin, 1997; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998; Spillane, 1994; Ulichny, 1997). Lortie (1975), in his sociological study, *Schoolteacher*, also recognized the gap that exists between the possible, which is proposed by policy, and the actual, which is carried out by teachers, and pointed to the importance of this issue for further concentrated inquiry. He recommended the need for "greater adaptability, more effective colleague relationships, and more sharing in issues of knowledge and expertise" (p. 221) for teachers, and these recommendations from over twenty-five years ago are still just that - recommendations, not realizations for some teachers.

Although most people now agree that teachers need opportunities for professional development, there is a multitude of knowledge and perspectives about the process by which teachers actually learn to improve teaching (Grant & Murray, 1999; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Morley, 1999). Furthermore, Hiebert & Stigler (1999) recognize that an obstacle to teachers' growth and learning has resulted from the ineffective professional development models normally employed and the lack of professional development models needed to change. In the traditional view of professional development, some models "seem to consist primarily of occasional short
workshops and rarely rise above a superficial level of learning" (Fullan, 1991; Griffin, 1991; Little, 1992; Lortie, 1975, p. 234).

Traditional professional development is commonly delivered from a deficit model that is based on the notion that a teacher has a deficit in some area or skill (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Day, 1997; Friesen, 1993). Training fills in the deficit by providing technical instruction, which is delivered to groups of teachers in settings removed from the school. Historically, inservice developers are not responsive to the needs and feedback of classroom teachers regarding the effectiveness of professional development based on the deficit model (Griffin, 1991; Hargreaves, 1997a; Lieberman, 1995). As a result, according to Fullan (1991), “nothing has promised so much and has been frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that lead to no significant change in practice when teachers returned to their classrooms” (p. 315).

A new professional development paradigm has emerged in which professional development is viewed as a complex process that entails much more than learning a series of skills or techniques. Professional development in this view provides opportunities for teachers to share with one another what they learn, actively engage in experiences with others over time, reflect on their practice, and connect their learning to the context of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Matlin & Short, 1992). Teachers need professional development that supports the adult-as-a-learner
while teachers are embedded in the world of teaching (Renyi, 1998; Sparks & Richardson, 1997; Sprinthall et al., 1996).

Professional development as inquiry into practice involves "learning from teaching" as opposed to "learning about teaching" (Zumwalt, 1988, p. 205). This approach privileges teachers as the primary knowledge generators of their profession (Hess, 1994; Lampert, 1999; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Thus, sharing teachers' knowledge through the vehicle of collaboration is viewed as one of the major frameworks for the new paradigm of professional development (Howey & Collinson, 1995; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; NCES, 1999).

Collaboration can be a powerful learning tool to engage professionals in collective work, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (1999). As a result of collaboration, teachers learn new ideas and have the support within the school to incorporate useful concepts in their classroom. Collaboration allows teachers to go beyond their own classrooms to engage in professional discourse about their own experiences and the experiences of others (Clandinin et al., 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Little, 1992). In the new paradigm of professional development, teachers' professional development is conceived as a supportive and educative community engaged in dialogic learning, which collaboration has the potential to create (Blase & Blase, 1998; Bullough & Gitlin, 1989; Howey & Collinson, 1995; Teitel, 1997).

Currently, there are several major problems confronting researchers in the
field of professional development. First, there are a limited number of cases of
innovative professional development in practice to study. A majority of proposed
professional development models occur in individual schools and as a result,
models tend to be isolated and narrow in scope. When studying these models,
researchers have problems with replications of studies for the purpose of
validating model success. Second, there is an absence of time for longitudinal
studies of those models in practice to examine their effectiveness. Third, little
has been done to examine the reflections of teachers regarding their experiences
and involvement in professional development models and this limitation is
addressed by carrying out this inquiry.

Among the literature available on professional development, there have
been a limited number of studies reporting teachers’ feedback about their
involvement in professional development models (NFIE, 1996; Ulichny, 1997).
When teachers are referenced, researchers have tended to offer descriptive
accounts of teacher activities, but not the actual experiences or professional
growth reported by teachers (Doerr & Tinto, 1999; Gordon, 1995). Thus,
teachers’ voices and their knowledge are limited in discussions surrounding
professional development (Fichtman Dana, 1994; Gitlin, 2000; Tompkins, 1996;

Since teacher participation in professional development is meant to
influence the way teachers think about their teaching and improve their practice,
it seems reasonable, as well as necessary, that to understand the limitations and
possibilities of a professional development model, the first step is to look at the reflections of the people most directly impacted by that model, the teachers. To do this, research needs to work within a phenomenological theoretical framework that values data generated by people affected by a given situation (Van Manen, 1990). My inquiry is context and content specific to the experiences of the participating teachers and explores teacher perspectives of professional development through Book Talk teachers' voices. Thus, this inquiry is not an attempt to evaluate the success of the Book Talk model at my site or to offer the model as an example of a preferred model of professional development. Rather, it is a study of the phenomena of Book Talk, a collaborative, teacher-directed professional development model, implemented in my individual school over a period of time.

This study attempts to understand professional development as teachers understand professional development, and to apply those understandings, so that teachers may engage in significant professional development and contribute to the discussion surrounding it. The following discussion provides an overview of Chapters II-VI and Appendix A.

**Book Talk, Professional Development, and Teacher Research: An Overview of this Manuscript**

In Chapter II, the Literature Review explores professional development as it is discussed in school reform literature, especially related to discussions
surrounding teacher quality reform. Models of professional development are described and a new paradigm of professional development that fosters teachers' contribution to the professional knowledge base of teaching is offered. Furthermore, collaboration is discussed as a professional development opportunity that promotes collegiality and learning, which is inherent in the change process. In the final discussion of Chapter II the literature on change is explored to clarify the reality of change in the teacher's professional context and the context of professional development.

This inquiry responds to the lack of teacher voices and perspectives about professional development and supports the teachers' understanding of professional development by employing the teacher research methodology, which is inherent to this inquiry and explored in depth in Chapter III. Teacher research is "an inquiry conducted on a particular issue of current concern, usually undertaken by those directly involved in a specific situation" (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995, p.110). Some claim that in contrast to traditional forms of research, the teacher researcher has the advantage of being able to understand local meanings, language norms, and practices because of his/her direct and immediate experiences (Doerr & Tinto, 1999; Patterson et al., 1993; Ulichny, 1997). This advantage enables me to share teacher perspectives of professional development in the language of teachers and help articulate the voices of teachers, which appear to be lacking from traditional forms of educational research (Cooper, 1988; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993).
A qualitative, teacher research design was selected to best collect the experiences of the participants, and a phenomenological approach served as the theoretical orientation because "phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of everyday experience" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 9). Teacher research methodology was employed because it links self and everyday practices in the local context of schooling (Lampert, 1999; Patterson et al., Wells, 1995).

The Annenberg Grant Project TEAM, my participation in Book Talk, and their influences on my own professional development have led me to this inquiry and furthered my understanding of professional development. My consciousness of the phenomena of Book Talk dialogue was raised and informed by my colleagues as I participated in the informal collaboration. A study that employs the phenomenological method of research, according to Merriam (1998), relies on intuition of the phenomena. Thus, it is my position as both researcher and teacher that allows the inquiry to emerge and informs the inquiry. My roles as a Book Talk member and witness to the phenomenon of Book Talk, and my role as a graduate student provided the basis for pursuing this study. Both my roles, as well as the participants, inform the inquiry, thereby making the research relevant not only for this inquiry, but for the Book Talk teachers at my site.

The site is a Chicago public, elementary school, renamed Marylin School for the purpose of this study. Marylin School is located in a developing community that is home to various levels of socioeconomic status and multi-
ethnic groups. This is reflected in the school's ethnically diverse student population. The school contains grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and houses 650 students and 40 instructional staff members².

Qualitative data was collected at my site from the group of five participants involved in Book Talk during the fourth and final year of Project TEAM. I used methods of interviews, journals, documents, site observations, and participation and observation in Book Talk, in addition to continually examining and reflecting on my role as teacher-researcher. Qualitative teacher research relies on thick description and recognizing the influence of the role of the teacher-researcher, and qualitative research is a process that changes as themes emerge from ongoing inquiry (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wolcott, 1997). In the analysis of the experiences, those descriptions, common and unique to the participants, are identified (Patton, 1990). The researcher then articulates the structures of meaning embedded in the teachers' collective experiences (Van Manen, 1990). Recurring themes, as well as distinctive themes, were examined to search for implications about these teachers' experiences in this professional development model, Book Talk. This is further explored in Chapter III.

The purpose of Chapters IV, V, and VI is to present an analysis of the data collected during the inquiry into how Book Talk teachers' experienced professional development. The purpose is also to provide an account of their voices and its significance in professional development. Teachers' voices arose
from discourse in Book Talk, and in interviews. The term “discourse" should be understood in the sense described by Lewis and Simon (1986). They state: “Discourse refers to particular ways of organizing meaning-making practices. Discourse as a mode of governance delimits the range of possible practices under its authority and organizes the articulation of these practices within time and space although differently and often unequally for different people. Such governance delimits fields of relevance and definitions of legitimate perspectives and fixes norms for concept elaboration and the expression of experience” (1986, 457-58). Discourse refers to the type of language used in a particular context, and describes a process of constructing and communicating self-understanding and of making experience intelligible and meaningful (Chase, 1995). Teachers had increased opportunities for discourse as a result of Book Talk and this inquiry, and it is their discourse that informs data analysis.

The Results of Data Analysis is organized into three chapters that address the following queries. First, I inquired about the nature of the participating teachers’ previous experiences with professional development and Book Talk, and the implications of those experiences. Second to that query, I solicited teachers’ perspectives about the influence of the school’s organizational structure on the reality in which professional development occurred.

The first chapter of The Results of Data Analysis, Chapter IV, sets the context for understanding professional development in the reality of teachers’ professional context. Book Talk teachers’ realities are described in depth to
address the secondary investigation of research and analysis, and their discourse exposes realities that influence the teachers’ work and growth, thus complicating and sometimes impeding learning and change. The participating teachers commonly encounter professional contradictions and curricular conflicts in their working context. Professional contradictions can result from the influence of authority and outside direction over the teachers’ professional context, including the professional knowledge base of teaching. The common isolation of teachers, the formalization of the school, the hierarchy of authority, and teachers’ limited participation in decision-making contribute to contradictions in and for their work. The outside direction over the participating teachers’ work is evident in curricular policy. According to Book Talk teachers, prescriptive teaching and learning and classroom and student realities contribute to curricular conflicts for these teachers. Book Talk teachers continually make choices for curriculum to account for their realities and the influence of curricular policy in the teaching and learning context. The contradictions and conflicts of teachers’ professional context contribute to the reality of their practice as well as the reality of their professional development context.

Chapter V examines Book Talk teachers’ definitions, understandings, perspectives, and experiences of professional development. The participating teachers discuss their experiences of professional development and in doing so, the teachers themselves, create a definition of professional development. These teachers cite collegiality, continuous learning, and change as significant
implications of professional development. However, the teachers often participate in traditional and deficit models of professional development, and the teachers agree that it is commonly an ineffective professional development experience (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; NFIE, 1996). Fortunately, the teachers recognize the opportunity for Book Talk, facilitated by the Annenberg Grant, as a unique, teacher-directed professional development experience that impacted their understanding of professional development.

The final chapter of the Results of Data Analysis, Chapter VI, describes Book Talk as a significant professional development experience of the participating teachers’ professional context that supports the new paradigm of professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Day, 1997; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Holmes Group, 1995; Lieberman, 1995; McLaughlin, 1997). Book Talk is examined as an opportunity for collegiality, learning, and change. Because teachers had the opportunity to direct Book Talk and generate the discourse, Book Talk became a place to examine the realities of teachers' professional context, as well as a place to engage in a significant professional development experience. The teachers’ discourse specifically illuminates the reality of social influences on schooling, such as changes in society and a lack of parent responsibility. Book Talk teachers recognize that social influences contribute to the expansion of teachers' roles and responsibilities, thereby creating social tensions in their work, and contributing to the reality of their
professional context. Uniquely the participating teachers also recognize that the opportunity for Book Talk and its discourse offers support to teachers as they encounter social demands in their professional context.

As the participating teachers presented details of the context of professional development, they were describing the reality of professional development. The reality is Book Talk teachers face obstacles to professional development in their working context, and this reality and recommendations for change based on this reality, are explored in the Conclusion in Chapter VII. The participating teachers conceptualized and constructed their realities, and their realities were demanding, as a result of the professional contradictions, curricular conflicts, and social tensions of their work. Primarily, because teachers' subordinate position in a hierarchy of authority and the influences of outsiders in positions of power limit promoting collegiality or "building the intellectual capacity of teachers" (Lortie, 1975, p. 56), the school's organizational structure contributes to restricting, rather than enhancing professional development. Thus, one recommended change discussed in the Conclusion surrounds changing the organizational structure of schools to recognize the centrality of teachers in professional development efforts.

The final discussion of this inquiry, found in Appendix A, is a reflexive account capturing the implications of the teacher research process. The Reflexive Account provides a space to reflect on the significance of the opportunity for a teacher research inquiry in the lives of the participants and
myself. I particularly analyze field notes and my reflections from interviews to describe the opportunity for reflection, professional development, and change as a result of teacher research. Appendix A also provides a space to reflect on my dual roles as teacher and researcher, and illuminates details surrounding the context of my inquiry. Because the teacher-researcher is an insider, it is possible that the direct experiences of the teacher-researcher can distort perspective, cloud judgment, and overestimate the importance of various factors, thus the act of continual and recorded reflection throughout data collection is significant and inherent to the teacher research process. The Reflexive Account of this inquiry also strengthens the validity and reliability of my findings by providing a description of the interview context and a deeper understanding of the relationship between the participants and myself (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Stephens & Meyer Reimer, 1993).

Cooper (1988) recommends supporting professional development by examining “how things really happen in schools” (p. 45). She suggests, “we not impose solutions and that we recognize that outside-looking in is different from inside-looking around” (p. 45). Thus, teacher research and my position as teacher-researcher allowed me to be an insider looking around and ensured observations and analysis that arose directly from firsthand experiences of Book Talk teachers. Teacher research was successful in understanding the language these teachers used, which sometimes can be misunderstood or misinterpreted by outsiders looking in (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Doerr & Tinto, 1999;
Ulichny & Schoener, 1996; 2000). Through my position as teacher-researcher, I was able to understand the perspectives and realities of the Book Talk teachers' context, and the implications of these realities for professional development by describing how things really happen in schools. The teachers' realities clearly influenced their professional development context, as well as contributed to their understanding of professional development.

To gain insight into perspectives surrounding professional development, it is necessary to understand the multiple meanings and implications of professional development within existing educational literature. The following literature review explores professional development as it is discussed in school reform literature and teacher education literature, and focuses on three points for discussion. They are: 1) Teacher Quality Reform, 2) Understanding Professional Development, and 3) Change in an Era of Reform.
Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This inquiry explores the nature of a group of teachers' experiences in a teacher-directed professional development opportunity (Book Talk) and the implications of those experiences. This inquiry further explores Book Talk teachers' professional development experiences in light of the school's organizational structure. A review of literature surrounding professional development provides a theoretical base to examine the Book Talk teachers' experiences and discourse.

Professional development is an ambiguous term, which serves multiple purposes, definitions, objectives, implications, and goals. Teachers participate in formal, informal, traditional, mandated, and teacher-directed professional development. Professional development can be associated with teachers' development of knowledge applied to practice, as well as a means for teachers to comply with directives of policy-makers and administrators, according to Darling-Hammond (1996). Professional development is defined by the orientation and direction of the professional development opportunity.

This literature review focuses on three main points for discussion surrounding professional development. First, professional development is recognized as a school reform effort that attempts to address teacher quality. In
this discussion, reforms in both teacher education and teacher certification are
discussed, as well as a restructuring of teacher education programs from a
training-based model to a participatory, field-based model. As a result of reform
efforts surrounding teacher education and certification, professional development
has also been reconceptualized, as evident in the development of professional
development schools (PDS), mentoring programs, and the new paradigm of
professional development, which is explored in depth in the second discussion of
the literature review.

The second point for discussion focuses on understanding professional
development and describes implications of professional development, recognizes
deficit models of professional development, and offers a new paradigm of
professional development that promotes teachers' contribution to the
professional knowledge base of teaching and to their professional context. The
new paradigm of professional development promotes collegiality and continuous
learning and heralds collaboration as a meaningful professional development
practice, thereby, reconceptualizing professional development

In the final discussion of the literature review, professional development is
discussed in light of the literature on change and is recommended as an agent
for change. The literature on change illuminates the reality of teachers'
professional context, thus the context for professional development, and exposes
the obstacles teachers face that complicate change. Currently, some change
efforts involve standardized reform and bureaucratic control of schools, and as a
result, teachers are unmotivated to change because they are required to adapt change efforts in their classrooms (Brooks, 1991; Cohen, 1996; Howe, 1995). To better bring about change, the literature recommends changing the culture of schools by providing time and support for teachers to engage in collegial and collaborative practices because teachers are central to change (Hargreaves & Evans et al., 1997; Hess, 1994; Holmes, Group, 1995; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Lipman, 1998; NFIE, 1996).

There have been numerous reform practices instituted to bring about change, which address the issue of teacher quality. In the following discussion, teacher quality reform is not only reviewed in the literature, but also in the Chicago Union Teacher bimonthly newspaper, a non-academic source, however, one of the main sources that informs teachers about their professional context.

**Teacher Quality Reform**

According to the National Commission of Teaching and America's Future, NCTAF (1996), teachers' knowledge and their practice make a crucial difference in what children learn. As schools are being required to meet more and higher academic standards for student learning, teachers are sometimes forced to meet these academic requirements by making changes to their teaching practice (Brooks, 1991; Cohen 1996; Kohn, 1999; NCES, 1999). As such, school reform agendas have included efforts that focus on teacher quality, and teachers, either
directly or indirectly, are the focus of many current reform efforts. Teacher quality is often addressed by reform in teacher education programs, professional development, and certification.

The White House attributes the lack of quality teachers to the ineffectiveness of teacher education programs and certification processes, and proposes an additional budget for teacher preparation (Chicago Union Teacher, 1999). According to a study conducted by NCTAF (1996), increasing funding for teacher education had the greatest impact on student achievement, more than increasing teacher salaries and lowering the pupil/teacher ratio. It is proposed that teaching must be provided with a better means for preparing new teachers and for continuing the professional development of teachers.

Initiatives, from such organizations as the American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association, also focus on enhancing teacher quality by improving training and recruiting, as well as developing peer assistance and offering support to practicing teachers (Rose, 1998). Thus, as teacher education programs restructure to meet the demands of teacher quality, professional development is also changing. This discussion explores the context of teacher quality reform by examining teacher education and its relationship with professional development. Teacher quality is further described in light of certification reforms, such as state licensure for Illinois (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000) and National Board Standards (NBPTS, 1994).
Reforms in Teacher Education

In an era of reform, critics often depict teacher education programs as "both the cause of all school problems and the source of many of its solutions" (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996, p. 705). The National Center for Education Statistics (1999) reports that more than one third of beginning teachers leave the profession within the first five years, and according to Rose (1998), that is because teachers are often times unprepared to meet the tasks of classroom management and the diverse needs of students. In Rose's (1998) perspective, the teacher turnover rates suggest that few programs sufficiently prepare new teachers for the classroom context.

In traditional teacher education programs, educational research offers a body of knowledge, which university experts teach to teacher candidates. Many teacher education programs consist of a collection of separated courses in which theory is presented without much connection to practice (Barone et al., 1996; Griffin, 1994; Smylie & Kahne, 1997). Teacher education programs emphasize a knowledge base, but only provide limited time and space to apply the knowledge base, such as in fragmented clinical observations or the traditional semester-long student teaching programs (AFT, 2000; Andrew, 1990; Darling-Hammond, 1999). According to Korthagen & Kessels (1999), "the traditional approach to teacher education appears to be rather ineffective and is currently being replaced by other, more reflective approaches" (p. 4). A new paradigm of teacher education promotes reflective teaching through an ongoing process of experiencing,
reflecting, and sharing with a mentor or expert teacher in the context of teaching (Griffin, 1994; Haycock, 1998; Holmes Group, 1996; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Nesbitt Vacc & Bright, 1994; Zeichner, Melnick, & Gomez, 1996).

As the pedagogy of teacher education changes to link theory and practice, teacher education programs are also changing to incorporate more field-based experiences. The current restructuring of teacher education programs focuses on greater collaboration between schools and universities to give pre-service teachers the knowledge, skills, and experience that they will need in the classroom (Griffin, 1999; Haycock, 1998; Rose, 1998; Zeichner, Melnick, & Gomez, 1996). Exemplary teacher education programs concentrate on content from both the arts and sciences, provide greater clinical experience, and concern themselves with ongoing professional development by building a partnership with local schools (Baratz-Snowden, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Teitel, 1997; Timpane & White, 1998).

To reach these goals, some universities are instituting programs that allow education professors to divide their time between work at local schools and work at the university, according to Frieberg & Waxman (1990). Other universities have developed new teacher education programs that utilize experienced teachers as mentors and increase fieldwork experiences for teacher candidates (Furlong, 2000; Holmes Group, 1996; Kagan, 1993). Furthermore, over three hundred public and private universities, such as the University of Virginia, University of California at Berkley, and Trinity University in San Antonio, have
organized a five-year teacher education program, in which a teacher candidate conducts a yearlong internship in a classroom (Andrew, 1990; Baratz-Snowden, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1999). The internship becomes a collaborative effort between the university and the school and is significant to the teacher candidates, the mentor teachers, the university professors, and the local school.

One of the most significant results brought about by the restructuring of teacher education programs is the Professional Development School (PDS). The PDS offers a place to improve teacher education by using the teachers and the school as tools to assist in the study and development of teacher knowledge and learning. The PDS houses innovative programs for teacher candidates to engage in classroom practice, reflect on their experiences, and connect theory to practice by developing relationships with both quality classroom teachers and university education professors (Abdal Haqq, 1999; Book, 1996; Nystrand, 1991; Teitel, 1997).

Teacher candidates who are placed at Professional Development Schools have the opportunity to share their experiences and concerns, and receive immediate feedback about their experiences. Teachers of the PDS participate in a process of continual improvement and enhance their practice by engaging in mentoring and collaborative activities. These opportunities are the foundation of the PDS, affording both new and experienced teachers the opportunity for learning and collegial support.
Nuebert & Binko (1998) conducted a study of the efficacy of a secondary Professional Development School to see if the performance of teacher candidates would improve by their participation in an internship. Their study resulted from a Maryland state mandate, which required universities to provide a yearlong internship for teacher candidates in a specifically designed model of a PDS. Results from the study determined that teacher candidates of the PDS were performing at a competent level, while teachers of the control group were performing minimally. Their analysis of surveys and interviews showed that the teacher candidates had positive experiences in the PDS, and the opportunity impacted positively on the PDS by enhancing relevant professional development opportunities on site for teachers.

The PDS is “a collaborative, reciprocal arrangement, which can individualize professional development for teachers” (Nuebert & Binko, p. 46), as it involves everyone in the process (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Levine & Trachtman, 1997; Mantle-Bromley, 1998). The Professional Development School is a valuable model and tool for both the reform and development of teacher education and professional development, and is further explored in the following section of this chapter.

Reconceptualizing Professional Development

Bearden (1990) asserts that “if students are to continue to learn and improve, then teachers must continue to grow and improve also” (p. 11). Just as
teacher education programs are being reformed to better prepare teachers for the classroom context, professional development is also being revised to aid teachers in making changes in their current teaching practices. The foundations of the Professional Development School, such as mentoring, reflection, and support, not only reflect a change in teacher education, but represent a new paradigm of professional development. Professional development opportunities such as peer coaching, practitioner research, reflective practice, and teacher initiated professional development models are being implemented to support teachers who must adapt and learn new ways of teaching and learning. Teachers engage in peer observations, share student work with grade-level teams, and share in the development of their practice as their colleagues support them (Day, 1997; Lieberman, 1988; McLaughlin, 1997).

Currently, teachers feel a lack of support offered to those who are struggling in the classroom. The absence of a support system contributed to one of the top two factors of the problem of poor teacher quality, second to low salaries and poor working conditions (Hart, 1997). Many mentoring programs such as New York City Peer Intervention Program or Teachers Need Teachers (TNT), are now being developed in schools to support teachers during their first year of teaching (Grant & Murray, 1999; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Lick, 2000; Phipps, 2001). These programs, commonly found in districts in Cincinnati, Columbus, Rochester, and Toledo, rely on veteran teachers to evaluate and
provide assistance to first year, struggling teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Gonzales & Sosa, 1993; Kochan & Trimble, 2000).

Some mentoring programs involve pairing up with a teacher-on site, while others have been organized around continuous veteran teacher visits during the first year of teaching (Furlong, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Schlechty, 1990). Regardless of the structure of the program, the objective focuses on implementing mentor teachers to identify problems or needs of the new teacher and create a plan for improvement. The mentor teacher plays the role of consultant and provides knowledge, guidance, and support, as well as offers modeling and evaluation. Thus, struggling teachers seek help from mentoring programs and develop a trusting, collegial relationship. Schools in New York that implemented a mentor program demonstrated that more than three quarters of struggling teachers go on to achieve satisfactory ratings by the end of their first school year, reduce struggles, and stay in the teaching profession (Phipps, 2001; Rose, 1998).

Mentoring can be a tool for teacher education reform, as well as to enhance teacher quality, but it is most significantly viewed as a supportive professional development experience (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Jipson & Paley, 2000; Lick, 2000). Mentoring supports the new paradigm of professional development by providing an opportunity for reflecting, sharing, and developing insights about one's practice. Mentoring not only assists beginning and struggling teachers, but practicing and veteran teachers as well, by engaging
teachers in conversations and observations that can serve as a source of knowledge, ideas, and support.

Professional development programs, such as in Dade County, Florida, offer ongoing opportunities for mentoring, reflecting, research, and growth by involving teachers in a nine-week professional development experience, in which teachers participate in research projects, observe classrooms, attend workshops, and work daily with a mentoring teacher (Dade County Schools, 1996). Teachers of Dade County cite the professional development opportunity as a way to deal with the isolating experience of teaching by creating linkages to someone who knows a great deal about teaching—a teacher (Rose, 1998). In this view, the new paradigm of professional development represents a support system that assists teachers in "keeping pace with the constant changes in society and the current demands in education" (Crowther, 1998, p. 75).

Reforms in Teacher Certification

Professional development holds great promise for improving teacher quality, however, professional development must be significant for teachers. The significance of professional development cannot be created for teachers, as it is with some certification processes involving professional development. The following discussion explores two types of certification that have been developed to address teacher quality. They are voluntary, National Board Certification and mandated, state certification. Both certification processes require participating in
professional development to qualify for certification, however their understanding of professional development for teachers differs.

National Board Certification (NBC), founded by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), is a yearlong process involving reflection, peer feedback, coaching, and most importantly, learning. The certification experience allows teachers to examine their practice and improve instruction for students by meeting teacher-made, set standards. The process provides an opportunity to challenge teachers to think about their work, their practice, their subject matter, and their students. As teachers reflect on their practice by completing NBC, they are engaged in professional development that promotes learning for their individual practices and their specific contexts.

National Board Certification, which is a voluntary certification process, evaluates teachers' knowledge and performance based on professional judgment made by teachers. Teachers involved in NBC develop a professional growth portfolio while continually reflecting on and evaluating their practice. Practicing teachers from across the country, who are trained in a uniform procedure to assess the teachers' work, evaluate and validate the portfolio. NBC is a demonstration of one's teaching practice in a discipline against high and rigorous standards influenced by teachers (Chicago Union Teacher, 1998; NBPTS, 1994). National Board Certification is heralded as a significant professional development opportunity, as well as a step to improving teacher quality because it allows the profession to set standards, create meaningful performance assessments, and
identify experienced teachers who meet the standards (Rose, 1998). NBC redefines professional development for teachers by placing teachers in control of their learning and provides an opportunity for teachers to contribute to professional development.

In his State of the Union Address in February 1997, President Clinton assured that by the year 2000 there would be a National Board certified teacher in every district. To this day, that goal has not yet been reached, however, teachers' participation in National Board Certification has been increasing. NBC is now recognized in most states, and some school districts are offering cost assistance and pay incentives for teachers to complete National Board Certification (Rose, 1999). However, in an article in the Chicago Union Teacher, written by both an NBPTS member and a Chicago Union Teacher member, they caution that seeking National Board Certification for monetary rewards is “doing the right thing for the wrong reason” (Cherkasky-Davis and Bearden, 1999, p. 11). Self-improvement and valuable professional development are the rewards of NBC, not monetary gain.

Although NBC addresses teacher quality and engages teachers in significant professional development, NBC has little significance for CPS teachers' practice because Illinois State Recertification demands precedence in their professional context and defines professional development for teachers. As of January 1, 1999, a new Illinois state law was passed in response to reform efforts surrounding teacher quality that impacted teachers' licensure,
recertification, and continuing professional development. Recertification surrounds state licensing, which sets the entry-level standards for beginning teachers, as well as the requirements for practicing teachers. Thus, teachers are required by law to comply with Recertification for a continuing license to teach. The legislation, which contained the recertification provision, requires that a standard teaching license must be renewed after five years and this may be achieved by participating in designated professional development to meet professional objectives by accumulating professional development points (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000, p. 1). Teachers are provided with a list of appropriate professional development activities, and not all professional development activities are accepted under the state law, hence professional development is defined, directed, and dictated by policymakers, rather than teachers.

Under the law, teachers must create and get approval of a Certificate Renewal Plan, which is reviewed, approved, and monitored by a Local Professional Development Committee, consisting of “three classroom teachers, the superintendent, and one parent, business, or community leader” (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000, p. 6). Teachers' participation on the Local Professional Development Committee describes the extent of teacher influence and control in the recertification process. Illinois State Recertification addresses teacher quality and professional development by controlling teachers' rights to practice and opportunities to learn (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000). In this view of
professional development, according to Popkewitz & Brennan (1994), teachers have limited opportunities to contribute their knowledge, experience and understanding to professional development.

Ironically, the same law that addresses teacher quality by directing teachers' professional development has the potential to reduce teacher quality by providing "alternative certification for a teaching license to anyone with a college degree" (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000, p. 3, Darling-Hammond, 1999; Feldman, 1998; Ingersoll, 1999). Personnel hired for a teaching position by alternative certification usually have little or no educational coursework or experience, and according to Feldman (1998) this creates a "structural teacher quality deficit" (p. 6). Alternative certification or emergency licensure often results from and addresses the problem of teacher shortages, and does not meaningfully contribute to the context of teachers' professional development and practice. Multiple points of entry into teacher preparation exist and not all alternative certification programs contribute to a quality deficit in teaching. However, because teacher quality is concerned with teacher competence, "even one incompetent teacher is too much for the good of our profession" (Feldman, 1998, p. 5).

Although the Illinois State law surrounding Recertification addresses teacher quality by requiring teachers to participate in professional development opportunities, it weakens the profession by limiting teachers' opportunities to contribute to professional development and by sometimes allowing untrained and
inexperienced personnel into the classrooms. National Board Certification, on the other hand, strengthens the profession by setting teacher made standards for its members and by challenging its members to improve the quality of their practice and profession, as well as direct their professional development. However, "NBC does not replace Recertification" and it is Recertification that is needed to practice teaching (Chicago Union teacher, 1998, p.10). Thus, according to State law, compliance constitutes teacher quality. Recertification represents a means to control, not necessarily improve teacher quality as it dictates professional development for teachers.

In headlines that read, "White House wants better teacher quality," it is evident that school reform efforts related to developing teacher quality and professional development are not teacher initiated (Chicago Union Teacher, 1999, p. 13). Some recommend that in order for teachers to gain greater control in teacher quality and professional development, a change must occur for more meaningful standards of entry into the profession and improved conditions of work that support the use of teacher's professional knowledge (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Grant & Murray, 1999; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999). The restructuring of teacher education programs and the reform of professional development practices recognize the need to create a supportive context for teachers to learn, share, and develop their knowledge by placing teachers in control over the development of teaching. Thus, successful and supportive
professional development is built around the quality and control of professional development, according to the National Staff Development Council (1994).

Professional development, its meaning and implication, has been significantly impacted by school reform agendas, which focus on teacher quality, through the restructuring of teacher education programs and certification processes (Chicago Union Teacher, 2000; Day, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997; 1999; Hargreaves, 1997a). Furthermore, professional development, discussed in school reform literature, represents a new paradigm of professional development and creates additional meanings and usages for this already complex and multi-faceted educational label. Professional development is further discussed in the following section by defining and understanding its traditional and current models, its implementation, and its effectiveness.

**Understanding Professional Development**

Professional development is a concept, and professional development practices are created to support and embody a particular understanding of professional development. Professional development practices can encompass collaborative activities, such as teacher networks and peer mentoring, commonly found in professional development schools, as well as activities delivered by a deficit model of professional development, commonly found in traditional professional development. Formal professional development or traditional
professional development typically consists of school and district staff-
development programs that include workshops and conferences that are
designed to meet short-term goals (Fullan, 1996; NFIE, 1996; Senge et al.,
2000). Traditional professional development is the basis to address teachers’
deficits and to provide skill instruction, thus it employs a deficit model of learning
(Friesen, 1993). The professional development opportunity focuses on specific
knowledge attainment through training, rather than professional growth through
inquiry into teaching and learning (Griffin, 1991; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999;
Lieberman, 1995).

A major criticism of traditional professional development is the lack of
intensity and follow-up of professional development programs. According to
Adelman and Panton Walking-Eagle (1997), not only do teachers lack
understanding, time, and opportunity to develop and implement the knowledge
directed by traditional professional development, but they also lack the resources
and necessary support. Lieberman (1995) suggests that the deficit model is
ineffective because it overlooks the context of teachers’ work and teachers’
understanding of their knowledge and practice.

Teachers conceptualize deficit models of professional development as a
remedial opportunity for minimal learning and growth, according to Griffin (1991).
Teachers have become ambivalent about the relationship between the
professional knowledge that they have developed through experiences in the
classroom and the research knowledge of educational reformers. Thus, deficit
models of professional development can restrict teachers' opportunity to contribute to their practice and rarely promote continuous learning in which teachers develop a more meaningful understanding of the teaching practice and one's professional self (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Friesen, 1993; McLaughlin, 1997). According to Renyi (1998), continuous learning that is “suffused throughout the teachers' working lives” is essential to high quality professional development (p. 73).

Professional development that focuses on continuous learning is a common practice of schools in some European countries, especially Japan. Schools in these countries provide for regular collegial exchange by sharing teacher knowledge, thus refining their practice throughout their careers (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Kinney, 1998; NFIE, 1996). The teaching practice in Japan is based on theories linked with examples from practice. “Japanese teachers have created a national research and development system based on teachers' experiences that ensures the gradual improvement of teaching over time” (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 130), hence teachers in Japan represent a community of learning in which information is shared and colleagues view each other as valuable resources.

Japanese teachers are encouraged and expected to learn from one another by participating in overseas programs and exchange programs with other Japanese schools, and by commonly practicing peer observation (Kinney, 1998; Shimahara, 1997). Japanese teachers' beliefs in themselves and their
colleagues grow from the built-in opportunities to collaborate, seek knowledge, and participate in learning and development throughout stages of one's teaching career. These opportunities as well as expectations for Japanese teachers create a culture of continuous learning.

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) promotes continuous learning for U.S. teachers by sharing similar beliefs of high quality professional development with Japanese schools. According to NFIE (1996), professional development creates an opportunity that "improves student learning, provides adequate time for inquiry, reflection, and mentoring, is directed toward teachers' intellectual development and leadership, is designed and directed by teachers incorporating shared decision-making, and is site based and supportive" (p. 12).

NFIE (1996) recommends several ways to meet objectives of high quality professional development. They propose more flexible scheduling and an extended school year for teachers, and they suggest expanding teachers' responsibilities, which will facilitate leadership roles for teachers. NFIE's (1996) recommendations represent challenges to current policies that support the hierarchical management and organization of schools, in which traditionally, teachers in the United States lack direction over their professional work and development (Caldwell, 1997; Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996; Firestone & Bader, 1992; Grant & Murray, 1999). In Japan, both teachers and administrators

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participate in collaboration, and teachers feel "that they are both responsible for and in control of most of what occurs in their schools" (Kinney, 1998, p. 18).

Compared with other countries, the United States clearly lacks a system for developing professional knowledge and for giving teachers the opportunity to learn about teaching. American teachers, compared with those in Japan, for example, have no means of contributing to the gradual improvement of teaching methods or of improving their own skills (Day, 1997; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999). However, professional development schools, based on teachers' contributions to their growth, are emerging within the United States and have the potential to reinvent and rethink educational practices, alter pre-service education, and develop growth for in-service teachers (Book, 1996; Hoffman, Reed, & Rosenbluth, 1997; Levine & Trachtman, 1997; Teitel, 1997).

Lieberman and Miller (1990) cite three main goals for the model of Professional Development Schools (PDS) (p.114). First, the model must provide a context for rethinking and reinventing schools for the purpose of building and sustaining the best educational practices. Secondly, the model must contribute to the pre-service education of teachers and induct them into the teaching profession. Lastly and most significantly, the model must provide for continuing development and professional growth of experienced, in-service teachers. To reach these goals, the model of Professional Development Schools creates a culture composed of five essential elements for professional development. They include: “norms of colleagueship, openness and trust; opportunities and time for
disciplined inquiry; teacher learning of content in context; reconstruction of leadership roles; and construction of networks, collaborations, and coalitions" (Lieberman & Miller, 1990, p. 120). In this view, professional development results in a collaborative context of continuous learning for teachers and represents a change from traditional professional development programs.

**Collaboration: Reconceptualizing Professional Development**

A new paradigm of professional development focuses on developing collegiality and continuous learning for teachers through collaborative efforts (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Holmes Group, 1995; Lieberman, 1988; NFIE, 1996). Multiple models of collaboration are described throughout the literature, however, collaboration is most commonly characterized as an on-site professional development activity (Clarke, et al., 1996; Franke, et al., 1998; Howey & Collinson, 1995). Teachers usually spend time away from their students to engage in professional development, thus professional development that is on-site minimizes the conflict for teachers who miss instructional time with students while they pursue their learning. John-Steiner, Weber, and Minnis (1998) see the necessity of building a theory of collaboration that specifies multiple definitions and multiple models of collaborative practice. Thus, collaboration cannot be viewed by a single definition, but rather defined by its outcomes. Collaboration is a professional development practice that is best understood by its potential and implication for classroom practice and
pedagogical change. The goals, participants, and discourse of the collaborative experience define collaboration.

A number of educators claim collaboration is useful for purposes of understanding and improving educational situations while promoting professional development (Clandinin et al., 1993; Clark et al., 1998; Franke et al., 1998; McLaughlin, 1997). Collaboration fosters professional development as a learning process of inquiry into the teaching practice. According to Tickle (1989), collaborative inquiry into the nature of learning, teaching, and school contexts, and their relationships would be better understood so that all three might be improved. NCES (1999) believes that teacher participation in collaboration is likely to produce positive and lasting change because such activities provide the basis for transformative learning. Furthermore, NCES realizes that as a learning process, collaboration is "capable of empowering individual action contributing to the dialogue of dialectical change" (1999, p. 281). Friesen (1993) suggests that collaboration provides an opportunity for teachers to interact, participate in the discourse surrounding their knowledge and experience, reflect on their teaching, and make changes in their practice, so that the result is professional learning.

John-Steiner, Weber, and Minnis (1998) view collaboration as a long term, site-based support system and opportunity to connect with members who share views and ideas and construct knowledge. According to Meyers (1997), collaboration can serve as a well-known locus of power where one's own ability to learn is enhanced exponentially by one's contacts. Collaboration is based on
joint work through teacher networks, and NCES (1999) views professional development as a lifelong inquiry-based collegial process rooted in the development of schools as collaborative workplaces.

Traditionally, schools are structured by a hierarchy of authority and promote a culture of independence, rather than interdependence. Some believe that the current organizational structure of schools facilitates separation, rather than collaboration (Caldwell, 1997; Day, 1997; Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996). Teacher isolation and decisions made within this top-down hierarchy of authority concerning professional development, often times decreases teachers' opportunities for developing collegial relationships and continuous learning, according to Darling-Hammond (1996). It is the hope of the new paradigm of professional development to provide a means to promote collegiality by establishing collaborative practices among teachers, which changes the traditional organizational structure in schools, according to Hargreaves (1992). Collaborative practices reduce isolation by engaging teachers in opportunities for interaction, such as peer coaching, mentoring, study groups, and task committees.

Clark et al. (1996) support collaboration as a tool to break down isolation, promote peer relationships, and provide continuous learning for teachers. In this study, collaboration created a community of practice and support among teachers. As teachers of Clark's et al. study reflected on their past experiences, one teacher remarked, "We don't collaborate with each other. Teaching is an
individual craft that you do in the privacy of your own room with your door shut usually, and you don't have opportunities to have conversations [with other teachers]" (p. 779).

According to the NCES (1999) report, regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers was the activity in which teachers were most likely to participate. Few teachers, according to the report, believed that participation did not help their teaching at all. Collaborative teacher networks have the potential to engage professionals in collective work and allow teachers to go beyond their own classrooms and schools to engage in professional discourse about their own experiences and the experiences of others (Howey & Collinson, 1995; NCES, 1999; Zeichner, Melnick & Gomez, 1996).

Lieberman (1995) suggests that participation in collegial networks provides the opportunity for reform. To implement reform plans, teachers must be able to discuss, think about, try out, and refine new practices. In teacher networks, dialogue is exchanged and learning takes place as a result of new commitments and friendships, exposure to new ideas, and contact with and observation of other teacher's work (Kochan & Trimble, 2000; Meyers, 1997; Mullen, 2000). According to Shanker (1997), teachers need time to develop peer relationships, noting that "there is not a profession without them" (p. 32).

Let it be understood from the literature that collaboration, which promotes collegiality, is a necessary element for the development of teachers' knowledge and requires a change in teacher and school culture. In the following discussion,
the literature surrounding school reform is explored to examine the possibilities for change and professional development. The discussion further highlights the obstacles to institutional and cultural change in order to recognize the reality in which reform and professional development occur.

**Change in a Era of Reform**

Lortie (1975) recommended needed changes for teachers in his study from over twenty-five years ago, and these are still challenges to teachers' practice and profession today. Lortie recognized that a change in the culture of teachers is needed to alter thought about practice and that a change of the status of teachers is needed and dependent upon the restructuring and reorganization of schools. He projected that “schools will become centralized bureaucracies,” (p. 215) and currently, schools are becoming more centralized through the proliferation of prescription and standardization of curriculum, standardized achievement tests, and accountability checks, according to Hargreaves (1997b). Apple (1990a) realizes that “movement in state legislatures and state departments to raise standards and mandate teacher and student competencies increases the centralization of the control of teaching” (p. 526), and these bureaucratic obstacles and external control of schools are dysfunctional, according to Strike (1993). It is suggested that a higher level of autonomy and
teamwork produce effective schools (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Holmes Group, 1996; Maeroof, 1988; Strike, 1993).

As a result of some reform efforts, building a professional culture of teachers has been further challenged by accountability practices, government intervention, and teacher proof curriculum materials (Bottery & Wright, 1997; Cohen, 1996; McLaughlin, 1997). Such reform efforts intensify teachers' work because more has to be done in less time, according to Apple (1990a). Fullan (1997) recognizes the fundamental problems of educational change, and he cites one significant problem as "the overwhelming multiplicity of unconnected, fragmented change initiatives" (p. 217).

Hargreaves (1997b) further recognizes obstacles to change by pointing to the lack of resources, support, and long-term commitment of some change efforts. Some believe that teachers disregard change proposals when resources and time are unavailable (Grant & Murray, 1999; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Lortie 1975). Often times, change is either too specific and limited or too broad and ambitious for real change to occur, and Hargreaves (1997b) realizes that "change is pursued in isolation and is undermined by other unchanged structures" (p. viii). Furthermore, change efforts rarely address the reality of the school context. An emerging reality exists that teachers today are facing an increase in job roles due to a lack of parental responsibility and support, which reduces the possibility for teachers to find time to change (Day, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Hargreaves, 1997b). Reform initiatives that ignore these larger institutional
issues create obstacles to change, and thus do not lead to "real" change in the teachers' professional context.

Although lawmakers, policymakers, educational researchers, and boards of education are in constant pursuit of teacher quality and teacher reform, they do not ordinarily solicit teachers' perspectives with regard to reform efforts, and insufficient teacher input has the potential to create ineffective and disruptive change, according to Tyack & Cuban (1995). The literature acknowledges that the lack of teachers' perspectives about reform, and the lack of time, resources, and support, as well as the increasing demands made on teachers, are obstacles to change that interfere with and perpetuate the current state of teaching.

In addition to these obstacles, teaching itself and its basic techniques are slow to change and complicate the efforts of teacher preparation (Grant & Murray, 1999). In Lortie's (1975) study, he found that more than half of the teachers lacked preparation in classroom management, and a third of the teachers had too little preparation in teaching methods. Rose (1998) supports Lortie's findings by recognizing that teachers today are unprepared to manage classrooms and lack knowledge about teaching methods. Currently, according to Bullough (1992), as a result of some teacher preparation programs based on a training model, preparation is not sufficient because training cannot meet the multiple needs of the classroom teacher in an ever-changing role.

Training is also inadequate preparation because, as Sheldon & Biddle (1998) recognize, teaching is "complex, demanding, and moral" (p. 165).
Teaching involves much more than techniques from training because "values lie at the heart of all decisions about curriculum, school organization, and teaching style" (Houston, 1988, p. 120). Teaching must be situated in relationship to one's biography, present circumstances, social context, and conflicting discourses about what it means to be a teacher, according to Britzman (1992). Thus, teachers, their beliefs and identities, must be accounted for in reform efforts that focus on teachers.

Reform is dependent upon teachers' participation and motivation to change, and according to Lortie (1975), "teachers have a built in resistance to change because they believe that their work environment has never permitted them to show what they can really do" (p. 235). Although teachers desire more involvement in school reform than they are afforded, according to Rice & Schneider (1994), currently teachers have become passive recipients of reform initiatives because they are usually seen as the problem, not the solution (Goodlad, 1994; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Maeroof, 1988). As a result of some educational reform policies, not only has teachers' work been intensified, but teachers have become alienated as they carry out their work in a distrusting environment (Fullan, 1997; Knapp, 1993; Mendel, 1987), and such reform efforts that control teachers' work can significantly influence teachers' morale.

The literature suggests that teachers are vulnerable and uncertain about their work as a result of the increasing attacks and blame for problems in schools (Borg, 1991; Floden & Buchmann, 1993). Some educational reform policies that
mandate teacher and student competencies can lead to teacher burnout, emotional exhaustion, and high levels of stress (Keltchtemans, 1996; Lutz & Maddirala, 1990). Meeting standards set by accountability policies significantly increases paperwork for teachers and consumes teachers' time, thereby limiting teachers' efficacy and taking away authority from teachers, which results in feelings of powerlessness and mistrust (Apple, 1990a; Hargrove, 2000; Lam, 1996). Thus, change initiatives that intrude on teacher's time and disrupt learning with students challenge the principal purpose of teachers and lead to conflicting results about their commitment and effectiveness, according to Fullan (1997).

Some believe that reform efforts controlled by state and federal governments that focus on accountability debase teachers' motivation as they are forced to comply and change the content and style of teaching (Kohn, 1999; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). In this view of reform, obedient teachers are more important than quality teachers, according to McMurtry, 1992). Accountability measures, such as standardized testing, teacher proof curricula, and raising standards, lower teachers' morale, according to Kohn (1999), and "either teachers capitulate, or they struggle courageously to resist this, or they find another career" (p. 32). As a result of reform efforts linked to accountability, there are those that feel more and more schools today resemble a factory, rather than a place of learning (Eisner, 1994; Fullan, 1992; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999).
It has been professed that the standardization of teaching and learning enforces rigidity in the schools by developing standards too narrowly, thus fragmenting the curriculum, disregarding interdisciplinary teaching and learning, and most significantly for teachers, ignoring student spontaneity and the teachable moment (Brooks, 1991; Duckworth, 1987; Howe, 1995; Kohn, 1999). Sheldon & Biddle (1998) caution that forcing teachers to meet rigid standards does not lead to change. Teachers' motivation to change is dependent on being trusted, according to Howe (1995), and Sheldon & Biddle (1998) agree that strategies for reform based on trust in teachers raise morale. Raising the morale of teachers creates an environment that is more conducive to learning (Ellenberg, 1972; Grant & Murray, 1999; Mendel, 1987), as well as change (Lumsden, 1998; Maehr, Midgely, & Urdan, 1993). However, Hargreaves & Evans (1997) recognizes that currently most schools do not provide an environment conducive to learning. Thus, the obstacles to change and building a professional culture for teachers not only surround the bureaucratic and technical control of teaching, but also involve teachers' motivation to participate in the change process.

Teachers and their genuine involvement in reform efforts are pivotal to educational change (Lipman, 1998; Livingston et al., 1992; Schlechty, 1990). Reform initiatives that promote teacher empowerment and increased decision-making opportunities are not always reflected in teachers' realities. In the case of the Chicago School Reform Act (1988), which supports the local control of
schools by allocating decision-making power to parents, administrators, and teachers, teachers reported an increase in administrative power, but teachers felt that "they lacked real power, despite the empowerment rhetoric" (Radnofsky, 1994, p. 160). Therefore, many teachers in Chicago are opting out of the change process (Hess, 1994; Radnofsky, 1994). Thus, reform initiatives that promise teacher empowerment are meaningless unless teachers are truly involved and directly contribute to the change process.

Currently teachers face several challenges to changing, and the lack of time and opportunity for any professional activities other than the direct instruction of students is slowing down reform, according to Fitch-Blanks (2000). Because teachers are told to change, but commonly lack resources, support, and time to change, they often times are ambivalent and even resistant to changing. While teachers attempt to adapt to change because of the growing responsibility and accountability for problems in schools, improvements cannot be enacted by mandates and policy alone. Change is created by the existence and application of professional and experienced knowledge, as well as an opportunity to continuously learn, and by the genuine desire of teachers to change brought about in part by ownership and control of the change process (Day, 1997; Franke et al., 1998; Morley, 1999; Senge et al., 2000).

The obstacles that teachers face complicate and have the potential to impede change, as well as teachers' opportunity for professional development. Building a professional culture based on collegiality and learning requires the
creation of time and opportunity for discussion, since most teachers work in isolation and have no way to share their knowledge and use it to advance the knowledge base of teaching (Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lieberman, 1995; Little & McLaughlin, 1993). Colleagues must meet to brainstorm, discuss, learn, and share knowledge to affect change for student learning and teacher development. When teachers engage in professional development, possibilities for change arise through teachers' interaction and discourse. Thus, change is necessary for meaningful professional development to occur and for a professional culture to be created.

A change for the culture of schools promotes more collegiality and collaboration among teachers. A vision of professional development from the Holmes Group (1995), *Tomorrow's Schools*, envisions empowered teachers developing their teaching practices through the exercise of greater teacher authority, choice, and responsibility. This new paradigm of professional development provides an opportunity for teachers to share and learn from one another and allows teachers to contribute to the professional knowledge of teaching.

Hiebert & Stigler (1999) profess that teachers are the gatekeepers to change in schools, although they work in a system that currently practices control over their context. They recognize that reform involves a change in school culture, and they suggest, "building a system that can learn from its own experiences" (p. 136). They understand that learning and development must
change, but not until teachers’ knowledge base is shared to support the change. They also realize that teachers must be given the opportunity and the support they need to advance their practice for learning and change to occur. Thus, reform efforts must focus on ways to accumulate teachers' knowledge and insights and to share this knowledge with other colleagues and future teachers.

Four key ideas summarize the discussion of literature. First, teachers are pivotal to educational change. Secondly, professional development opportunities have the potential to contribute to change. Thirdly, meaningful professional development occurs when collegiality and continuous learning is developed. Lastly, meaningful structural and organizational change is needed to support professional development efforts for teachers.

Discussions in the literature surrounding professional development lacked teachers' perspectives as it described the potential of professional development opportunities, but rarely reported the reality of the teachers' experiences. The literature review explored the relationship between professional development and change based on meanings of researchers and educational experts. However, if teachers are pivotal to educational change, then teacher research is a necessary practice for change because teacher research engages teachers in discourse so that they may contribute to the professional knowledge base of teaching.

In the following methodological discussion, teacher research is defined and examined to demonstrate its significance to the research context and the
context of this inquiry. To that end, teacher research is discussed as an opportunity for change, professional development, and reflection.
Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As this study sought to understand what Book Talk meant for its participants, qualitative research was the paradigm that most logically fit, and phenomenology was the theoretical orientation that most appropriately supported this inquiry. Qualitative methodology involves approaches that enable researchers to learn directly about the social world they are investigating by means of involvement and participation in that world and by focusing upon what individual participants say and do (Brizuela et al., 2000; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Merriam, 1998). Phenomenology focuses on questions concerning the meaning of a particular phenomenon for a particular group of people (Patton, 1990). This study recognized teachers as the persons who have most directly experienced Book Talk, hence they understood the significance and implications of Book Talk.

In a phenomenological study such as this, the researcher gets at the meaning through having participants recall and reflect on lived experience (Reason, 1996). The teacher research methodology seemed particularly appropriate for an inquiry concerned with a unique professional development model implemented in a particular school and the participating teachers' reflections on that model. The teacher researcher, who is an insider, has the
advantage of being able to more clearly understand local meanings, language norms, and practices resulting from his/her direct experiences (Doer & Tinto, 1999; Hollingsworth & Sockett et al., 1994). My role as researcher within my own context supports the phenomenological orientation by extracting meaning that is not only understood but also experienced (Van Manen, 1990).

In contrast to traditional forms of research, it is the hope of teacher research to bridge the gap between researchers’ understanding and teachers’ understanding of the educational context (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lampert, 2000; Lortie, 1975). Currently, there are those who believe that traditional research has the potential to further the division between the experts, who reflect on and scrutinize reality, and the teachers, who are often objects of the inquiry (Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Patterson et al., 1993). According to this perspective, ironically, teachers are not considered “experts,” although they directly participate in the teaching and learning context and affect learning for students. Those who are considered experts conduct research and make recommendations that influence and sometimes direct teaching and learning, the professional work of teachers, and do not necessarily practice in the teaching and learning context. The teacher research process values teachers as the “experts” and is a vehicle for learning from a group of “experts” on their own practice and the affairs of their professional context.

This exploratory study sought to understand the professional development model, Book Talk, and its discourse from the eyes and voices of teachers who
had consistently participated for the past four years. Meaning was extracted through data collection, which included interviews, attendance at meetings, review of documents, and participant observation, and data analysis was ongoing throughout the study. This study sought commonalities and differences of response about the nature of experiences across the teachers who participated in Book Talk, as well as their unique experiences and multiple perspectives.

The need for this study initially arose from my participation and consciousness of the discourse surrounding Book Talk and was further influenced by the lack of studies by teachers about teacher perspectives. I participated, experienced, and took action by investigating the phenomena and issues surrounding Book Talk. As both teacher and researcher, I inquired about the phenomena of Book Talk, not as an isolated professional development experience, but as it occurred in the everyday context of the Book Talk teachers' working lives.

Qualitative teacher research is about values and choices: “Where can I place myself to be of most use in articulating what I stand for” (Doerr & Tinto, 1999, p.2)? In my role as teacher-researcher, I focus on Book Talk as a vehicle to understand professional development and the voices of the BT participants, because these voices have the possibility of shedding light on the political, social, cultural, professional and curricular contexts of teaching (Fichtman Dana, 1994; Friesen, 1993; Gitlin, 2000; Hollingsworth & Sackett et al., 1993), which influence the context for teachers’ professional development. The teacher research
process served as a method to examine and explore Book Talk (BT) teachers’ perspectives about their professional development context, as well as an avenue for teachers’ voices to take shape.

Teacher research, action research, collaborative action research, and practitioner research are terms often used interchangeably throughout the literature. Thus, their popular use creates some ambiguity in their definition. Because there is much disagreement in the field about teacher research as a distinctive methodology, I draw from literature from all the above-mentioned genres, but for the purpose of clarity in the text, I refer to my methodological framework as teacher research. Teacher research refers to research that is carried out by teachers based on a reflective process aimed at the professional development of the individual, as well as a process of reflection aimed at change (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Patterson et al., 1993; Sagor, 1997; Stephens & Meyer Reimer, 1993). I explore teacher research in this discussion by examining its relationship with three foundations of its model: change, professional development, and reflection.

There are some who believe that the reality of doing school reform work is dependent on those who live and work in schools on a daily basis (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994), thus dependent on teachers. According to Ulichny (1997), the power to change does not always reside in the academy and the researchers’ accounts, but more so in the school community. It has been suggested that school communities that are
involved in research come together to address common concerns and work at developing the means to understand each other, to articulate their social position, and to effect change (Noffke, 1997; Sagor, 1997; Saurino, 1996).

In teacher research, it is the teacher who plays the central role in the enactment and study of educational changes (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Wells, 1995). Because teacher research is grounded in the concept that the teacher and her/his role are a necessary part of the research, the teacher becomes the central producer of research, knowledge, and change. The teacher research process places the power and the knowledge in the hands of the teacher to carry out the “living educational theory” (Eisner, 1994, p. 205). Thus, the role of teacher as researcher enhances the development of both teaching and research.

Teacher research serves as a vehicle to understand and share teachers' knowledge and experience so that the context of teaching and learning may improve, and also provides an opportunity for professional development. Teacher research has the potential to generate self-knowledge, personal growth, and can serve as a critical, reflective, and professionally oriented activity, which might be regarded as a crucial ingredient in the professional development of teachers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Doerr & Tinto, 1999; Miller & Hunt, 1994). Because teacher research encourages teachers to engage in research, it develops a temperament oriented toward inquiry and a disposition toward
investigating one's own practice (Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Patterson et al., 1993).

Book Talk, as the opportunity for professional development and teacher discourse, is in itself a phenomenon to be revealed, explored, and exposed by a teacher-researcher. My participation and understanding of Book Talk influenced my inquiry, furthered my understanding of professional development, and cultivated my role as a teacher-researcher. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggest that it is consciousness of one's self throughout the study that adds to the research. Teacher research became a developmental process that contributed to an understanding of my own professional identity. Since the researcher is the key instrument in teacher research, self-reflection is pertinent to credibility (Mishler, 2000; Patterson et al., 1993).

Friesen (1993) explains that research by teachers takes shape through inquiry on the basis of one's work in relation to multiple contexts. This calls for critical self-analysis in relation to one's context and the context studied, especially since direct experience can distort perspective, cloud judgment, and overestimate the importance of various factors. The teacher researcher engages in a reflective process aimed at the professional development of the individual, thus teacher research succeeds when teachers, as researchers and participants, develop a deeper understanding of their professional selves, others, and situations (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Miller & Hunt, 1994; Stephens & Meyer Reimer, 1993). In the following discussion, my teacher-researcher role is further
reflected on and explored by examining researcher subjectivity and its relationship to this inquiry.

**Researcher Subjectivity**

The term teacher research clearly defines that I am a teacher as well as a researcher. My current teacher role, participation in Book Talk, the impact of the teacher dialogue, and my position as researcher motivated my inquiry, as well as created the opportunity for this inquiry.

Limitations of my inquiry existed due to the nature of phenomenological study as a field. The problem is that researchers already know what they want to investigate, thus prior understandings, suppositions, assumptions and common knowledge can lead to interpretation before understanding the significance of the participants' words. Traditional research views this interpretation as a limitation of the study, however, teacher research emphasizes the significance of the researcher's role and understanding of the context for study.

Since a phenomenological study is carried out by consciousness of phenomena, sensitivity or being highly intuitive is a trait needed in phenomenological research (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Patton, 1990). The researcher must be sensitive to the context, and all the variables within it, including the physical setting, the people, the overt and covert agendas, and the nonverbal behavior (Merriam, 1998). My sensitivity to the context of inquiry permitted the questions posed to focus on the teachers' set of concerns, thus the
emerging inquiry followed the concerns that were voiced from the participating teachers.

According to Doerr and Tinto (1999), teacher research uses the position of the teacher to ground questions, structure analysis, and represent interpretation. Burgess (1991) explains that the teacher-researcher role “influences the perspectives and the accounts obtained” as a result of the influences of the teacher-researcher role in the group to which membership is granted (p. 50). The researcher influences the study by entering into the context so that the research becomes an interaction between the researcher and the participants. The author in teacher research is part of the research because the form, style, and communication of the research project are linked to the perspective and orientation of the author (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996, 2000).

As a teacher teaching at the site for study, I have my own teaching experiences based on ten years of elementary, public school teaching. I have worked as a kindergarten classroom teacher and a librarian, as well as taught in hallways as the bilingual and ESL teacher. As the foreign language teacher, I taught eight different grade levels in one day for an entire school year. I was a displaced teacher because of a racial minority quota at the beginning of one school year, and ended one school year as Teacher of the Year. I have taken graduate courses in curriculum and bilingual education and have attended numerous workshops and conferences throughout my teaching career. I
continue to engage in Book Talk with and through the same format as my participants, and I have prior teaching exposure and experiences that created existing meaning at the onset of my study. My views and experiences as a teacher at my site informed my research question, and it is also these preconceptions that permit the inquiry to be pursued.

My position as teacher and researcher was an asset to the study in several respects. First, it provided me with a working knowledge of the teacher's world at my site. Second, it gave me rapport with teachers in the field that many educational researchers do not possess. Third, I possessed a working knowledge of the implementation and experiences of Book Talk. Lastly, I acquired a knowledge base of the literature related to professional development and teacher research. This provided the opportunity to address the need for the teacher to be equipped to understand the methodologies and languages that underpin research in order to make sense of both current policy and training approaches and apply a selective and critical attitude towards its relevance and application in practice, according to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995). I was both a student and teacher, and in my position as teacher-researcher, I investigated the inquiry. The following discussion describes the context in which my roles played out. I provide a sketch of the site and the participants of my inquiry, as well as continue to reflect on my role as researcher, its significance in gaining access, and its influence on data collection.
Site Description

The site is renamed Marylin School for the purpose of this study. Marylin School was built in 1961 and is a traditionally structured Chicago Public School, in which the Board of Education makes central decisions, and the school adheres to those policies and procedures. The school is part of the nation’s third largest school district. The district is made up of 20,000 teachers and 431,000 students.

The school provides a pre-kindergarten through eighth grade community program, a fine arts magnet program, and a regional gifted center. There is also a small, Spanish-bilingual program. Marylin School has an ethnically diverse student population, and due to its gifted center, draws students from all parts of the city. Marylin School has a population of 650 students and 40 teachers. Sixty percent of the population is in the community program, one-third is distributed in the gifted program, and the remaining one-tenth is in the fine arts program. Children from the fine and performing arts program are equally distributed throughout the community program. The students in the gifted program are academically segregated and taught by teacher specialists who are trained in gifted education.

The school is located in a developing multi-ethnic community on Chicago’s north side. Current gentrification of the neighborhood creates a wide range of socioeconomic levels within the community structure. The ethnic make-up of the students is 40% Black, 39% Hispanic, 16% White, and 3% Asian. Eighty percent
of these students are from low-income families and ten percent are limited English proficient (School Report Card, 1998).\textsuperscript{2}

According to the 1998 School Report Card, Marylin School has a mobility rate of 49\%, which changes the composition and culture of its classrooms throughout the school year. The class size averages 24.9 students. The school, as a whole, performs at and above national norms according to the IOWA Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Students read at 59.9\% of the national norm and perform mathematically at 63.8\%; scores reflect a combined total of gifted and norm students (School Report Card, 1998). Student standardized test scores have been improving at Marylin School during the past five years under the direction of the current administration.

These scores reflect Marylin's services to its students. Marylin School provides many extra programs for its students, including on-going co- and extra-curricular programs through its private, youth foundation, which is funded by an alumnus. Programs include band, drama, and after school academic and social programs. The school operates and provides services from 8:30 a.m. through 4:00 p.m.

The physical structure of the school is modern and houses a large auditorium that is constantly in use. A science lab, computer lab, research library, and art room offer supplemental spaces for learning. Students who attend Marylin school have a “wealth of opportunities, including a caring and
dedicated teaching staff," described by the principal in the School's brochure (1997) for prospective parents.

The administrative team has been in place for five years. The team consists of a principal and assistant principal. Both are women who started their administrative roles together. At the time of data collection, a third administrative team member, referred to as the disciplinarian, made up the administrative team of Marylin School. The disciplinarian left Marylin School during the middle of the 1999-2000 school year.

Under the current administration, the school's mission is to lay the groundwork for its students to become lifelong learners and successful members of a multi-cultural society. The School's goals as reported in the 1999-2000 School Improvement Plan center on improving reading and math achievement, improving student behavior, and increasing personal responsibility. Marylin School wants to increase communication with parents and increase students' involvement in the school community. To gain another perspective about the school, the Annenberg proposal describes Marylin School as...

"having a hard working LSC (Local School Council) and a pool of parent volunteers with exceptional skills. The community has had an active voice in setting school policy. The school has developed an excellent after school program, specializing in arts, physical education, computers and academic remediation. An external Partner has funded this program, which has enabled many special activities at the school including a band program and a theater program. The latter greatly benefits from a theater-style auditorium. About one third of the students come there to attend the Regional Gifted Center program" (Appendix F).
The above description highlights positive aspects of the school environment as found in local documents or handouts published by the school. Most aspects of the school are average, some poor and some exceptional. The school is typical of many Chicago Public Schools, based on statistics from the 1998 School Report Card.

My position as teacher-researcher facilitated full access to my site and to the teachers' perspectives concerning Book Talk. Research access is based on different sets of relationships, and I was a member of the participants' culture, which entitled me access to the teachers' environment (Burgess, 1991). The relationships involved in this inquiry and their influences on the development of the design, collection, and analysis of data for the research project are described in the following discussion.

Access

The teacher research process facilitated immediate access to the site because "the field is so to speak immediately there, therefore all that needs to be done can be done in familiar environments with familiar others" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, P. 39). As a teacher-researcher, I continued to participate in the shared school environment of my participants, which granted access to a range of locations within the school and social setting.

I did not have to make an appointment to discuss access with my administration. To ensure both professional integrity and adhere to policy, I
prepared a written overview of my inquiry stating its purpose and function. I walked into the office during school hours and introduced my research project to the administration. I gave each administrator the overview and began explaining my role as researcher. We discussed the teachers who would be participating in the study, and the administration welcomed me to school time for conducting interviews. I believe access was granted immediately because of my relationship with the administration in my role as teacher.

I helped the Book Talk teachers understand my role as researcher by leaving a brief written synopsis describing professional development and teacher research, including the participant's consent form, in their school mailboxes. All the teachers responded within a week's time by either returning the consent form to my mailbox or by seeking me out during the school day. The teachers mainly wanted to know how much time would be involved and some also expressed gratitude for their participation, as well as support for the study. Although I responded to teachers in my researcher role, my teacher role prevailed again, in that teachers verbally granted access immediately, sometimes before they read the entire document.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) call on the researcher to explain as clearly as possible the aims, objectives, and methods of the research to all the parties involved. Any research involving humans in the process "demands full and informed consent from each of the participants from whom data will be sought" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 254). All portions of the study and the participant's
role in the study were explained, including data collection and analysis (Appendix C: Informed Consent). Teachers were informed of my inquiry as well as my researcher role.

Dialogue between the participants and myself had never been shared in an in-depth, one-on-one level of communication before the interviews. I knew my participants through school-related activities as colleagues for the past four years at my site. Opportunities for conversations and dialogue occurred informally in the hallway or teachers' lounge and through Book Talk collaboration. Herein lies the extent of my relationship with my participants.

Knowing my participants and sharing the role of teacher gave me complete access to our environment. The gatekeepers of this inquiry were the teachers involved in the study. My inquiry was not concerned with access to the site, but rather access to the individual Book Talk teachers' perspectives. As a result of my teacher role, it was not necessary to spend time building trust between the teachers and myself prior to starting the study because I entered and shared the same space as my participants as a teacher. It was necessary to remind teachers about my researcher role and the confidentiality of their discourse, so that teachers could share their perspectives openly, regardless of my familiarity and relationship with colleagues, administration, and the school context. I participated and observed in the context through a researcher's lens, even though the teachers saw me as their colleague. The teacher participants associated me with my teacher identity, although I was also entering their world.
as a researcher. My additional role as researcher and the opportunity for complete access impacted the teachers' environment and is accounted for throughout the process of teacher research by continually reflecting and sharing those reflections through a reflexive account of the teacher research process found in Appendix A.

The teacher researcher must be aware that the aims and objectives of research are often to make a change (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Hollingsworth & Sackett, 1994). Such research, whatever its good intentions, may appear to other colleagues to threaten their own professional practice and standing, according to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995). As the research process unfolded, I realized my exploratory inquiry had the potential to create personal, political, and professional conflicts for teachers at my site. Raising the consciousness of the teachers can create conflicts, especially if teachers may not want their consciousness to be raised. While raising consciousness is educative, it can be disruptive to the norms set by the hierarchy and culture of the school. These disruptions can arise when one critically seeks to investigate one's practice and understanding of this.

I have established a trusting, collegial relationship with the participants in this study. Being a teacher with a dedication to the profession of teaching, my first concern in conducting a study of this nature was to honor the integrity and time commitment of the teachers who participated in the process. This study would not have been possible without their interest, reflections, and involvement.
This study was conceived and designed to allow a place for teachers to develop voice in the exploration. Care was given to offer a picture of Book Talk that is true to the experiences of the teachers at this site. The five participants and their selection for this study are described to provide a more personal and professional history of the teachers who are most significantly defined by their voices.

**Participant Selection**

By using purposeful sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998), the pool of eligible teachers was determined to be those teachers who had the highest, and therefore, most consistent attendance in Book Talk. Through purposeful sampling, the researcher seeks out participants who have experienced the types of experiences the researcher seeks to understand (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Book Talk was attended by an average of nine teachers, and five individuals shared a similar participation rate and formed a core group. These five individuals were selected and voluntarily agreed to participate in this study.

Specifically, four teachers and the instructional coordinator of my site participated in this study. The years of teaching experience among the participants ranged from three to twenty-five years and their experiences covered a wide range of elementary grade levels and subject matter. Two first grade teachers (community and gifted program teachers), a second grade-community teacher, a middle school-community teacher, and the instructional coordinator,
who was a former classroom teacher, were observed in Book Talk collaboration and interviewed in depth. These teachers are representatives of the teaching culture and also represent different outlooks, backgrounds, races, and ages.

Uniquely, the participants represent a diverse age and racial population, composed of Black, White, and Latina teachers. However, pertinent to the identification of the participants for this inquiry was their identity based on their experiences as teachers and members of the teaching culture, rather than members of different racial backgrounds. Although topics of race surfaced in the teachers' discourse, they resulted from book themes, not personal or professional themes.

I recognize that race makes up one's professional identity and that teachers' racial identities can influence their access to collaborative relationships (Ladson-Billing, 1998; Lipman, 1998). However, race did not emerge as a significant theme from the teachers' discourse, and these teachers' diverse racial identities and participation in Book Talk provide evidence that access to collaborative relationships were available to teachers at Marylin School, regardless of race. More importantly for this inquiry was the participating teachers' identity as representatives of teachers, both, young and old, Black, White, and Latina, who participate in schools and perform their practice in real contexts with real students. Therefore, I omit racial identity from the participants' character sketch, which is located at the end of this chapter, and this omission can be seen as a limitation to my study. However, this omission continues to
assure anonymity, and more importantly, illuminates the teachers' identity based on their realities as teachers of a metropolitan public school, which was a significant topic of the teachers' discourse.

I recognize that of the five participants, the instructional coordinator is not a teacher position, but an administrative position in the hierarchy. The instructional coordinator has been in the current administrative position for two years and was a classroom teacher for six years. She was the initiator and a central member in implementing the Annenberg Grant. Our relationship, prior to this study, was based on mutual respect and professional behavior. I considered the instructional coordinator to be a colleague who offered knowledge and support, more than a top-down administrator at Marylin School. The instructional coordinator recognized the dynamics of her administrative position, her involvement in Book Talk and her relationship with Book Talk teachers. Teachers involved in the study consistently associated the instructional coordinator with the administrative team and their actions and top-down decisions. Thus, the instructional coordinator struggled with her administrative role in the context of Book Talk and within the school because she shared a dual perspective based on her prior experiences as a teacher and her current duties associated with her administrative position. The dynamics of the administrator-teacher relationship, as well as the instructional coordinator's struggles, manifested throughout interviews and are explored in depth in Chapter V of the Results of Data Analysis.
I included the instructional coordinator as a member of the teaching culture because of her teaching experiences and membership in Book Talk. Book Talk teachers are members of the unique phenomena of Book Talk and members of the teaching culture whose stories, perspectives, and experiences contribute to their identities. The five participants are referred to as Book Talk teachers throughout the text and are also cited as BT teachers.

Methods of Data Collection

The Book Talk teacher voices were expressed and collected by methods of interviews, documents, and participant observation. The following discussion demonstrates how I conceptualized and operationalized the process by describing the methods employed and the implications of the teacher-researcher relationship. I was a continual participant-observer, not only during Book Talk collaborations, but also within the context of my site. I was afforded this opportunity by being a member of the teaching culture.

Participant Observation

As noted earlier, I have been a teacher for seven years in the Chicago Public School System, thus I was a researcher, teacher, and colleague of my participants. My experiences as a teacher shaped the intent and impact of my research question, and my inquiry framed by teacher research, also arose out of the needs and experiences of the people it served (Reason, 1996). This
investigation served the teachers by recognizing the significance and implications of Book Talk and its discourse as a professional development experience.

I attended Book Talk on Friday mornings on a monthly basis from eight to nine o'clock during the 1999-2000 school year in both roles as participant and observer. I also attended the site's weekly faculty meetings, professional development activities, and teacher activities that required my attendance. As a participant at my site, I was able to directly observe the everyday context of the teachers participating in Book Talk.

As a participant-observer, I undertook multiple roles as researcher, teacher, and colleague. Fine (1994) defines this process as "working the hyphen" between researcher and self, and explains that researchers probe how they are in relation to the contexts they study and with their informants (Fine, 1994, p. 118). My context is defined by my role as teacher, and the participants in my research are my colleagues. I am a teacher, and I added the role of researcher to my identity, thus creating the duality of the teacher-researcher role. My consciousness about my identity was continually explored and developed throughout the inquiry.

Prior to data collection, I attended Book Talk to discuss the weekly novel and meet with my colleagues as a teacher. However, during data collection, I attended Book Talk as a teacher-researcher to gain access to the teachers' discourse. I carried my tape recorder and note pad, constantly made notes, and usually participated in the dialogue when a response was solicited. As the
process of data collection emerged, I focused on listening to the teachers' discourse, rather than contributing teaching ideas related to book themes. I recognized my decreased participation in Book Talk discussions during data collection as a result of observing, and not participating. However, because I am a teacher, it was impossible to listen to discourse without reflecting on my own practice and sharing ideas with my colleagues, the participants at the same time.

As a participant observer, I was in dual roles as teacher and researcher, and these roles played concurrently, sometimes shifting from teacher to researcher, but never separating my teacher role from my researcher role. Because of the experiences that I experienced in my teacher role at my site, my researcher role was directly affected. When an emergency staff meeting was called after school, an interview had to be canceled because it required the participant's attendance, as well as my own. Thus, there is a blurred distinction between teacher and researcher when one is teaching and conducting a study in one's own school.

The teacher-researcher role affords opportunities to immediately gain access and experience the context for study. My teacher-researcher role enabled me to distinguish between the formal rules and language of the school organization and teaching culture, and the argot, the informal rules and language of the school and culture. I did not have to learn the argot at my site and was able to respond in "socially and interactionally approved and defined ways in the setting under investigation" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 135). Understanding
the argot and language of the context for study was not only significant for participation and observation, but was particularly relevant to conducting interviews.

**Interviews**

Interviewing created a space to gain Book Talk teacher perspectives and as Bogdan and Biklen (1998) explain, “what participants share will emerge more clearly when the researcher individually solicits their perspectives rather than observes their activities” (p. 56). I conducted approximately five interviews, one hour in length, with each teacher during the 1999-2000 school year; the final year of the Annenberg Grant. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Interviews took place after school in the teacher's classroom and sometimes during teacher preparation periods. Interviewing was also associated with informal dialogues in the hallways, the teacher’s lounge, or the office.

Interviewing, as defined by Wolcott (1997), refers to anything that the field worker does that intrudes upon the natural setting and is done with conscious intent to obtain information directly and purposefully. The interview serves two purposes. First, interviews are a resource for developing an understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam 1998). Second, the interview process can be used to develop a conversation with the participant to encourage them to engage at a deeper level with the inquirer (Van Manen, 1990). Significantly, the participating teachers revealed a third purpose of the interview, which resulted from the
opportunity for discourse. The interview served as a catalyst for teachers' voices to take shape and be exposed.

The purpose of the interview process was to provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on their experiences and capture the perceptions and recalled experiences of the participants. Interviews were semi-structured (Merriam, 1998) and defined as conversation and inquiry into the participants' perspectives and context. The semi-structured interview can be flexibly worded or a mix of more and less structured questions, but usually specific information is desired from all the respondents (Wolcott, 1997). In that case, there is a highly structured section to the interview. The interview schedule used in this inquiry is found in Appendix D.

The largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of questions is determined ahead of time (Patton, 1990). This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging view of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic. Semi-structured interviews of a teacher research inquiry follow the direction of the participants to inform inquiry because respondents define the world in unique ways (Merriam, 1998). Thus, the interview becomes a complete piece of social interaction between the researcher and participant (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995).

The success of an interview can depend on the development of the
relationship between the researcher and participant and familiarity with the respondent's background and context. My existing relationship allowed me to "relate more fully and in a more appreciative way with those being interviewed" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). It was the existing teacher relationship and experiential knowledge base that enhanced a deeper level of dialogue within the interviews. Doerr and Tinto (1999) explain that a level of trust between colleagues exists, which creates deeper, less protected communication. I am a teacher, therefore, I experience and understand the context and vocabulary of the teacher. I was able to provide a more detailed description using our common language and illuminate teachers' voices in the language of the teachers.

The language of the Book Talk teachers is expressed and exposed by presenting findings through teacher narratives. Because more researchers seem to be telling stories about teaching (Brody, 1991; Clandinin et al., 1993; Elbaz, 1991), narrative and biographical forms of research are emerging to uncover teachers' thinking about teaching (Noddings, 1991; Schubert, 1991). This represents a change in teachers' professional context because generally teachers do not author the knowledge or the publications that are presented about their work, professional development, and culture (Clark et al., 1996; Noffke, 1997). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) and others have called for the need to create teacher voice and support the role of teacher-researcher in this effort (Fay, 1992; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Patterson et al., 1993).
I intended to create a space for Book Talk teacher voices to be expressed within my research, and I purposefully engaged BT teachers in dialogue so that they were able to create their voices. I used BT teachers' voices to write an account of their experiences, sometimes presented in the Results of Data Analysis in a Readers Theater format. Readers Theater is an oral presentation that focuses mainly on the voices of the actors and is also a form of writing and disseminating knowledge that is constructed and shared in an educational community (Clark et al., 1996; Latrobe & Laughlin, 1989).

Readers Theater scripting techniques were used to present data of BT teachers' voices, which involved selecting information and adapting it to convey messages through the language of the Book Talk teachers. Scripting relied on my knowledge and understanding of the material to rework data to develop conversations among teachers regarding a central theme. The focus on voice allows teacher perspectives to be shared in their language through their story.

For example, one participant in the inquiry, Ms. Wednesday, continually referred to a specific event in her teaching career, and it was necessary to convey this event as a story. The story provided a place to describe an event that was constructed over time and that involved numerous, significant details (Brody, 1991; Hogan & Flather, 1993; Narayan, 1991). Through Ms. Wednesday's narration, I am able to express and expose a particular reality of teachers' work by using Ms. Wednesday's voice to honor her experience. Gitlin and Russell (1994) explain:
The central motivation for encouraging a dialogical approach is that it can further the aim of developing voice among those who have been silenced historically. The opportunity to speak, to question and to explore issues is an important aspect of this process. But the notion of voice can go far beyond the opportunity to speak; it can be about protest. Understood in this way, voice becomes politicized; its aim is to question what is taken for granted and to act on what is seen to be unjust in an attempt to shape and aid future educational directions (p. 186).

Interviews facilitated the voices of the BT teachers by creating a place to reflect and recount their experiences, and share their stories. Narratives provided space for BT teachers' voices to be exposed. Both interviews and narratives provided the opportunity to speak in order to speak out and be heard. The opportunity for voice, as well as an opportunity to reflect, resulted from engaging in dialogue for the purpose of interviews. The interview offered BT teachers an opportunity to verbalize and to attempt to articulate some aspects of their experiences, knowledge, and practice (Clandinin et al., 1993; Noddings, 1991). The interview was unique to contributing to the development of teachers' voices because BT teachers commonly struggled to express their voices in the school context, especially in communication with administration.

Although interviews facilitated teachers' voices, their voices did not carry over into their professional context. I observed and listened to teachers and their voices in interviews, Book Talk, as well as in staff meetings. Staff meetings were organized and directed by the administration and served as an opportunity for the administration to communicate to the teachers, resulting in one-way communication in which teachers are the recipients of information. On the other hand, the interviews engaged teachers in contributing their voices because
communication was participatory. Teachers rarely contributed their voice in staff meetings and had to raise their hand to offer opinions, ideas, or perspectives. Even in the case of Book Talk, teachers struggled in developing and negotiating their voices, as it was an uncommon experience to express voice and be heard by one's colleagues. Teachers were sometimes hesitant to share perspectives, and veteran teachers sometimes overpowered communication as they felt they possessed more experiential knowledge to share and shared more openly, thus voices were stifled.

However, teachers' voices and their perspectives were expressed freely during interview discourse because the interviews invited teachers' voices, and communication was collegial. As such, teachers trusted the interview context because it was an intimate and confidential space shared by two colleagues. Unfortunately, when teachers were not engaged in interviews, teachers' struggled in defining and exposing their voices in the school context. Thus, the teachers' voices developed from interviews did not serve as a catalyst to develop voice in their professional context. Fortunately, teachers did find and create their voices to contribute to the discussion on professional development by engaging in the teacher research process.

Journals

Journals served as an additional method to narrate Book Talk teacher experiences, as well as triangulate data (Patton, 1990). DeMott (1990) suggests
that "we write and read in order to know each other's responses, to connect ourselves more fully with the human world, and to strengthen the habit of truth-telling in our midst" (p. 6). Thus, the method of journaling created an additional space for reflection (Cooper, 1991; Lee & Zuercher, 1993).

Usually written in narrative form, journals are descriptive and subjective and focus on connecting feelings, opinions, or personal experiences. Journals offered BT teachers an alternate form to narrate their experiences and create voice (Davies, Hogan & Dalton, 1993). Journal topics were semi-structured and explored questions about teaching and its relationship with the school's organizational structure, teachers' social norms, and professional development (See Appendix E for journal topics). I distributed the journal to BT teachers before leaving for the 1999 summer vacation and I used the journal as a tool for BT teachers to reflect on their practice, while they actually had the physical time for reflection. I asked for the journal to be submitted after the summer vacation.

I received some journals by mail during the summer and found one in my school mailbox at the beginning of the new school year. I did not receive journals from two of the participants.

Limitations of journaling were attributed to time and one's interest and ability in writing and reflection. Although BT teachers were familiar with the concept of student journals, teacher journals were a new experience for teachers at the site. Journals were completed on the BT teacher's own time, and I was conscious of the time issues that teachers face and the value of their time.
Journals offered a valuable place for reflection and self-exposure and provided me with a deeper knowledge and understanding about my participants before conducting interviews.

In addition to journals and interviews, BT teachers articulated their voices in response to documents. Documents published by the administration or the Board of Education created meaning and implications for the teachers' working environment, and these documents were immediately available to me because of my position as teacher-researcher.

Documents

Documents are written texts that relate some aspects of the social world, which include official documents relating to educational policy and documents produced within a school (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Documents are defined for the purpose of this study as letters, memoranda, agendas, announcements, minutes of meetings, administrative reports, and news clippings and articles of mass media. Documents refer to printed material and are cited by date received in the Results of Data Analysis. Personal communication refers to any handwritten or email communication between the teachers and myself and is also cited by date received. Public and private documents were accessible and collected from the mailbox at my site.
Documents were not a proposed method of data collection at the start of this inquiry. Book Talk teachers used documents to communicate perspectives by submitting newspaper clippings, handouts marked with their side notes, Internet material, and notes. The BT teachers voiced concerns, opinions, and feelings regarding these documents.

Documents also refer to the way in which an organization communicates with its members. The documents that teachers encountered held significance for their teaching context, thus these documents were collected and used in analysis. The documents contained policy, mandates, and communication that were discussed by teachers in Book Talk and interviews. Because documentary sources contain intended and unintended values and ideologies, documents were analyzed by understanding their literal meaning, the deeper meaning, and its meaning for whom it was intended (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). The participants informed my inquiry by using documents to communicate perspectives.

According to Gitlin and Russell (1994), the teacher research process is a process with turning points that redirect inquiry, thus it provides for a process to alter the questions asked and influence analysis as insights are gained. Insights from the discourse of Book Talk, teacher interviews, journals, and documents informed my analysis of the data, which is explored in the following discussion.
Data Analysis

Patton (1990) defined qualitative research methods as an effort to:

understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context
and interactions found there. This understanding is an end in itself, so
that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future, but to
understand the nature of that setting - what it means for participants to be
in that setting – and to be able to communicate faithfully with others (p.
41).

Qualitative inquiry is concerned with the description and explanation of
phenomena as they occur in routine, ordinary, natural environments. The point
of phenomenological research is to focus on other people's experiences through
their reflections on those experiences and to come to an understanding of the
deeper meaning or significance of an aspect of human experience in the context
of the whole human experience (Van Manen, 1990). Qualitative analysis is an
inductive, emergent, exploratory, and creative process that organizes specific
details into coherent concepts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Qualitative
researchers analyze their data by focusing upon people's perceptions,
interpretations, and meanings.

According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), qualitative data analysis
involves reworking materials, rewriting field notes, producing codes from which
categories can emerge, and comparing events across time and space. Data
collection and analysis are concurrent in a phenomenological, qualitative study.
As data is collected, compared, and analyzed, themes emerge, and these
emergent themes and their analysis redirect inquiry. Comparing data during the
collection process is a continuous part of analysis because ideas and evidence are mutually interdependent in qualitative research.

Book Talk and interview data, documents, and reflective notes were coded by using a constant comparative method to analyze data (Stake, 1997). Coding is an integral part of qualitative data analysis and simultaneously involves mechanically reducing data, and analyzing and categorizing it (Merriam, 1998). To create themes, I used shared characteristics that emerged across data, as well as looked for patterns of similarities and differences. The common and unique patterns that emerged were examined by three levels of coding, developed by Strauss (1987). The first level of coding involved identifying and categorizing information about the data. At the second level of coding, I interpreted constructs related to the ongoing analysis by linking concepts to each other in terms of similarities, differences, opposites, and uniqueness. The final level of coding specifically selected and connected themes that were related to the major themes of the inquiry. The coding process created themes for the data, as well as allowed themes to emerge. Although I had interview topics surrounding issues of professional development and the school's organizational structure, it was the participants' dialogue that created themes and informed my analysis.

In addition to analyzing participant interviews and Book Talk discourse, my own descriptive and reflective notes were analyzed. I followed themes for analyzing interviews and conversational material as outlined by Hitchcock and
Hughes (1995, p. 173). I developed a familiarity with the transcript by undertaking multiple readings. My first reading involved editing the transcripts by listening to the tape-recorded interviews, my second reading entailed coding and analyzing the data, and the third and final reading sought out data for further evidence and clarification.

The analysis of data was an ongoing, emergent process. I used transcripts, field notes, documents, literature, and reflection to synthesize and formulate findings by isolating general units of meaning and extracting themes that frequented the dialogue. Significant themes such as voice, learning, isolation, contradictions, uncertainties, conflicts, society, policy, and authority emerged from the discourse. I examined the themes by relating them to the focus of my inquiry in light of the relationship between Book Talk, professional development, and the school's organizational structure. I further extracted themes surrounding definitions and understandings of professional development and its impact for Book Talk teachers. Themes related to the professional, curricular, and social realities of the teachers' environment emerged during the analysis of data, specifically the influence of outside experts and authority in teachers' professional context, the isolating work of teaching, and the lack of teacher participation in decision-making for the school context, teaching, learning, and curricula. In addition, themes surrounding reflection and the opportunity and significance of the teacher research process emerged from interview discourse and became a secondary focus of data analysis.
At this point, I discuss the notions of validity and reliability within a teacher research inquiry. When teacher research is pursued, the criteria of validity and reliability are redefined from traditional standards on which research is judged, and these standards are taken up in the following discussion.

**Validity and Reliability**

As educational researchers, we have an obligation to render studies that are valid and reliable (Patton, 1990). Validity and reliability are the criteria that set standards on which research is judged. Because teacher research is different from traditional research and its purposes, traditional definitions of reliability and validity must be altered. The criteria of validity and reliability within a qualitative, teacher research framework differ from traditional standards on which research is judged because qualitative research is inductive (Mishler, 2000).

The qualitative paradigm differs significantly from the traditional, quantitative paradigm of research. In quantitative research, the researcher collects data and condenses them into numbers, and then manipulates the numbers to represent empirical facts. On the other hand, qualitative researchers continually look for patterns throughout data collection and create new concepts and theory by blending together empirical evidence and abstract concepts (Ragin, 1987; Strauss, 1987). Primarily, qualitative research is based on narratives, which are often contextual (Brody, 1991). Quantitative research, which relies on a standardized set of data analysis techniques and builds on
applied mathematics, have set the standards for traditional forms of research (Ragin, 1987).

Traditional forms of research achieve validity and reliability through systematic examinations and by providing findings that are generalizable across contexts. Reliability in quantitative research involves duplicating procedures and applying results. However, in qualitative research, it is suggested that procedures should be allowed to evolve within a specific study and change to adhere to the given needs and priorities of a particular population (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ulichny, 1997).

In both qualitative and quantitative contexts, validity refers to the extent to which the researcher collects material and presents a true and accurate picture of what is claimed is being described (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). In qualitative research, validity is based on information that accurately represents the thoughts, feelings, and actions of those involved (Kochendorfer, 1994; Mishler, 2000). Reliability focuses on the need to examine the significance and nature of the research technique itself and the influence of the researcher. In qualitative research, validity and reliability evolve from a mutual process pursued by the participants and the researcher that recognizes the context of study (Brizuela et al., 2000).

My teacher research inquiry, by its very nature, is context specific. Therefore, reliability and validity in this study was not based on duplicating procedures or producing findings for the general population of teachers. For the
purpose of this inquiry, validity and reliability were concerned with the degree to which findings captured the reality of the situation. The perception of the research findings as plausible and accurate to the situation was addressed through prolonged engagement, triangulation, and critical reflection.

Prolonged engagement requires that the inquirer "spend a long enough time to become oriented to the situation...to be certain the context is thoroughly appreciated and understood" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 302). My membership in the context afforded me appreciation and understanding of the situation. The result was greater depth in analysis and the potential to increase the validity of the data.

Validity can also be strengthened by triangulation (Patton, 1990). Triangulation involves using more than one method to collect data that results in different types of data (Stake, 1997). Teacher perspectives were collected through observation, interviews, journals, and documents that served as a form of communication. Validity is developed in teacher research by the communication between the researcher and participants. Reflecting on my role and relationship with the inquiry also enhances validity.

Critical reflection on my roles as researcher-self and the significance of the teacher research process is presented as a confessional tale in the reflexive account found in Appendix A. Confessional tales contain accounts of fieldwork that reveal the critical reflexivity of the researcher (Van Manen, 1990). My tale is
a written reflection of my role and the participants' experiences in the teacher research process.

This study did not provide generalizability among results. The search was for an understanding of a particular professional development model in its complexity. To suggest that this research is replicable contradicts the very nature of the uniqueness of this study because teacher research is a process of inquiry that is informed by its participants and has possibilities to change in relation to the particular context and discourse of the participants.

This inquiry did provide thick description that should paint a clear picture of this professional development model, implemented in this setting, at this time, with this group of teachers. The significance and value of qualitative research methods for teacher-researchers lie in their ability to reconstruct faithfully the realities from the participants' viewpoint (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1994). I facilitate the reconstruction of Book Talk teachers' realities from their perspectives by selecting methods and procedures that provide a complete picture. Data was collected by methods of participant observation, interviews, journals, and documents. Book Talk teachers were always available for follow-up questioning and clarification. Triangulation of methods and reflection strengthened the validity of this inquiry. I explore my personal assumptions, biases, and how they came into play during the study and provide explicit description for my role and status within the site and within the context for study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Being reflective was an integral part of the teacher researcher process. My study
is valid and reliable in that the researcher's role is recognized and contextualized, and the inquiry followed the reality of the researcher's and participants' shared context and the emerging themes.

Themes that emerged from my analysis are defined and discussed through the emergent voices of the participating teachers. In some parts of the text, I synthesized the BT teachers' voices into a written account of their experiences, but more often, I used their voices in their language to describe their experiences. All quoted material in the text represents Book Talk teachers' voices from Book Talk and interviews. Material from journals, documents, notes, and personal communications are cited by author, name, and date. Book Talk dialogue is cited by BT, date, and page number. When any of the five participants are cited from Book Talk discourse, their name is included, which signifies that the Book Talk teachers' voices were a result of Book Talk discourse. Interview material is cited by speaker, date, and page number. Other teachers from Marylin School, who did not participate in the study, but are referenced in teachers' discourse, are referred to by the title, Ms. and the name of a month; administrators are indicated by the title, Mrs. All teachers and administrators cited in the study are given pseudonyms and referred to by female titles, to further protect anonymity.
Participant Character Sketch

Background information about participants is provided for the reader to develop a sense of characterization before entering into the script in the following chapter of the Results of Data Analysis. Because I focus on Book Talk teachers' positions, understandings, and beliefs about teaching, the following background information describes BT teachers' identities through their role as teachers, rather than identified by their personal history.

Ms. Monday

Ms. Monday is the instructional coordinator of the school, which positions her in an administrative role. She was a classroom teacher for six years and has been in her present job title for three years. Ms. Monday identifies with her teacher role, as well as recognizes her position in the hierarchy of schooling, and this creates conflicts in her work.

Ms. Monday has a master's degree in Special Education and is currently working on her administrative certification. She was one of the author's of the Annenberg Grant and coordinated Friday Book Talk for teachers, which included writing memos, organizing time and schedules, and ordering and buying books.

Ms. Monday is active in her community, participates on the community LSC, and promotes diversity and multiculturalism. Her definition of teaching involves caring, learning, optimism and seeing the "big picture."
A teacher is somebody who cares about the kids. Somebody who cares about society. There has to be, even if the teacher is not conscious of it, some kind of optimism, constant optimism. Teachers need to be able to step back and see the big picture. Those are the two operatives, optimism and the big picture (3-18-99, p. 8).

Ms. Tuesday

Ms. Tuesday has been teaching at the primary grade level for more than twenty years. She has taught at six different schools, both private and public, under seven different administrators. Ms. Tuesday currently teaches the first grade, gifted classroom and is dedicated to her students. Colleagues have described Ms. Tuesday as an expert teacher. Ms. Tuesday earned her master's degree eight years ago in a program that focused on the practice of reflective teaching, and her philosophy of teaching resulted from her master's program. “Know thyself so that you’re not in the way of your relationship with your students” (9-15-99, p. 22).

Ms. Tuesday’s priority, the students, always takes precedent over herself and her teacher needs. Ms. Tuesday is a giver. The principal has told her on more than one occasion to “slow down...take ten minutes for yourself each day to sit down in your classroom” (9-22-99, p. 11). Ms. Tuesday is looking for a balance in her teaching between the cognitive, social, and emotional, and she is concerned over subject matter knowledge. Most importantly to Ms. Tuesday, she believes that “ultimately you just have to care about kids” (Note, 9-15-99, p. 2). She teaches because she finds teaching exciting.
It's a wonderful event to hear and read and listen to children and what their thoughts are. I still don't hear enough of them and continue to desire to ask really good questions (Document, 12-99).

**Ms. Wednesday**

Ms. Wednesday has been teaching for three years, and two of those years as the first grade, community teacher. As a beginning teacher, her struggles are ongoing as she develops her teacher identity. Her roles and definitions of teaching change as she learns from her teaching experiences. Ms. Wednesday currently defines teaching as meeting each child’s individual needs. She is aware that students have lives outside of the school and is sensitive to their feelings. She cares and gets to know the whole child. She not only helps her students grow “intellectually but often emotionally too” (Journal, p. 1).

Ms. Wednesday takes responsibility for continuing education with student motivation in mind. Ms. Wednesday is currently taking classes for her master’s degree at a city university. She believes that, “most importantly you have to realize that learning never stops. I’m still learning; the kids are always going to learn. It just never ends. It’s just part of it” (Journal, p. 5). Ms. Wednesday teaches because she loves learning and wants the chance to help children. “Hopefully, they will love learning too” (Document, 12-99).

Ms. Wednesday’s participation in this study was unique. Ms. Wednesday volunteered to participate in the spring of 1999 and a preliminary interview was conducted. In June of that school year, Ms. Wednesday was informed that her teaching was unsatisfactory and was instructed to look for a new teaching
position. Although Ms. Wednesday was no longer a teacher at my site and participant in Book Talk at the time of official data collection (1999-2000), her initial interest in the study and her two year, consistent participation in Book Talk defined her candidacy for involvement in this study.

Ms. Thursday

Ms. Thursday has been a seventh and eighth grade teacher for over six years at three different public schools under the direction of three different administrators. The previous year, Ms. Thursday received an award for the most improved teacher at Marylin School.

Ms. Thursday holds a bachelor’s degree and furthers her learning by attending workshops and seminars. Her philosophy of teaching highlights students as the priority. “An effective teacher is someone who is concerned about the child’s learning environment, what they’re learning, and that they’re capable of learning” (Journal, p. 4). Ms. Thursday teaches because she loves the learning process. “I love to work with kids, and most of all that is learning. Learning is a continuous process ...you can never learn too much or know too much” (Document. 12-99).

Ms. Friday

Ms. Friday has been a teacher for thirty-six years. She has taught all ages and “enjoys it” (Document, 12-99). She has worked at six different public
schools, directed by five different administrative styles. Ms. Friday holds a master's degree in administration, and with all of her experience, colleagues regard her as a source of information. She believes, "knowledge equals power" (Note, 9-16-99, p. 3).

When Ms. Friday first decided to become a teacher, she thought that to teach meant accessing status in the community where she lived. She believed that now as a teacher, she was a member of the professional community; she was "no longer just a secretary" (Journal, p. 1). At the end of her first semester of teaching, she thought to teach meant to get the class on task and keep them there until the end of the year. Currently she defined teaching as getting to know her students, helping them get on task, understanding their problems and fears, and helping them to become better citizens. Ms. Friday realizes that she has "become more individual oriented in her teaching" (Journal, p. 1).

Her teaching practice instills lifelong, authentic, and connected learning in her students. "I am authoritarian but also enjoy seeing students self-reflect and evaluate" (Document, 12-99). Ms. Friday teaches because she can.

I love to model thoughts, attitudes, and skills to and for my students. I thoroughly understand learning. It is social, intellectual, and very, very emotional. I am very happy teaching. It is very tiring, and I am healthily exhausted at night (Document, 12-99).

These characters are scripted into three chapters of the Results of Data Analysis. The following chapter, Chapter IV, sets the context for professional development and narrates the realities of BT teachers' professional context. The discussion is organized into two sections. The first section describes the
professional contradictions that Book Talk teachers encounter as result of influences from outside participants of the educational context such as, educational researchers and experts, the common isolation of teachers, and the hierarchical organization of schools. In the second section of this discussion, Book Talk teachers describe the curricular conflicts they face in teaching and learning as these teachers were again influenced by outsiders, who centralized and instituted curricular policy, which often times lead to teachers having to make choices for their students based on the reality of the teaching and learning context and policy directives. In this reality, Book Talk teachers encounter various complications and obstacles to teaching and learning, as well as professional development, and these obstacles are defined as the professional contradictions and curricular conflicts of teachers' professional context.
Chapter IV

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

TEACHER TALK: DISCOURSE SURROUNDING THE PROFESSIONAL AND CURRICULAR REALITIES OF TEACHING

Schools are the arenas in which the struggle over ideas, values, and power in society are acted out (Apple, 1995; Goodlad, 1991), thus complex and overlapping political, cultural, and social contexts are embedded in the school environment (Apple, 1990b; Britzman, 1992; Lipman, 1998). Apple (1995) recognizes that "in the politics of everyday school life, in the ideology and practice of curriculum, and in social interaction, dominant social relations are reproduced and contested, influencing curricular policy and decisions and institutional norms and values" (p. 218). Considering this perspective, the dominant culture can control what is considered legitimate knowledge, based on what best serves its interests, thereby deciding what is taught or reproduced in schools (Apple, 1990b, 1995, 1996; Lipman, 1997, 1998). Hence, the curriculum serves the dominant culture, and schools and teachers are responsible for maintaining the status quo (Apple, 1990b; Goodlad, 1991). In this view, teachers are defined as persons whose professional activity involves the transmission of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are stipulated in a formal curriculum to students enrolled in an educational institution (Hensel, 1991). Consequently, some believe that teaching has been automated (Elkind, 1997; Schmoker, 1997).
Furthermore, it has been recognized that teachers work in a system overwhelmed by organizational and technical demands (Caldwell, 1997; Cooper, 1998; Day, 1997), and because of recent school failures, there has been an emphasis on tighter control over schools as evident in reform efforts surrounding efficiency, accountability, and standardization (Cohen, 1996; Howe, 1995; Ladd, 1996). Accountability often results from school reform agendas, instituted in schools to bring about change. This change is often conceived of in an oversimplistic manner without considering the realities of schools (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Grant & Murray, 1999). As a result of certain accountability measures, teachers are required to transmit designated information to students with high stake decisions being made based on standardized performance tests (Johnson, 1996; Kohn, 1999; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). Thus, in this view of schools, schools are reduced to institutions measured by input and output, whose value is determined by the efficiency in which it produces products (Apple, 1990b; Howe, 1995).

Political, cultural, and social influences of education contribute to teachers' understanding of school culture and their professional context, and because professional development occurs within the school context, political, cultural, and social influences contribute to its possibilities. The new paradigm of professional development describes opportunities for learning as a continual part of the teacher's working environment (Darling-Hammond, 1999; 1997; Lieberman & Miller, 1990; McLaughlin, 1997; Renyi, 1998), and by applying this understanding
of professional development to Book Talk teachers' professional context, it was found that meaningful professional development was limited in their reality. Some believe that the organizational structure of the school and the influence of current reform efforts are not conducive to continuous learning (Day, 1997; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; Matlin & Short, 1992). As Book Talk teachers commented on the reality of their professional context, they reported:

Test scores are a media circus. National curriculum in a perfect world. Lawsuits create rules. The CEO takes teachers out of schools on professional development days. Teachers are women; people in charge are men. Teachers perpetuate the system. We are treated like children, and so we behave like children (Ms. Monday, Ms. Thursday, Ms. Friday, Note, 10-27-99 and 11-10-99).

As Book Talk teachers described their demanding context, they revealed struggles that impacted and defined their professional context, thus the context for professional development. Some believe that because teachers lack power to govern their daily work and continue to be employed subordinates, building a culture of professional development often conflicts with the current organizational structure of schools and wider educational policy (Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Goodlad, 1990; Hargreaves, 1997a; Rosenholtz, 1989). In the participating teachers' immediate context, The Chicago Union Teacher recognized advancing the professional development of teachers and reported that "the lack of time and opportunity for any professional activities other than the direct instruction of students" is limiting professional development opportunities and slowing down reform (Fitch-Blanks, 2000, p. 11). Thus, teachers have limited professional development opportunities to seek collegial knowledge and support to cope with
demands (Callan, 1998; Day, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997). Book Talk teachers' discourse provides evidence of this, and they exposed and explored their demanding realities in two discussions surrounding the professional contradictions and curricular conflicts of their professional context.

Professional contradictions describe the discrepancies that arise in teachers' work as a result of teachers' limited influence in their professional context. Currently, teachers endure growing disparities in their work between the professed and mandated knowledge of teaching developed by educational experts and the experienced knowledge of teachers (Fullan, 1991; Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996; 2000). Educational experts and their recommendations can limit teachers' influence and contribution to the knowledge of teaching because their knowledge and recommendations have the potential to set precedence in the teachers' professional context. More significantly, isolation, which results from the schedule of the teaching day, limits teachers' influence in developing knowledge about teaching by limiting teachers' opportunities to engage in collegial interaction and professional development (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Callan, 1998; Johnson, 1990).

Teachers encounter contradictions in their work as a result of the formalization of the school and the hierarchy of authority, which influence teachers' professional context by creating rules, procedures, and instructions that are communicated to teachers in a top-down directive (Cheng, 1996; Hargreaves, 1997a; Johnson, 1990; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999).
Outsiders have the potential to influence and direct teachers' professional work because of their positions of power in the hierarchical structure of schools. Teachers often lack power as a result of their subordinate position in the organizational structure of the school, which can result in teachers' lack of participation in decisions surrounding tasks associated with their work, the context for teaching and learning, and their professional development (Cooper, 1988; Matlin & Short, 1992; McMurtry, 1992). Book Talk teachers' realities contradict recommendations for improving professional development because teachers are isolated from other members of the teaching culture, and their professional context is commonly directed by educational experts, but furthermore, because teachers are subordinates in the school's organizational structure, and these realities create professional contradictions for them.

Book Talk teachers' professional development was further impacted by the curricular conflicts in their professional context. Curricular conflicts surround the discrepancy between the application of teachers' experiential knowledge base and the application of curricular policy, which often prescribes curriculum that can lead to automating teachers' practice (Brooks, 1991; McClure, 1991; Spillane, 1994). Furthermore, curricular policy does not often account for the realities of the teaching and learning context, especially students' specific needs (Eisner, 1994; Schwab, 1983; Shkedi, 1998). Therefore, teachers are forced to make decisions for curriculum and their students based on their unique knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning context. Because
teachers make choices based on their realities, they deviate from the mandated and prescribed curriculum, thus creating curricular conflicts for their work.

Although teachers apply their knowledge to the immediate context of teaching and learning, teachers do not commonly contribute their knowledge to discussions surrounding curriculum development (Howe, 1995; Schwab, 1983; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). Curricular policy, usually developed by outside experts to the educational context, further reduces teachers' influence and opportunity to contribute to the development of their practice and professional development. It has been recognized that in public education, the politicians, bureaucrats, and citizens influence and make decisions about the most effective constructs for learning, and thus for teaching (Apple, 1990a; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Howe, 1995; Lieberman, 1988). However, these outsiders and their decisions are sometimes uninformed, and consequences from their decisions can contradict teachers' professional work and growth, as Book Talk teachers reveal throughout this chapter. In the first discussion of this chapter, the teachers describe the influences in their professional context that limit professional development, and by doing so they illuminate the professional contradictions of their professional context.
To better understand Book Talk teachers' professional contradictions, it is first necessary to examine the definition of teaching because teaching defined as a profession is a contradiction in itself. According to Shanker (1997), a professional is someone, who by virtue of his or her expertise, has a high degree of decision-making power, exhibits a strong and specific knowledge base, exhibits control over their practice, and establishes and executes standards. Currently, teachers work within and for a system not created or controlled by teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Howe, 1995). Although Book Talk teachers possessed a strong and specific knowledge base, like other professionals, they rarely contributed their knowledge to the profession. The teachers' voices and influence were lacking from the formal knowledge of education, and decisions made for the teachers' professional work and growth, and Book Talk teachers recognized minimal opportunities for developing their knowledge base, thus BT teachers' realities did not describe Shanker's (1997) definition of a profession.

Teacher's work has been characterized as that of a profession, as well as a craft. Competence for a craft professional is based on various skills and practices that reflect a different sort of knowledge base (Pratte & Rury, 1983). Craft professionals are members of a guild that provides community based support, in which teaching, learning, and reflecting occur within the guild. Book
Talk teachers' knowledge bases represented knowledge of a craft, however, the teachers did not participate in a guild, and a contributing factor to the absence of a guild may be attributed to teachers' working schedule, which isolates them from other members of their culture. The participating teachers reported a lack of socialization in their work reality, which also contributed to the teachers' lack of opportunities for growth and support. Thus, teaching is neither a craft, nor a profession, according to its formal definitions and Book Talk teachers' realities.

In CPS, teaching constitutes fulfilling duties and responsibilities, as evident in the following formal description of teachers' work, which was distributed to Marylin School teachers at a staff meeting to inform and remind them of their responsibilities (Note, 10-28-99).

Classroom teachers shall take charge of the divisions or classes assigned to them by the principals. They shall be responsible for the instruction, progress, and discipline of their classes, and shall devote themselves exclusively to their duties during school hours. These responsibilities shall include but shall not be limited to the following categories: Instructions, planning, use of appropriate instructional methods, and evidence of competence in subject matter taught or services provided. Teachers shall render assistance in the educational program in the school-wide environment and demonstrate effective classroom management. Teachers shall promote positive relationships with pupils and community members and shall adhere to the professional responsibilities and personal standards promulgated by the Chicago Public Schools (CPS Document, 10-28-99).

Teaching in CPS is defined by detailed tasks and specifications, and demands competence, but does not include continuous and built-in opportunities for learning. Book Talk teachers were overwhelmed by their responsibilities.
dictated by CPS, and there was never enough time to meet all the demands, let alone continuously learn. As one Book Talk teacher put it:

I spend the whole day with the kids, but I'm expected to grade papers, keep records up, write letters home, and call parents. You know all that stuff that you do everyday. Keep up with the kids who are not doing their work. Have conferences. All that stuff that you do, all of that goes home with me. I have boxes of papers that I have to grade at home. I can't see how they can possibly think you're doing all this in six hours and actually working with the kids (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 8).

The demanding realities of the Book Talk teachers' context were often times attributed to the school's organizational structure (Cheng, 1996). Teaching takes place within an organizational structure based on a hierarchy of authority, which directed and sometimes controlled the Book Talk teachers' professional context. The teachers were required to follow rules, procedures, and instructions of their work, including their professional development, communicated by a top-down directive. Book Talk teachers' subordinate position in the hierarchy of authority facilitated by the school's organizational structure restricted the teachers from making decisions about their work, school policies, and the allocation of resources for the school and their professional development. Instead, outsiders of the educational context were involved in decision-making, and the ramifications of those decisions directed the teachers' work and growth.

Traditionally, outsiders have been charged with the surveillance of the profession's affairs and do not believe that they require teachers' participation (Kerr, 1987; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). As one Guest teacher of Book Talk realizes:
I was listening to reports on the news about teacher remediation and teacher probation — academic probation, and I kept hearing administrative points of view, politician points of view, public figures' points of view, but I never heard a teacher's point of view (Guest, BT, 11-12-99, 1).

Currently, there is a concern with the quality and qualifications of teachers (Haertel, 1991; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997), and outsiders, who do not participate in the teaching and learning context, are remediating teachers, therefore controlling the standards of the teaching profession. Teachers' voices are deficient in the discussion of their profession and current quality of their work (Fay, 1992; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Livingston, 1992), and this may be attributed to the following factors; teachers work in isolation, are not involved in knowledge production, and are subjected to outside control of their work (Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999).

Teachers' professional work is mainly defined by outsiders and directed by the school's organizational structure, and this reality creates contradictions for teachers' work and growth. In the following sections, Book Talk teachers describe professional contradictions of their work, which are obstacles to professional development, by exposing the reality of the influence of educational researchers and experts, isolation, and the school's organizational structure in their professional context.
The Influence of Educational Researchers and Experts in the Educational Context

A reality exists that teachers rely on judgments of outsiders, rather than collaborating with other teachers and engaging in continuous quality control over their own work and knowledge, as most professions do (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997). The most obvious contradiction for BT teachers' work and growth existed between the educational research of outside experts, which influenced teaching and learning, and the teachers' knowledge and understanding of their work. According to Gitlin & Russell (1994), research, as currently conceptualized, “allows a small segment of the educational community to produce a specialized form of knowledge that is typically considered more objective or at the very least more insightful than the knowledge produced from experience” (p. 184).

Thus, in this perspective, educational researchers who are considered experts are supposed to discover and make recommendations for teaching and learning, while teachers are supposed to implement their recommendations, which commonly fail in practice (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999). Failure may be attributed to the misunderstanding that researchers make recommendations, which are contextual and must be reflected upon, and are not meant to provide solutions. However, the reality is these recommendations are often interpreted as remedies, and sometimes are the single and imposed source of knowledge of the teachers' professional context. Failure may also be attributed to the
contradiction that the teacher, who directly affects learning for students, is not considered an expert, and yet, those who are not immediate participants in the teaching context are considered the experts, and direct teaching and learning, which is the professional work of teachers. Ms. Wednesday comments:

I don't like to hear a lot of stuff on research and all those things. I'm bored. Research is good as far as to tell you, well, this is why you should use it, but, otherwise, it just seems like I've already been through that (4-29-99, 2).

According to Ms. Wednesday, research was boring, redundant, and limited. Smylie and Kahne (1997) suggest that because the scholarly research community often times produces knowledge that is removed and irrelevant from the needs of practice, a disparity in knowledge grows. Hiebert and Stigler (1999) attribute a gap in knowledge to the understanding that researchers “do not have the same access to the same information that teachers have as they confront real students in the context of real lessons with real learning goals” (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 126). “The knowledge that teachers develop in their work differs from the knowledge of educational researchers and outside experts” (Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997, p. 204), because teaching is based on tactic knowledge, as well as experience. For example, as a beginning teacher, Ms. Wednesday clearly recognized the disparities that exist between formal knowledge implemented in teacher education programs and experiential knowledge, and she reflects:

Why didn’t they teach me this at school? You’re hired, you’re new, and you’re thinking, I’m supposed to know this. It makes me think of phonics when I started teaching first grade. I didn’t see anything with phonics.
You didn’t do anything with phonics in the university because at the time whole language was the thing (4-29-99, 12).

I was a student teacher for an entire school year and there’s still so much that you don’t know. There are so many little things that I mean you really don’t do until you’re completely in charge. Like all the technicalities, the attendance book, and grades, and all those things that you do with your mentor teacher, but you don’t actually have complete control when you’re the student teacher. It is tough (4-29-99, 4).

Ms. Wednesday’s formal education lacked significance for her teaching reality because she was informed by a single, theoretical trend, and felt unprepared to meet technical requirements of her work. Formal education, which validates educational research, does not always account for the contextual experience of teaching (Smylie & Kahne, 1997).

Practicing teachers rate their own classroom experiences as their most valuable sources of education (Howey & Collinson, 1995; Lampert, 1999; NFIE, 1994), and according to BT teachers, this is because formal education overlooks the realities of teaching by instituting teaching as technique, and by ignoring the preparation of teachers for the record keeping tasks in their work, which is a significant part of teachers’ work, according to the CPS’s definition of teaching. Formal education only partially prepared Book Talk teachers for their work with students, and this may result from the fact that formal education was directed by outside experts to the teaching and learning context. Ms. Thursday explains that:

I think I received the most information from seeing other classrooms, or because of teachers that can tell you how to teach. They can give me some advice. I always say, no one way is the best way. You can always add something...nothing in any of these [text] books can prepare you for it.....They [teachers] need to do more observations, they need to see different settings, they need to know that this is the real world....Did you
get that degree? It doesn't prepare you for it. I mean especially this job. Trial and error (11-18-99, 19-20).

Ms. Thursday recognized the lack of preparation from her formal education in her work, and sought members of her culture for ideas and knowledge to learn about and improve the cultural practice of teaching. Teachers who want to build a professional culture develop their professional knowledge based on experience and practice and depend on each other for professional information because teaching results from informal learning and participation in the school context over time (Britzman, 1992; Bullough, 1992; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999).

Currently, developing teacher's knowledge and shifting the role of teacher in research has been recommended to build a professional culture of learners (Berlin, 1996; NFIE, 1994; Tompkins, 1996; Saurino, 1994). A new paradigm of teaching promotes images of the teacher as intellectual, researcher, inquirer, and curriculum planner (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Lampert, 1999). However, teachers have always been intellectuals, researchers, inquirers, and curriculum planners, but now the new paradigm is suggesting that teachers' influence and experiences should gain recognition in the professed work of teaching. Hiebert and Stigler (1999) suggest that "if we could find a way to marshal the efforts and experiences of classroom teachers, the potential is far greater than anything that could be achieved by a few thousand researchers" (p. 136).
However currently, teachers "have not yet developed a tradition of sharing expertise amongst themselves" (Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997, p. 206). Professional development opportunities can provide a tradition for sharing, however, a collaborative culture of teachers is far from being constructed because teachers frequently experience influence from educational researchers and experts, and mainly because teachers work in isolation.

Isolation contradicts the culture of teaching by prohibiting communication and collegial and social relationships, which prevents learning from other members of the teaching culture. Some of the most widespread attributes of teaching are unknown because teaching is a cultural activity that takes place in isolation, according to Hiebert and Stigler (1999). Although teachers can improve their practice from experience and by sharing with other teachers, teachers work alone and away from members of their culture, thus creating an additional professional contradiction and impediment to professional development. Book Talk teachers illuminate the reality of developing a culture of teachers engaged in continuous learning and growth by exposing the reality of isolation in their work. Isolation further impedes professional development for teachers by ignoring the cultural practice of teaching and limiting opportunities for teachers' to share their knowledge and come to voice.
The Isolating Work of Teaching

It is recognized that the common isolation of teachers prohibits communication about their practice with other teachers and makes it difficult for the individual teacher to verify collegial claims (Bathen, 2000; Johnson, 1990; Ladson-Billing, 1997; Lortie, 1975). Although teachers' practice and development rely on support, collegiality, and the knowledge base of teachers, the environment in which teachers work has been structured in ways that actually work against communication and collaboration (Callan, 1998; Day, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). The schedule of the teaching day contributes to a teaching culture whose members work in isolation, as evident in Ms. Wednesday's schedule.

I don't really see any of the teachers at all. I'm really isolated. Like for 8:30 to 9:00 I'm already teaching the kindergarten morning class. And then after school, 2:30 to 3:00, everybody is going and I'm still teaching the afternoon class. There's the social committee but that's not going to work either. Social committee is like from 8:30 to 9:00 and I'm already with the class at that point. And so I don't socialize with the teachers at all. I talk to you, but other teachers, basically I don't see them at all (10-12-99, 8-19, 24).

Ms. Wednesday recognized that the opportunity for her participation in this teacher-research inquiry provided her with an opportunity to communicate with another teacher, which was a unique opportunity. Teachers involved in this study were clearly isolated from other teachers because they were confined to their classrooms and also because they were accountable for students. By law,
Chicago Public School teachers cannot leave students unattended. Thus, CPS teachers are accountable for children every second of the school day because "we are liable for the students" (Ms. Friday, Note, 9-16-99). As one Book Talk teacher puts it: "This is just like a work camp" (Ms. Friday, 10-21-99). Ms. Wednesday explains, "For one reason or another, I had no preps and couldn't take a bathroom break. I had to buzz [intercom] the office to be relieved" (Journal, 4). Ms. Wednesday could not leave her students unattended because she was liable. Not only was it inhumane and unprofessional for Ms. Wednesday to work without the use of a bathroom, but it was also degrading and demeaning to have to request one, and this was a typical mode of communication for teachers as they were with students in their classrooms for a majority of the school day.

Even outside the classroom walls, the teachers' priority must always be the student. "Playground doesn't [offer time for social relationships] because I'm very serious about watching my kids. I think I did more [socializing] last year, but I'm more afraid this year" (Ms. Tuesday, 9-29-99, 13). The principal reminded Marylin School teachers who were on playground duty, "Don't talk to other adults. You are there to talk to the kids" (Document, 10-25-99). Book Talk teachers' main priority in their work was the students because teachers are accountable, and schools are liable for students.

The work of teachers controls one's daily interactions so that most take place with children (Goodlad, 1990; Office of Policy and Planning, 1998;
Rosenholtz, 1989), thus time to communicate with other teachers is limited, thereby making it difficult for teachers to develop social relationships. “You don’t really have a social relationship. There’s not really time. Time is a major factor” (Ms. Thursday, 10-28-99, 13). Ms. Thursday further explains:

You wouldn’t really have time to socialize unless it’s in the lunch, and you only got twenty minutes. You’re trying to get your stuff done for the next day, or that day. You might have a need to make a call or do something, and you don’t have time to really socialize (9-28-99, 3).

Some teachers actually use their 20 minutes in the lunchroom. I eat in my room. I take the kids down [to the cafeteria], and I zoom around here. I might take 5 minutes while I’m eating — actually eating — to just stare out the window and to reevaluate my mood or something like that (Ms. Tuesday, 9-15-99, 24-25).

During teachers’ only opportunity to socialize, the Book Talk teachers used their lunch period by isolating themselves to meet the demands of their work. Because many teachers regard their social relationships as secondary to their commitment to students (Cooper, 1988; Grant & Murray, 1999; Lortie, 1975), teacher socialization and building social relationships were not a priority for BT teachers because it took time away from their work and required giving extra time outside of school. According to Ms. Wednesday, “more and more teachers I think at the end of the day, they just wanna go home and they don’t want to think about work any more” (10-12-99, 8-19). As Book Talk teachers explain:

I only socialize with one person after school, and we don’t even socialize that much. It’s your space when you go home, that’s it. You have your other things. I have my other things, so we don’t socialize much.... might socialize a little bit before school or pass in the hall like to change classes.
Other than that, that's it. You know, if we just want to talk, we just talk after school at home on the phone (Ms. Thursday, 9-28-99, 3).

Ms. June and Ms. September and I are friends. And we'd like to make it outside of school, but we don't have time. Relationships are so, so important to me, and I want to have the time for them, and there's part of me that doesn't want to extend too much more because I want to have quality in the relationships that I have now. So that's where it boils down to. It's just a matter of figuring out the time (Ms. Tuesday, 9-29-99, 10-11).

Social relationships required teachers to give time after and outside of school because social relationships could not be maintained during school, while teachers were isolated from each other. Book Talk teachers recognized their lack of effort in building social relationships, and attributed this to pressures of time. Because the time and opportunity for communication and socialization were restricted, building collegiality, supportive relationships, as well as collegial responsibility among teachers was limited, and a lack of collegial support can be detrimental to teachers. As one Book Talk teacher realized:

When I taught, for so many years, I found I was exhausted at the end of the day and depressed because the kids didn't, and I didn't accomplish my goal....Well, when you got exhausted at the end of the day and you were depressed and you didn't have somebody to talk to, you went and you drank. We had people who were alcoholics or marijuana or whatever....I mean they would do whatever they could to get themselves ready for the next day (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 28).

According to Ms. Friday, teachers need support and receive very little of it, and because teachers lack a supportive environment, teachers struggle in their work. Even though teaching is based on knowledge and experience learned over time, isolation prevents sharing and cultivating the practice, thus limiting
support for those who are struggling. Ms. Wednesday understands the effects of isolation in teacher’s professional context and explains that:

I’m not surprised when I hear about people who have studied to be teachers and after their first year they go back and decide to be a lawyer or a businessperson. Because I know that they had that first year and no one was helping them, and they didn’t know how to look for help. It can be so stressful (4-29-99, 12).

Isolation can drive teachers to leave the profession, according to Ms. Wednesday, whose first year “was like a nightmare” (11-18-99, 5). The effects of teacher isolation impact tremendously on beginning teachers by increasing anxiety due to a limited support system (Cooper, 1988; Lortie, 1975; Rose, 1998), as evident in Ms. Wednesday’s testimony.

That first year, and I don’t know if it happens to everybody, but it was the worst year for me. I cried like two or three times. I broke down in the office. But it was just because I had reached the point where I couldn’t go to anybody, and when I finally did go to somebody, it was at the point where I was so stressed out that it wasn’t even really helpful because I went there to just break down, and say I can’t do this. I felt like I wasn’t being supported (4-29-99, 5).

A support system was clearly lacking for beginning teachers, and all teachers for that matter, according to Book Talk teachers. Ms. Thursday explains:

I’m pretty isolated. I really feel like there’s no one I can go to if I have a problem or I want to talk about something. When things got really bad with some student or whatever, I’d go to Ms. Monday, or I’d go to the principal, or other teachers. And I felt like I could go right when things were really bad. But at the same time, you kind of knew you can’t go to them too often. You get that impression, like you’re supposed to deal with this stuff in the classroom. So I was the type of teacher who dealt with this stuff in the classroom until I couldn’t take it any more (9-13-99, 23).
Ms. Thursday recognized a lack of support in her practice, and sought support as a final solution to her problem. She attributed her unsupportive environment to the overriding feeling that teachers practice and work is an individual experience. Traditionally, schools are organized around teacher separation rather than teacher interdependence (Elmore, 1990; Johnson, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Myers & Goldstein, 1997). Isolation separates teachers, thereby defines teaching as individual work, rather than collective work, and as a result of this, teachers adapt isolating behavior towards other teachers, which is counterproductive to the practice and culture of teaching. Ms. Friday explains that:

As a new teacher, you were looked at as an enemy. You weren't looked at as an equal or a peer. You have parents evaluating you, children evaluating you a little, I mean not much, but they do. And then people in administration, and your own peers...When I was a new teacher it was horrible. I'd ask them [teachers] for a piece of paper. I'd ask them for some help or something when we started school, it was terrible....Nobody would give out anything. And one teacher, who came in as a substitute, said another teacher came up to her, and said, 'do you need any pencils or anything?' She said that was the only school that anybody had ever offered something. We had teachers here when I originally came that if you asked them for a paper clip...and when they did leave, or retired, their cabinets were filled with the stuff. So I mean, it's not that they didn't have it. I mean, they just didn't share anything (5-4-99, 3-4).

Book Talk teachers recognized a lack of collegial responsibility in their professional work as a result of teacher separation and prolonged isolation. The teachers did not share materials and were not accepting of new teachers, thus they did not support new members of their culture. Rather, they evaluated new members because the teachers practiced independently, not collectively.
Because teachers are accustomed to working alone, mutual isolation is an element of the teaching culture, which further complicates collaborative, collegial, and supportive opportunities for teachers and can develop an isolating and unsupportive attitude and behavior among teachers.

Although Book Talk teachers were most commonly isolated, the teachers recognized and valued their few and unique opportunities to overcome isolation, which afforded time to develop social and collegial relationships. Book Talk teachers who did find time to socialize used the opportunity to support their practice and developed trust and collegiality through their informal relationships. "Camaraderie" was developed, according to Ms. Friday: She recalls that:

We used to sit around and have discussions because we had to. It was like a therapy group. We were going through culture shock with these kids. We were down on the West side and let's face it, we had never heard those words, so we used to help each other. And I mean we did it at school. So we used to have a lot of meetings. And we had a lunch hour, so we used to do it during our lunch hour too, which was nice. You know, we had a whole lunch hour (10-14-99, 25).

Teachers developed a system of support to meet the demands of their job because they had the time for a collegial opportunity. Book Talk teachers valued socialization, which facilitated collegiality among teachers, because the teachers engaged in supportive relationships, which was unique to the isolating practice of teaching. The communication derived from an opportunity to socialize is often times cathartic (Chase, 1995), and the Book Talk teachers felt most supported when they engaged in dialogue with other teachers (Note, 9-28-99, 8). Perhaps, teachers turn to each other to compensate for the absence of a formal system of
reassurance (Lortie, 1975). As one Book Talk teacher recognized, “I don’t receive teaching compliments. I have to tell myself it’s important” (Ms. Tuesday, Note, 5-3-00, 13). This reality was also recognized by the Guest teacher:

I think the last thing I would like to say about what was very important about my year of teaching for me as a teacher was finding connections to other teachers and other people to have as mentors...when you’re a Chicago Public School teacher you better get good at saying things to yourself because nobody else is really gonna say it (Guest, BT, 11-12-99, 7).

Teachers clearly desire support from their colleagues, however, the reality is that teachers are isolated from colleagues and lack support. Time is not built into the teaching day to develop support among teachers, and an unsupportive environment contributes to a lack of collegial responsibility among teachers, although teachers are attempting to overcome their isolating reality, as one teacher comments:

I feel very lucky now that there’s the Internet, and that there are more ways for teachers to communicate and connect with each other so it doesn’t have to be such an isolating job, and all the battles that we fight don’t have to be fought on our own... there’s other people feeling the way we’re feeling, and if we can just reach out, and connect a little bit, we can find it to bring ourselves and our profession together, and also to garner the respect that we so deserve and work towards (Guest, BT, 11-12-99, 9).

Although teachers seek other teachers to support their practice, isolation maintained by the schedule of the teaching day impedes the development of collegial and social relationships among teachers, as well as prohibits the development of teachers’ knowledge and practice. Because teachers are not accustomed to sharing their understandings and ideas (Adelman & Panton...
Walking-Eagle, 1988), teachers’ ideas and knowledge exist in isolation (Hendricks, 2001), which further restricts teachers from contributing to the knowledge of their profession and professional development (Hargreaves, 1997a).

The isolation of teachers affects the culture of teaching by creating a practice of independent work, rather than collective work. The reality is the organization of schools and the structure of the school day isolates teachers, thus creates a lack of a support system for teachers, as well as limits opportunities for collegial and collaborative professional development. In the following discussion, Book Talk teachers further extrapolate their realities by defining the influence of the school’s organizational structure on their professional context and the context for professional development.

The Demanding Realities of Teachers’ Professional Context as a Result of School Organizational Structure

Improving the workplace and organizational environment in schools has been recommended to facilitate professional development (Bathen, 2000; Day, 1997; Holmes Group, 1995; Johnson, 1990; Lieberman & Miller, 1991). The organization of schools provides the framework for teachers to perform their tasks and has been characterized as a loosely coupled organization (Ingersoll, 1999; Lortie, 1975) as well as identified by Cheng (1996) as an organization structured by a hierarchy of authority, in which teachers are subordinates within the hierarchy. According to Cheng’s (1996) understanding of the organizational
structure of schools, teachers have limited influence in decisions regarding school policies, opportunities for professional development, and tasks associated with their position, and this can hinder them from sharing their unique knowledge and experience, as well as complicate and impede teachers from carrying out their practice (Caldwell, 1997; Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; McMurtry, 1992). Book Talk teachers support Cheng's (1996) characterization of the organizational structure of schools and recognize that the hierarchy of authority has the potential to dictate teacher's practice and professional development by making demands on teachers, rather than supporting teachers. The school's organizational structure directs teachers' professional development by directing the context where teachers practice and learn.

Book Talk teachers' stories and anecdotes serve to illuminate three dimensions of the school's organizational structure that influenced their professional context. These influences include the formalization of the school, the hierarchy of authority, and teachers' participation in organizational decision-making (Cheng, 1996; Hage & Aiken, 1967; Robbins, 1990). The formalization of the school describes the rules, procedures, instructions, and communications of the school. The hierarchy of authority defines the extent to which teachers participate in decisions involving the tasks associated with their position. Organizational decision-making encompasses teachers' participation in decisions made for the school, regarding the allocation of resources and school policies. In what follows, Book Talk teachers describe the reality of their professional
context, which is influenced by the organizational structure of the school, as they
discuss the formalization of the school, the hierarchy of authority, and teachers'
participation in organizational decisions.

Formalization of the school: The influence of rules, procedures, instructions, and
communication in teachers' work

It has been recognized that the role of teachers has become increasingly
influenced by paperwork and central-office decision-making (Brooks, 1991;
Howe, 1995; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). In addition to meeting the needs of
students during the school day, "lesson plans, report cards, graded papers,
accident reports, inventories, evaluations, surveys, and request forms" demand
teachers' time and attention, according to Book Talk teachers (Note, 10-29-99).
"Teaching involves a lot of paperwork and records. I feel like it all gets in the
way. What matters monthly summaries, lunch count, attendance, passes? It
takes up precious time (Ms. Wednesday, journal, 7), and according to Ms.
Tuesday, "time that teachers would rather be giving to students" (4-28-99, 12).

Teachers face demands in their work as a result of rules, instructions,
procedures, and communication facilitated by the school's organizational
structure, and teachers are required to comply with directives. The reality is
"everything administration asks you to do as far as your job description, they
expect, well, they want this in ASAP" (Ms. Thursday, 9-8-99, 33), and because
"I'm in a public school and those are the ground rules of my working here" (Ms.
Tuesday, 9-22-99, 12).
BT teachers encountered “a whole lot of unnecessary busy work” during the school day as a result of rules, procedures, and instructions, and because accountability governs schools and teachers' professional context (Note, 9-28-99). "Your work is never done," according to Ms. Thursday. "Made to do it...grades, plans, paperwork, cover your butt" (Note, 5-2-00). "Lesson plans are to verify that I'm working" (Ms. Tuesday, 4-28-99, 17). "Another teacher I know does the lesson plans for the Board, but doesn't' use them. What's the point?" (Ms. Tuesday, Note, 9-22-99, 3). However insignificant the procedures were to the context of teaching and learning, they were significant to the teachers' professional work because these procedures ensured accountability. BT teachers explain that:

The lesson plans are for the Board of Ed. I don't use them. I really don't. It stays there on my desk....I would say it takes at least 3-5 hours just writing out the lesson plans. I could be doing other things. Oh, my lesson plans are not up to date. Shoot me. We work 40 hours a week. I'd say at least 25% of it or at least 10 hours is doing the dumbest things, I cannot believe (Ms. Wednesday, 10-12-99, 33-36).

I was busy doing the lesson plans over the weekend. It's discouraging. Just fill in the lesson plan book, even if you don't teach it. When I do the lesson plans, I think of a second career (Ms. Tuesday, Note, 5-3-00, 13).

The lesson plans wasted Book Talk teachers' time because the lesson plans were based on following rules, procedures, and instructions, and served simply as a measure of accountability and were often times seen as irrelevant to the teachers' understanding of their practice. BT teachers continually used their time after the scheduled school day to complete formalized tasks of their work, rather than to develop their own professional learning and growth, because their
time was expended by the formalized work of teaching. These teachers attest:

"You know how we have to fill out forms and do this and do this. I stayed up until midnight doing schoolwork" (Ms. Wednesday, 10-12-99, 1-4). "I give up a lot of my evening time. For instance, last night I did school work instead of putting it aside and reading the book [for Book Talk] (Ms. Tuesday, 9-22-99, 21-22).

BT teachers spent their after school time carrying out procedures and completing paperwork, and one teacher sacrificed an opportunity for her own professional growth to meet the demands of formalized paperwork. The teachers were forced to use their after school time because teacher's time during school hours was consumed by the realities of the teaching and learning context and time was not provided for teachers to complete procedural tasks of their work. Because the teachers were often expected to give time outside of the regular school day to attend to the formalized work of teaching, conflicts arose in BT teachers' professional context as a result of the demands of teachers' formalized work and the lack of time to meet these demands. Because BT teachers' professional development takes place in this reality, opportunities for professional development were limited because the teachers' time was consumed by following rules, procedures, and instructions of their work. Professional development often became secondary to meeting the demands of the formalized work of teachers.

As a result of the school's organizational structure, the teachers were instructed to follow rules and carry out procedures that were formalized by one-
way communication that was authoritatively directed. Ms. Tuesday recognizes authoritative communication in her professional context and explains: “I pretty much listen to her [principal] dictates over the years of what she’s said to me, personally. It’s nothing more than she is my principal and my boss. And she’s the one who keeps me employed. It comes down to those basic things” (Ms. Tuesday, 4-28-99, 8). Commonly, communication is initiated and directed by authority of the hierarchical structure of schools in teachers’ professional context, and according to Book Talk teachers, communication is “demanding, non-participatory, and sometimes unprofessional” (Ms. Friday, Note, 10-21-99).

Top-down communication in schools directed the teachers to follow rules, procedures, and instructions, thereby directing the teachers’ professional context, as well as their professional development, as in the case of Ms. Wednesday.

I have to go to a couple seminars on classroom management that the principal recommended I take. Like from 3:30 to 6:30, and I mean, it’s okay, but you didn’t ever actually come into the room to see if my students were out of control. But I didn’t say that. I’m thinking that in my head, and I’m like brooding over it later (Ms. Wednesday, 10-7-99, 22).

The administrator instructed Ms. Wednesday to improve her professional work and practice, and Ms. Wednesday was expected to use time after school, which is valuable to teachers, to participate in a professional development opportunity that was seen by Ms. Wednesday as uninteresting and irrelevant to her practice and professional growth. Top-down communication influenced the teachers’ understanding of professional development because outsiders sometimes directed and defined professional development for teachers and
instructions commanded by the organizational structure of schools took precedence in BT teachers' professional context.

Although Book Talk teachers were constantly inundated by the communication of rules, procedures, and instructions, they also experienced a lack of communication within their professional context, and they described this lack of communication as "not being informed" (Note, 10-21-99). Because BT teachers were uninformed, communication became contradictory. According to Ms. Monday, "there are just huge holes everywhere in communication" (10-27-99, 1). "No planning, no team, no together, no communication. I don't know, nobody tells me" (Ms. Tuesday, Note, 9-9-99). "We used to get notes from the meetings. You know like if you couldn't go to the meeting...there would be a summary of the meeting....And since the computer age came, we don't get bulletins. We always got bulletins" (Ms. Friday, 5-4-99, 9). The teachers were uniformed about their professional context in the age of information. A lack of information in BT teachers' work was attributed to communication that was one-way directed, rather than participatory.

Administrators did not often invite communication from the teachers, and defined when communication could occur. Book Talk teachers were communicated to in a manner that transcended independence and self-reliance as a result of top-down communication.

Administrators don't like it when someone comes to them with a problem that doesn't have a solution and I've always known that, so I've always tried to have the solution, before I go in (Ms. Monday, 11-17-99, 4).
I just felt like as a first year teacher you were expected to know these things, and it feels like you get the feeling from the administration that they want you to be independent. They want you to be able to work things out because they have all these other things to worry about (Ms, Wednesday, 4-29-99, 12).

Communication formalized in schools defines teachers' practice and development as an individual experience carried out in isolation. The formalization of the school influences teachers' professional context, as well as their professional orientation and behavior (Lewin, 1943), and the effects of top-down communication in the teachers' work influenced the ways in which teachers communicated and acted in the school context. Because authority often times directed communication in BT teachers' professional context, a defensive attitude was created in the teachers (Marshall, 1991), which was sometimes counterproductive to the context for teaching and learning.

Ms. Monday's unique perspective, as both an administrator and former teacher, provides evidence of teachers' behaviors that were counterproductive to the development of their professional context, but a direct response to the formal demands of teachers' work. "There's an attitude that there seems to be an overriding belief among teachers that the administration is either useless or out to get them" (Ms. Monday, 10-27-99, 10). Ms. Monday shares her unique perspective by describing the way in which Marylin School teachers respond to top-down communication. She is able to understand the teachers' attitudes as a result of communication in schools, and she recognizes that their attitudes have
potential to prohibit the development of their professional context. She explains that:

There's a lot of defensiveness in teaching, there's a lot of fear. I mean Ms. April today, when she said she got called into the principal's office, and she wondered what she had done wrong. I mean she's such a wonderful teacher. She's been here six years. She's never done anything wrong. And yet that's her take on it. And that's inbred in our teachers. Maybe it's the type of person who goes into teaching, but I think it's partly what teaching does to people. You know, when somebody calls you, abrades you over the intercom or lambastes you and says, 'Where's your lesson plan book or whatever?' I mean, of course people are cowering and the kids see it. There's this top down and we don't have it here as much as they have it some places. We must have it enough here that the teachers cower, but also I think it's just the whole thing with administration. It's an authority thing (Ms. Monday, 10-27-99, 1C-11).

Top-down communication is abusive and damaging to teachers because teachers fear authority, according to Ms. Monday. Teachers are uncertain and defensive when requested to communicate with the administration because teachers rarely communicate with their administrators, and teachers usually do not direct communication. School communication has the potential to damage teachers' professional growth because communication creates behaviors and attitudes in teachers that are counterproductive to teachers' professional context (Blase et al., 1991; Marshall, 1991). Thus, this leads us to the paradox: Are teachers treated like children, therefore behave like children? Or do teachers behave like children, therefore are treated like children? Ms. Monday responds:

I think that teachers are treated like children, for sure, because look who are teachers—women. Look who's in charge downtown. They've got their token women now but...it's the male CEO and his partner and the mayor, and so we're treated like children, we're patted on the head. We're given our nice little salary. What are we complaining about? We have our vacation days. Our little short workdays. It's a motherhood profession.
So in that sense we're treated like children, but on the other hand, it's just so dysfunctional. It is totally dysfunctional (11-10-99, 22-23).

Book Talk teachers recognized the influence of male authority in the educational context, which contributed to a "dysfunctional" reality in the teachers' work. Significantly, the teachers did not associate the local administration of schools with male influence because in the experiences of Book Talk teachers, "most of the principals were women, and most of the teachers were women" (Ms. Friday, 10-21-99, 1). The administration at Marylin School was female, and their power, like all school principals, was delegated by the hierarchy of authority. BT teachers referred to the hierarchy of authority in CPS as the mayor, the CEO, and other executives who were mostly males and had the power to influence teachers' professional context (Note, 10-14-99).

According to Fitch-Blanks (2000), the profession of teaching has been addressed in a "substandard way for decades because it is a profession that has consisted mostly of women" (p. 12). "This is a service profession. Teachers are women. We are not to be respected or considered smart. We are not able to work without a time clock. The lack of credibility makes you feel angry and down" (Ms. Tuesday, Note, 5-3-00, 13). Teachers are in a position to be victims of gender discrimination because authority derived from outside positions of male power direct teachers' professional work, although these outsiders rarely enter a school or classroom. Gender-based experiences negatively impact the professional lives of women, creating feelings of injustice and anger that
accumulate from their recognition of gender discrimination in their work (Committee on Women Faculty in the School of Science at MIT, 1999).

Gender discrimination is a subtle and systemic feature of schools that results from the considerable stereotyping played by adults within the educational system (Hendricks, 1991). Teaching is a gendered profession, where women constitute the majority. Seventy-five percent of teachers are female, and only thirty five percent of administrators are female (NCES, 1996). Males continuously outnumber females in positions of power within school hierarchies. The influence of male authority in the context of education and the gendered profession of teaching has the potential to limit teachers from positions of any real power, according to Ben-Peretz (1996).

Furthermore, by sharing stories that describe the ways in which administrators communicated to teachers, BT teachers illuminate the reality and influence of top-down communication facilitated by the school's organizational structure, and provide evidence of their subordinate position in the hierarchy of authority in schools. The hierarchy of authority in schools is described by Cheng (1996) as the extent to which teachers participate in decisions associated with their work. The hierarchy of authority significantly contributed to the reality of Book Talk teachers' professional context by directing and attempting to control their professional context, thus creating contradictions for the teachers. In the following discussion, Book Talk teachers' describe the influence of the hierarchy
of authority in their practice and development by exposing the reality of outside control over decisions for teachers' professional context.

**Hierarchy of authority: Implications of teachers' subordinate position in their professional context**

According to Ingersoll (1999), teachers have only limited authority over key work-place decisions because teachers work in an organization structured by a hierarchy of authority, and the hierarchy of authority creates positions of power that have the potential to influence, direct, and control the educational context (Elmore, 1990; Goodlad, 1990; Johnson, 1990). "Who controls education? It's clearly the City government. It clearly is. It's the Mayor" (Ms. Monday, 10-27-99, 7). Book Talk teachers equate the hierarchy of authority with control over their professional context.

According to Darling-Hammond (1988), "the hierarchy of authority in schools represents the system of education, in which bureaucratic structures for administering schools are meant to foster uniformity and efficiency to provide educational services" (p. 67). Ms. Monday recognizes that "the students and teachers are robots. Authorization. What's our message?" (Note, 10-27-99, 7-8). In Ms. Monday's perspective, teachers are subordinates who serve the system of education. Teachers do not often contribute their knowledge and understanding to decisions made about their professional context because their professional context is most commonly directed by decisions made by the
hierarchy of authority. Ms. Monday shares her administrative perspective and recognizes that:

I'm just hierarchy. I think it's the hierarchy, it's the whole sense that the CEO is in charge of the region officers. The region officers are in charge of the principals. The principals are in charge of the teachers, and the teachers are in charge of the students. Instead of we are here to work in some kind of communal society as a school, there is a hierarchy which then creates this antagonism (10-27-99, 14).

In Chicago Public Schools, the hierarchy of authority includes the CEO, the Region, the administration, the teachers, and the students. Teachers' positions are bottom-level positions in the hierarchy of education, although they are the only ones that actually execute education with students. Book Talk teachers both recognized and accepted outside direction of their work.

According to Ms. Wednesday, “teachers should have a voice, but the administration is the administration. I mean, sometimes they're going to have to make a stand because we're a group of people that they're in charge of” (4-29-99, 15). Authority in BT teachers' work was established by the hierarchical chain of command as well as engrained in teachers by the process of education, as Ms. Monday explains:

From kindergarten on, kids do exactly what they're told and so this little robot...raise their hand if they have a question. But they're basically taught not to make a move unless they have authorization, and teachers are told the same thing. And it's so engrained in them (10-27-99, 13).

According to Ms. Monday, teachers accept authority as a feature of their work environment, and recognize their subordinate position in the school context, because authority is established in the educational context. Teachers'
subordinate position in a hierarchy limits their involvement in decision-making for their professional context, as in the case of grade level and subject matter assignments. According to Ingersoll (1999), there is little regulation of how teachers are actually employed and assigned, and because the participating teachers work in a hierarchy, the administration made decisions about the status of teachers' employment, thereby dictating the context for teachers to practice and learn. As Book Talk teachers reveal:

They [administration] don't make us party to that [choosing the grade level to teach]. We don't have any say, they just tell us what they want, and we don't have any say in those kinds of things. But, you'd think that we'd have a say in like what do you think you'd be best at or talk amongst the teachers. But the principal runs the school (Ms. Wednesday, 9-13-99, 27).

My first year of teaching I spent the whole summer getting ready for first grade because the principal of Marylin school hired me and told me I was going to be teaching first grade. When I got here in August, they told me fourth grade, which was really just a setback because I had already planned. I had all this stuff set or the first month set with first graders. I came three days before school was going to start, and they told me, 'well, you don't have a room yet and you're doing fourth grade.' I thought they should have respected the fact that they hired me as a first grade teacher, and I thought it was completely wrong that they just gave me fourth grade because it worked out for them. So those kinds of things upset me because other professionals wouldn't be able to get away with that (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 6).

I'm the one who teaches art, I should have that job. Well, I'm in a rage. I went to the Union over it, and I got nowhere. They said, well, talk to your principal [former school]. I'm a new teacher. I can't talk to anybody. So anyway, it was a man principal from the armed services, and he didn't listen to me. You know, he could care less. All I was, was a body, a warm body in the room (Ms. Friday, 10-21-99, 11-12)

BT teachers worked under conditions that were "unprofessional" because decisions made by administrators controlled the teachers' professional context.
The allocation of teaching assignments is the prerogative of school principals (Carey & Farris, 1994; Ingersoll, 1993), thus, the teachers' knowledge and expertise in subject matter and grade level were irrelevant to their professional work. The administration organized teaching assignments, thus teachers' practice (Ingersoll, 1999), and the teachers complied with decisions made by the administration. Administration had the power to terminate teachers' employment, and this power was simply a reality of the teachers' professional context. This reality tragically unfolded in Ms. Wednesday's professional context as data collection occurred for this inquiry.

The following section is dedicated to Ms. Wednesday and her experiences of injustices in her work, which resulted in professional and personal tragedy. Ms. Wednesday's voice is presented as a story to include all the experiences that lead to the current reality of her professional context. Her story surrounds the sudden termination of her employment at Marylin School, as similarly, I also experienced sudden termination of employment early in my career. Because authority influences teachers' professional context and employment, teachers can face the reality of being forced out of their position, as Ms. Friday recognized:

I've seen some really good teachers have to leave....That other one, that Ms. Wednesday. Still don't understand her story. I don't know what her story was. I'll get it. It will take me a year and a half to get that (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 40).

The opportunity for this teacher research inquiry provided an opportunity to expose and address Ms. Wednesday's termination, which until this point has
been concealed. Ms. Wednesday's story is significant because her narrative gives voice to my own story, as well as a voice to teachers who silently endure professional injustices, because “we're in a job where we have no protection” (Ms. Friday, 9-23-99, 17).

A Saga of Injustice

I'm worried that we need a job and pretty much they [administration] can get rid of you when they want. You just have to accept that it's that easy for them to do things and that's scary, because a lot of new teachers don't know that, and they go in, and they're so trusting, but that's what happened to me. I just had faith that if I did the best I could, that they would treat me the same way and do the best that they could. Well, when it was inconvenient for them to have me there, they pretty much screwed me over. Anybody else in the whole country, in America, has more rights than a teacher does apparently. They based the whole thing [termination] on the one observation they came in to do at the end of the year. That was their basis for firing me. I felt pretty bad. I just happened to be viewed by them as the one that was the easiest to get rid of, and that's pretty much what I think.

I think that if I had really been the kind of teacher they thought I was or that they told me I was, the last week of school, then I would have done something about it. I would have gone back and taken seminars, workshops, whatever. I was part of the Annenberg thing, and I was doing all kinds of things to get better cause I knew that I had stuff to learn. I mean, I believe that you have to go back and improve, so I don't think that I ever gave them the impression that I was gonna fight anything that they told me. If they would have come and told me, well we want to see this and we're not seeing that, I would have worked on it, but they didn't. See, that's the thing as a new teacher, you don't know what the administration's supposed to do. You don't know all of that.

And at the [dismissal] meeting they're supposed to make recommendations for you to improve, and the assistant principal says, well maybe you should go to the Annenberg meetings. And that just pissed me off even more because she didn't even know I attend the Annenberg meetings. She had never been to an Annenberg meeting. And this upset me even more because she's recommending I go to Annenberg meetings when I've been going since it started.

Well, as soon as I found out that they were going to get rid of me, and I pretty much knew that I didn't have any responsibility, I came here.
her new school] to talk to this principal. She used to be my teacher, so, I came for her advice because there was no one else to go to that was an administrator that could help me. Everybody else was basically telling me you have no rights. She basically told me and then asked me, what do I think is going on? And I told her everything, and I think pretty much when people hear this story, they pretty much figure I'm not that far off. And it's politics. Yeah. So then she told me that she was going to have the kindergarten, and the second grade and that she would like me to come. So then at that point I told her, well, yeah. I said yes so just that I would have a job. Because at that point, with the unsatisfactory [rating from Marylin School], I thought, how am I supposed to get a job? How am I supposed to deal with all that reference and stuff? You're looking for a job, your principals are asking for references and why did you leave your last job, and stuff like that. How are you supposed to recover from that? Which was my thing at the time. I pretty much felt like, there's no way that I'm ever gonna get hired anywhere with an unsatisfactory (Ms. Wednesday, 9-13-99, 1, 3-22, 25-29).

Ms. Wednesday complied with the rules, procedures, and instructions of her formalized work, although this did not ensure her employment, because it was determined by the Marylin School administration that Ms. Wednesday was an unsatisfactory teacher. The reality is that the administration can force teachers from their positions because teachers have limited rights. The administration at Marylin School did not carry out procedures thoroughly or correctly, regarding teacher evaluations and the termination policy. Ms. Wednesday was observed and evaluated at the end of the school year without receiving a written warning about the observation, and usually Marylin School administrators communicated to teachers in writing or verbally about the date and time for an observation (Ms. Wednesday, 9-13-99, 19). Ms. Wednesday received her evaluation in June, although evaluations were supposed to be completed by May. Teachers who are given an unsatisfactory rating for their
evaluation have fifteen days to improve, however, the administration ignored this rule by "pushing out" Ms. Wednesday at the end of the year, when there were not even fifteen days left in the school year. The administration's neglect in complying with rules and procedures was irrelevant to the context of Ms. Wednesday's termination because the administration had the power to terminate Ms. Wednesday's position, regardless of the rules and procedures.

Ms. Wednesday encountered a multitude of contradictions surrounding her termination, and she felt her termination was unjust. Ms. Wednesday previously received an excellent rating for her evaluation, and now she was rated as an unsatisfactory teacher. At the beginning of the school year, the administration informed the LSC president that Ms. Wednesday was a "good teacher" (9-13-99, 12), and within the year, Ms. Wednesday had become an unsatisfactory teacher. Ms. Wednesday's lesson plans were not updated, and she did not execute reading groups, according to the administration's observation in the last week of the school year, and this made her an unsatisfactory teacher.

The most significant contradiction for Ms. Wednesday and her termination surrounded her professional development. The administration recommended for Ms. Wednesday to participate in the Annenberg professional development opportunities, ignorant to the fact that she was already an active participant. Ms. Wednesday recognized the significance of professional development, and was willing to seek help to improve her practice, and did seek help by participating in Annenberg opportunities, but was still an unsatisfactory teacher.
The experiences that lead to Ms. Wednesday's termination were "degrading" (Note, 9-13-99, 17), as well as contradictory. Ms. Wednesday was informed that she was an unsatisfactory teacher and that she should look for another place of employment, and then she was instructed not to discuss her termination. Not only was she told to keep silent, but also she had to return to her classroom to continue her professional work for the remainder of the school year. Ms. Wednesday discussed her termination with other teachers, ignoring the instructions from the administration, and the teachers were supportive of Ms. Wednesday, but because the teachers were also influenced by the administration and their position of power in the hierarchy, their support was limited. The administration had the power and the responsibility to "push out" Ms. Wednesday from Marylin School, as well as influence her to consider quitting teaching and leaving the profession. Although Ms. Wednesday remained in teaching, teaching became stressful because she had experienced the reality of the power of authority in her work. As she reflects:

At this point, I'm just feeling like killing myself. My lesson plans are up to date and all the paperwork and everything. I'm the first one to turn it in. That's what I'm worried about. For me, it means that I'm not enjoying teaching any more because I'm spending all my time worried about the paperwork and all that. I don't know what I'm going to do now, whether or not I'm going to keep doing this. At this point, I feel like there's nothing that can make me feel better...I chose teaching. It sounds corny, but I knew it was what I wanted to do in high school. I knew already what I was gonna do. I'm not sure I want to any more. I wanted to be with kids, but kids are not what I'm being paid for. And at this point, it's not the same for me any more, and it's really tense all the time. Unhappy (9-13-99, 36-39).
Ms. Wednesday encountered tensions in her professional context as a result of her termination from Marylin School because she was concerned with the mandated tasks of her work, rather than the practice of teaching. Teaching was redefined for Ms. Wednesday by the influence of authority in her work, and the definition of teaching in CPS differed from Ms. Wednesday's understanding of teaching. Ms. Wednesday was motivated to teach, yet the context in which she carried out her professional work complicated and sometimes obstructed her practice. Although Ms. Wednesday started a new job teaching kindergarten at a new school with a new administration, her saga continued. She was deeply affected by the unjust events of the previous year, and she could not escape the influences of the hierarchy of authority facilitated by the school organizational structure in her professional context, which was evident in her inequitable working schedule.

The kindergarten, it's an extended day, so I'm there from 8:00 until 4:00. I get paid like when you're working after school, half of your hourly salary. So, it's like I get paid my regular salary up to 2:30, and then from that point on, I get paid half my salary. Half the salary that I would be earning. I'm still teaching. Well, I have not even asked my union representative about working the long hours for extended day. I haven't even broached the subject. I don't want any trouble. I know that the kindergarten teacher from last year wants me to file a grievance that all the extended day kindergarten teachers are doing just because they're not paying us our full salaries for those extra two hours. I don't even know how it works to file a grievance. If I knew that it was just between the union rep and me, I'd do it, no problem. But if the principal has to find out about it or something else, I think it looks like I'm complaining. I just don't want any problems whatsoever (10-17-99, 16-18; 9-13-99, 1-2).

Ms. Wednesday accepted the terms of the extended day position, involving working extra hours without being equally compensated for this time,
however, she accepted these conditions of her work because she feared the power of authority. Although Ms. Wednesday is in a new school with a new administration, her professional context is still directed and controlled. Teachers' professional work is clearly influenced by authority facilitated by the school's organizational structure, and Ms. Wednesday's stories provide evidence of the influences of the hierarchy of authority in teachers' professional context. Ms. Wednesday was completely disempowered by authority, and authority profoundly affected Ms. Wednesday and her work as a teacher. She explains that:

I really don't think I'm coming back next year because I don't even want to come. It's really hard because I'm not enthusiastic about any of it. It's a job. And I hate that, but that's how it is right now for me. I'm telling the principal that I'm just gonna get my masters, and maybe stay, and then get the early childhood, and then go to daycare, or something, or open my own daycare. That was one of my things that I'd like to open a daycare; I'm in charge. I'll have the say in what's going on because right now I feel totally powerless. I have no control of anything, so that's my hope. I can stay in teaching, but I have to find some way where I can have more power over what's going on. Right now, if they asked me to come back next year, I don't think so. At any public school. Ever again. You know, it's not just this school; it's not just Marylin School. I just think the whole bureaucracy is just getting in the way of everything that I wanted to do because I know that I want to teach. I don't think I'd be happy doing anything else. But, the other crap, I don't want to do it any more. It just makes me feel worse and worse, like my confidence about what I'm doing, it's just minimal. At this point, I still have been able to tell myself that I still want to teach. I just gotta find a better place to do it or a better place for me anyway to do it (Ms. Wednesday, 9-21-99, 15-17; 10-7-99, 30-33).

Ms. Wednesday is considering leaving CPS because she has no control over her professional context. The hierarchy of authority in CPS has dictated and demanded too much from Ms. Wednesday, and Ms. Wednesday was burdened by the tasks associated with her formalized work, and the uncertainty
of her working context. Although Ms. Wednesday is still motivated to teach, the influence of authority in CPS has resulted in the possibility of losing a teacher for its schools.

Authority dominated the Book Talk teachers' working environment by directing decisions made for the educational context, thus for teachers' professional context. Teachers' influence in schools is limited because teachers are subordinates in the hierarchical structure of schools, and their position in the hierarchy maintains outside influence over their work. As a result, "teachers have been ignored and even silenced in their marginal role in educational decisions" (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 101). Because teachers do not often contribute their knowledge and experience to decisions for the educational context, contradictions and injustices can arise in their professional context.

It has been recognized that currently in schools, decision-making takes place at a level far removed from the classroom (Brooks, 1991; Elmore, 1990; Griffin, 1995), and too many extraneous people who control the school context are involved in decision-making (Johnson, 1996; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; McLaughlin & Yee, 1988). In the final discussion surrounding the demanding realities of the school's organizational structure, Book Talk teachers describe the extent of their involvement and influence in decisions made for the school context, such as decisions regarding the allocation of resources, and by doing so they expose a limitation to developing voice in their professional context.
Decision-making power: Teachers lack of participation in making decisions for their professional context

Some agree that teachers rarely participate in decisions for the school context as a result of their subordinate position in the hierarchy (Cooper, 1988; Elmore, 1990; Griffin, 1995). “Who makes educational decisions? We [teachers] lost control. We used to have it. When the principals lost control in the 80's, we know the teachers have no control. The region is over the principal. The courts made it possible. Human relations interfered with educational decisions” (Ms. Friday, 9-16-99, 3). Educational decisions are usually centralized and executed by the hierarchy of authority in CPS, and these decisions can influence teachers' professional context.

Decisions made by superordinates most commonly directed the allocation of school resources, thus the teachers were rarely consulted in decisions involving funding. BT teachers recognized discrepancies and inequities regarding the allocation of resources, specifically because two academic programs, which received very different funding, organized Marylin School. Ms. Thursday explains that:

The neighborhood people [teachers] get fifty dollars. The gifted people get two thousand dollars. I know it’s true and then they want you to be all alike, in harmony and whatever, but they don’t act like that...if you got the neighborhood pool, you got the kids—the low reading scores. They should have the most money. They got the lowest reading score; they need the most help or whatever. If the kid’s supposed to be some gifted, then that’s where you should be spending less money....I don’t know how they make decisions. It just—it makes you just totally sick (9-8-99, 35).
Teachers at Marylin School practiced under different sets of conditions depending on which program they were assigned. Inequities between the programs were blatantly recognized in the school context, and teachers were confused by the allocation of resources. Teachers who worked with low-achieving students received fewer resources, but needed resources more than teachers who worked with gifted students. Thus, the inequity remained and influenced teachers' individual professional contexts, as well as students' opportunities for learning. BT teachers were concerned about decisions made for the allocation of resources because these decisions affected student development and their practice. Ms. Friday recognized, in her opinion, consequences of funding decisions made by outsiders to the educational context, as she recalls:

I asked the school counselor about where all the money is. I opened my mouth last week. I got real upset with him. I said where is all the money that you get for these [Special Education] kids? Special Ed has to get special money....I said to Ms. December, the Special Ed teacher, 'when you're working with James, why isn't he on there learning his alphabet or learning subtraction?' 'Well, I don't have a computer.' I said, 'why don't you have one?' I said, 'there are funds for Special Ed children.' I know that and if you go down in there, there are old shitty books that are a hundred years old....It stinks. Where is the money is what I want to know. I want to know for all those Special Ed kids and don't tell me they give it (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 43-45).

I've talked to teachers that told me they still had staple down desks in their classrooms, and I said, 'we've had enough money for three sets of desks here at school.' Well, where's the principal? Where's that money for those desks? There's money, they don't use it. The principal said she'd used all the money on the electrical stuff this year, which is ridiculous. I have more plugs than I'd ever use and they don't work (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 45).
This school should have been computerized years ago. There's no reason for it because ten years ago I had seven computers in my room set up for network. Where are they? They're in the garbage....Things haven't improved at all. No they've gone in the damper (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 18).

Ms. Friday inquired about funding for Special Education students and updated desks and computers for students because students were lacking these resources. Money was spent by the administration for resources that were not necessary for the context of teaching and learning, according to Ms. Friday, but because teachers were uninvolved in decisions about the allocation of resources, needs were often overlooked, and sometimes, money was wasted.

When BT teachers did have the rare opportunity to allocate funding, their decisions were dissected, and sometimes opposed by outsiders, such as parents and administrators (Lipman, 1997). Their decisions in the classroom did not command professional authority, and this was reflective of their subordinate position in the hierarchy of schools, which often times detracts from the teachers' authority. Ms. Wednesday provides evidence of this by explaining that:

There is a $10.00 student fee in the primary classes, and a few parents complained about it. So, I have to write a letter telling them in detail what I'm going to order with the money that they haven't given me yet. We're allowed to use the money for workbooks, or whatever the teacher needs. The teacher decides, right? It's for their kids. And what I feel like just saying is, just send the $10 so that I can buy these things. I don't know what they think I'm doing with it. I wish that they had a better idea of how much of my own money I spend on their kids, and then maybe they'd just shut up. But I think the parents think that everything in here the school gave me. We get the $100 for the year, people, we don't get anything else. And I don't think parents realize it. But the last thing I'm going to do is start calling parents, begging them for the $10.00. I'm sorry, but I'm not going to argue with them about why they should give their kids $10.00 for school. A general letter was sent out by the primary teachers that said
we’d buy supplies and workbooks, different things like that. But the letter wasn’t good enough for the parents. What do you think we’re doing with the money? I don’t know what they think I’m going to do with it, but apparently not the right thing (10-12-99, 36-45).

According to Ms. Wednesday, parents doubted her abilities for spending money and her additional role as bill collector burdened her working context. Parents, who were unaware of the reality of teachers’ work, determined the outcomes of a decision that was supposedly Ms. Wednesday’s decision to make. According to Ms. Wednesday, parents do not trust teachers, and at the same time, they do not realize the ways in which teachers provide for their children. Ms. Wednesday spent her own money to purchase materials for student use because funding and supplies in CPS were limited for teachers and students.

When Ms. Wednesday had the opportunity to contribute to a decision regarding the allocation of resources, her decision-making power was challenged and eventually overthrown by outsiders of the educational context because parents can influence, and in this case, override a teacher’s decision. Because teachers are not in a position "to make parents comply or withstand their attacks, teachers are genuinely vulnerable" (Lortie, 1975, p. 154). Unfortunately for Ms. Wednesday, she continued to encounter outside influence over her professional work, and she was constantly reminded of the hierarchy of authority in her professional context.

In Book Talk teachers’ professional context, influences from authority, rather than knowledge and experience, impacted decisions made for the educational context, including teachers’ professional development. “What is the
Board of Education teaching by its behavior towards us? Where's the respect? You don't know how to run your own staff development. So go to this. It's a big mess. It's a real big mess" (Ms. Monday, 11-10-99, 24). Book Talk teachers had limited opportunities to participate in decision-making for the school context, thereby limiting the contribution of their knowledge and the development of their voices. “Teachers do not provide input, therefore the people skills in the school are not used” (Ms. Friday, Note, 9-9-99). BT teachers lacked input in decision-making, which may be attributed to the understanding that teachers lack power in the hierarchical organization of schools. Lack of power can lead to teachers acting in ways that are educationally counterproductive by disengaging from their school and professional context (Blase et al., 1991; Cooper, 1988; Lewin, 1943). This becomes apparent when one teacher of this inquiry chooses to leave the profession of teaching to overcome power struggles in her work, while other teachers choose isolation to cope with their feelings of powerlessness. The teachers explain:

I'm not surprised that people just want to be in their rooms, and they don't want to worry about anything else outside because they're not always treated fairly (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 15-16).

Even though there are these barrages of abuse, I'm left alone....I can still close the door and teach. So that's such a huge thing (Ms. Tuesday, 4-28-99, 1,15).

Book Talk teachers achieved autonomy, as well as protected themselves from injustices in their professional context, through isolation. However, mutual isolation perpetuates a lack of teacher leadership, collegiality, and understanding.
of teacher's work (Little, 1992). Thus, teacher isolation, minimal participation in decision making for the school context, and an overall lack of involvement in their professional context as a result of their subordinate position can be counterproductive to professional growth and has the potential to limit teacher influence and voice in the educational context. (Blasé & Blasé, 1991; Callan, 1998; Marshall, 1991; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994).

Professional development occurs in the reality of the working context described by Book Talk teachers, and this reality emphasizes instituting norms of institutional protocol, rather than norms of collegial practice (Cooper, 1988; Firestone & Bader, 1992; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Teaching takes place in a system composed of elements that interact and reinforce each other, and teachers are not the only ones that need to change in order for professional growth to occur, according to Hiebert & Stigler (1999). Currently, reform efforts do not focus sufficient attention to the way schools are managed or mismanaged and the way teaching is continually treated as semi-skilled work, thus reform is limited unless boards of education are willing to reconceptualize their roles (Day, 1997; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999). The school's organizational structure would benefit by changing from an organization of institutionalization to an organization of development. However, as a result of some school reform efforts in CPS, the overriding reality is accountability measures institutionalized in schools permeate teachers' professional context, and most significantly impact curriculum, and thus teachers' practice and
development, by mandating a structured curriculum, prescribed lesson plans, and time distribution for content knowledge.

A new solution to the problem of failing public schools is emerging, which involves a takeover by outside authorities that prescribe a standardized curriculum (Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Howe, 1995; Ladd, 1996; Lemann, 1988). In this reform effort, teachers are accountable to the centralized and prescribed curriculum developed by curricular experts, which has the potential to automate teachers' practice. Book Talk teachers were held accountable for standards of learning and students' test scores because their practice was subjected to curricular mandates. The teachers were forced to choose between their unique, inside knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning context, and generic, structured knowledge (Spillane, 1992). Thus, BT teachers compromised their practice as a result of their subordinate position and the influence of curricular policy developed by outsiders, like curriculum experts and policymakers, whose policies do not always acknowledge the realities of the teaching and learning context (Frances Klein et al., 1991; Schwab, 1983; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998; SooHoo & Wilson, 1994). In the following discussion, Book Talk teachers describe the curricular conflicts of their professional context by exposing realities of the teaching and learning context that conflict with efforts to prescribe and potentially automate teachers' practice.
Curricular Conflicts: The Influence of Curricular Policy in Teachers' Professional Context

Currently, the system of schooling relies on externally developed policies and mandates to assure public accountability (Cohen, 1996; Howe, 1995; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994; Ladd, 1996). As such, centralized policymaking has virtually ignored the people it most affects, the teachers, and policy has limited the influence of teachers in the educational context (Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; Kohn, 1999; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). Although "teaching is the activity most clearly responsible for learning," teachers, who are the only educational constituents engaged in the act of teaching, who know students best and want to improve their own learning to benefit students, have relatively little to do with formally deciding what students need to know (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 3). Chicago Public School teachers are mandated to teach a standards based curriculum, in which content is provided by grade level and minutes are assigned for each content area. In CPS, curricular policy defines knowledge, as well as directs teaching and learning.

Generally, policymakers do not participate in classrooms and they "do not know the people their policies affect....The unique needs of particular individuals, constituencies, and circumstances are unnoticed and because they are unnoticed, they are neglected in educational policy" (Eisner, 1994, p. 7). Furthermore, because "teaching is not based on a set of rules, but occurs when
there is exhilaration, experiences of creativity and breakthrough, and cathartic connections to real purpose and real lives," teachers make choices for curriculum based on the reality of the teaching and learning context, and this is not always accounted for in curricular policy (Hargreaves, 1997b, p. 14). Teachers bring to class additional materials and draw from their professional and personal experiences. Teachers deliver curriculum to students, and students experience curriculum through teaching, thereby teachers influence and direct curriculum and the teaching and learning context, as well.

Curriculum refers to the content of instruction, the planned activities to deliver instruction, and the outcomes of instruction, either intended or that which students actually experience, according to Eisner (1994). He recognizes both an intended and operational curriculum. The intended curriculum is "that which is planned" (Eisner, 1994, p. 32) or more often that which is written by outside experts describing what is to be taught in schools (Shkedi, 1998). The operational curriculum is "the unique set of events that transpire within a classroom" (Eisner, 1994, p. 33). Book Talk teachers most commonly engaged in the operational curriculum, which was implemented by teachers and not necessarily identical to the written curriculum (Shkedi, 1998). Book Talk teachers recognized that curriculum was implemented in a unique set of conditions and because BT teachers operated in a uniquely characterized context, the teachers balanced the reality of their professional context and curricular policy, by making
choices for teaching and learning (Duckworth, 1987; Solomon, 1998; Spillane, 1994).

As the world of education becomes increasingly politically contested, the potential for conflict between teachers' professional integrity and the demands of policy become more acute (Brooks, 1991; Frances Klein, 1991; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; SooHoo & Wilson, 1994). Book Talk teachers exposed curricular conflicts of their work, and by doing so, these teachers are able to contribute knowledge to the debate on the prescription of curriculum, teaching, and learning by voicing their direct experiences about the effects of policy in their professional context. Currently, teachers' voices are limited from discussions surrounding curriculum development and student learning (Cooper, 1988; Ladson-Billing, 1998; McClure, 1991; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994), because as Book Talk teachers reveal, they practice in a context directed by policy developed by outside experts, lawmakers, and the Board of Education.

Teachers Experiences and Implications of Curricular Policy: Deskilling Teachers' Practice

In response to calls for reform in education, there has been a recent preoccupation with prescriptions for effective teaching, the over standardization of curriculum, and measurement driven instruction (Apple, 1990a; Howe, 1995; Reese, 1999; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). The regulation of teaching is enacted by
curricular policy and because a discrepancy exists between the realities of policymakers, curriculum writers, and teachers, teachers are caught in a persistent dilemma to continuously make choices for their teaching and their students (McClure, 1991; Solomon, 1998; Spillane, 1994). Features of the system can pressure teachers to satisfy their supervisors or meet legislative mandates, rather than inquire into the best practices for working with particular students in unique situations, according to Sagor (1997).

Curricular policy in schools today is developed to ensure student learning, as well as ensure accountability (Cohen, 1996; Kerr, 1987; Ladd, 1996; Lemann, 1998). However, curricular policy results in influencing, directing, and sometimes, controlling knowledge, and the teaching and learning context, and often “contradicts in its pursuit of simple solutions to complex problems” (Lieberman, 1988, p. vi). Book Talk teachers recognized the need for a curriculum to develop student growth, but also reported the influences of curriculum and curricular policy, which limited teaching and learning, thus influencing their professional context. They realized, “We sure have a lot of top down telling us how to be a good teacher...I mean, what did I go to school for? There's no sense of professionalism” (Ms. Tuesday, 9-15-99, 12-13). Conflicts for teachers can arise from dual images of a teaching profession committed to the promotion of creativity and the image of teacher accountability and student standardized outcomes (Brooks, 1991; Eisner, 1994; SooHoo & Wilson, 1994; Spillane, 1994).
In Chicago Public Schools, directed teaching is praised as the saving mechanism for abysmally performing students. In a scripted manner, curriculum is presented that makes instruction, in the most demeaning and ironic of phrases, “teacher proof.” Talented public school teachers decry the growing influence and credence of directed teaching for fear that soon everyone — new teacher, veteran teacher, good teacher and bad teacher — will be reading the script lock step (Reese, Chicago Teacher Union, Document, 2-99).

According to Book Talk teachers, curricular policy ensures accountability in the Chicago Public Schools by structuring curriculum, thus prescribing teachers’ lesson plans and allocating time for subject matter. These accountability measures created conflicts for the Book Talk teachers by dictating teaching and learning and ignoring teachers’ understanding of their practice. BT teachers, however, could not ignore curricular policy, as they were held accountable for student learning, which was commonly measured by students’ standardized test scores. The significance of student standardized test scores and increased accountability measures in schools have influenced the context of teaching and learning by qualifying knowledge, pressuring teachers, and changing the focus of teaching from learning to accountability. Ms. Tuesday explains that:

I feel the pressures that come down. I mean it’s inescapable. I definitely feel that I’ve altered quite a bit of my teaching to fit the time on task. It slowly…it just wears into your psyche that I was going to do bubbles today, but I better do that unit on double digit because that’ll be on the IOWA’s. And those scores are so important to this school. They just are constantly telling us about the scores, so I better do that. And I really do think that it’s had a great influence (4-28-99, 1-2).

Published information about schools’ achievement is crucial for public
accountability, according to Myers & Goldstein (1997). A barrage of statistics relating to reading and test scores, grade level achievement, and class and school rankings overwhelmed the Book Talk teachers. "So little about education is about learning," according to Ms. Monday (10-27-99, 6). Learning became lost in test scores and accountability measures, which redefined learning, as well as transformed the teachers' practice. As one teacher comments:

Just returned from school records day. Do you know that when I started at the school I used NO textbooks? Now I use all texts except social studies because they don't have one. I've been reflecting on how I've effectively been changed through the last seven years to do it their [the Board of Education] way. It's uncanny (Ms. Tuesday, Personal communication, 3-31-01).

Ms. Tuesday is teaching from the scripts of textbooks, and she is teaching for the standardized tests. She explains that "the mandates are right there. They just kind of stay there in your face, and they just kind of sit there. They're on your shoulders, and you read it"(Ms. Tuesday, 9-15-99, 23-24). Pressures from accountability measures have influenced and even changed Ms. Tuesday's practice of teaching by deskilling her practice as she disregards creativity and transmits knowledge prescribed by textbooks. This change in teachers' practice is not an improvement, according to Book Talk teachers. "There's no room for teachers to make decisions after you got certain goals and guidelines for students you got to follow to get through, so you just do what's put there before you" (Ms. Thursday, 10-28-99,1). Curriculum, which usually provides detailed, daily objectives and goals, can deprive teachers of individual input (Oakes, Stuart-Wells, Yonezawa & Ray, 1997; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998; Spillane, 1994).
In CPS, the structured curriculum resulted in prescribing lesson plans for teachers, thereby ensuring accountability by automating the teachers' practice. Ms. Wednesday recognized the effects of deskilling the teacher's practice and explained that:

Teachers don't even do their lesson plans any more. I mean, they're handed what they're supposed to do every day and that's what they do. I don't want to do that. What's the point? Anybody could do it basically. Because when they do stuff like that it's like what does that say then? Anyone can teach. Cause I'm telling you -- it's a vocation. It's something that you really want to have to do and really like to be willing to dedicate yourself to it or whatever. It's not supposed to be some job where you come in and leave and not think about it. I mean but that's what it's turning into, more and more I think. It's like they just tell you what to do, and the teachers have no say in it (10-7-99, 35-37).

Prescribed lesson plans limited the BT teachers' influence in their practice by disregarding the teachers' unique knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning, and by decreasing the teachers' control over curriculum. Book Talk teachers regarded the prescribed lesson plans as a significant accountability practice for their work, but the lesson plans held little significance for the teaching and learning context because, as Ms. Tuesday explained, "The State goals don't take into account that they're [students] in a developmental stage. They're all learning at different levels" (4-29-99, 9). Book Talk teachers realize that:

The lesson plans don't guarantee that the students are going to learn anything. I mean let's face it, how can the Board of Ed know what's going on in your class and how can they say they're [the students] going to learn, you know, the letter A or whatever in one week? I mean, it might take some kid the whole year to learn the letter A. They can't just say stuff like that (Ms. Wednesday, 10-7-99, 35).
Even though that the lesson plans are there sometimes, you know, you don't get to all of those things that you should get to because there's not enough time permitting, or the kids didn't get it the first time. You gotta go back and reteach and reteach. There's no use of going on if they didn't get it the first time (Ms. Thursday, 9-8-99, 18).

Because policy is often generalized and imposed (Eisner, 1994) and does not always account for students' particular abilities and the specific knowledge that teachers possess about their students, policy restricts the application of teachers' knowledge and influence in the learning process. Furthermore, curricular policies, such as prescribed lesson plans and a structured curriculum, attempt to control learning to ensure accountability, which does not always ensure student development, according to Book Talk teachers' testimonies.

Curricular policies in the Chicago Public Schools not only dictated content knowledge by instituting a structured curriculum, but also allocated time for teaching the designated knowledge, which further restricted the context for teaching and learning. Book Talk teachers specifically referred to the CPS mandated, time distribution sheet, which must be posted outside of teachers' classrooms, as a curricular conflict of their professional context that was demanding and unrealistic because it completely ignored the teaching and learning context. Book Talk teachers explain that:

The time distribution sheet is telling you, you have to be doing what it says at that time. I mean, we know what they're expecting us to do and it's just not reasonable to expect us to be doing something at a specific time, especially in education. There's things that come up or something takes longer than you thought it would or you can't always do social studies on Monday. You have to be able to change these things around. So when they're telling you to make sure you're doing this at that time, it's so frustrating. This week I just felt that I reached the point where I just said I
can't possibly do it. To me, I'd rather they just give me a note saying, well, you weren't doing this. Reprimand me, but I'm doing what I think I should be doing, teaching the kids (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 10-11).

The CPS time distribution sheet (TDS) established an impossible task for Book Talk teachers by controlling every minute of teaching and learning. The TDS accounted for every minute in the school day, but did not account for the realities of the teaching and learning context. As the time distribution sheet dictated when and how much teaching and learning should take place and prioritized individual subject matter, it overlooked the concept of an integrated curriculum. Because BT teachers were accountable to the demands of the TDS, teachers felt inadequate and unprofessional. The TDS created time pressures for the teachers in their work, but became irrelevant to the real context of teaching and learning because Book Talk teachers simply could not meet the impossible demands of the TDS. "You can't account for every minute like that, because, actually, when you're at school, every minute you spend in school that you've got kids, it's a learning process" (Ms. Thursday, 5-6-99, 5). Since Book Talk teachers were continually aware of engaging students in the learning process, the TDS only served as a measure for accountability.

Curricular policies changed the focus of teaching from learning to accountability, and policy directives automated, burdened, and limited the Book Talk teachers' practice. "The Board of Education's prescribed curriculum treats us as non-professionals. They are not asking us to learn. They are telling us what to do and say...what to teach" (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 12). Policy
attempted to restrict the teachers' immediate practice, as well as their
development, by directing curriculum, thereby limiting the teachers' contribution
of their unique knowledge and understanding to curriculum.

Although the teachers do not formally contribute and participate in
curriculum development and policy, they do make decisions that influence
curriculum implementation because teachers practice an art and account for
student and classroom realities that influence the teaching and learning context.
The following discussion illuminates BT teachers' inside knowledge of the
teaching and learning context, by describing the curricular decisions they made
for their students and their practice.

**Making Curricular Choices: The Struggles between Upholding Policy and
Practicing the Art of Teaching**

Although most teachers understand the limits and possibilities of
curriculum implementation and the needs of students, teachers are not usually
consulted in terms of curricular decisions (Brooks, 1991; Elmore & Fuhrman,
1994; Griffin, 1995; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; Schwab, 1983), as such,
curriculum is commonly developed for possible learning contexts, not actual
learning contexts. Teachers understand the actual context of teaching and
learning, but curriculum is prescriptive and conflicts with teacher's knowledge
and understanding and the realities of the teaching and learning context. This
contradiction in BT teachers' professional context created curricular conflicts for
the teachers as they made curricular choices based on their unique knowledge and understanding of their practice and student realities and the influence of curricular policy.

According to Eisner (1994), a curriculum needs to recognize and account for regional differences, inequities among school resources, and cognitive, stylistic, and moral differences among children. Book Talk teachers accounted for these significant differences daily, as they delivered curriculum to their specific student population. Book Talk teachers supported Eisner's (1994) understanding that "because the process of education always occurs within a context, decisions about educational practices need to be sensitive to that context" (p. 2). Ms. Thursday understands that:

You got kids that come out of different family environments; different households and a lot of the kids don't get extra things, and you have to take a situation into account and just look at all those things—kind of look at the whole picture (Ms. Thursday, 9-8-99, 36).

While curricular policies are standardized and uniform in their application, students are not standardized in their needs, backgrounds, and learning abilities (Howe, 1995; Kohn, 1999; Senge et al., 2000). Teachers were sensitive to the context of teaching and learning as they made choices for their specific students based on their needs and abilities. Teachers make choices for the curriculum because they practice an art, according to Eisner (1994), and teaching is based on human service and relies on intuition, creativity, flexibility, and expressiveness (Britzman, 1992; Bullough, 1992; Duckworth, 1987). Schwab (1983) refers to teachers' unique knowledge and understanding of the teaching and learning
context as artistic judgment, and he explains that curricular policy restricts teachers' knowledge.

Teachers will not and cannot be told what to do... Teachers practice an art. Moments of choice of what to do, how to do it, with whom and at what pace, arise hundreds of times a school day and with every group of students. No command or instruction can be formulated as to control that kind of artistic judgment and behavior with its demand for frequent, instant choices of ways to meet an ever-varying situation (p. 245).

Although teachers' work is characterized by CPS as "rationally planned, programmatically organized, and carried out on the basis of standard operating procedures," Book Talk teachers characterized their work as understanding complex situations and using their artistic judgment to make choices for teaching and learning (Devaney & Sykes, 1988, p. 5). Teaching in the classroom is "moment to moment thinking," according to Ms. Wednesday (Note, 10-12-99, 11). Curriculum should enable teachers to feel free to move in a direction when ideas arise, according to Duckworth (1987), however the current CPS curriculum "is just such canned information" (Ms. Monday, 10-27-99, 33). "The having of wonderful ideas" (Duckworth, 1987, p. 361) or "thinking on one's feet," as Ms. Tuesday puts it, are stifled by mandated curriculum and prescribed lesson plans (9-15-99, 11).

However, because "teaching is a form of human action found in the course of interaction with students, rather than preconceived and efficiently attained" (Eisner, 1994, p. 155), BT teachers made curricular decisions based on their artistic judgment and the reality of the teaching and learning context. The teachers recognized and accounted for the influences of classroom realities such
as, constant interruptions and scheduling changes, which were not accounted for in prescribed lesson plans or the time distribution sheet. Ms. Thursday explains that:

When you’re in a setting like this, you’ve got to be flexible because you never can know what can happen. You know you’re going to be in school from 8:30-2:30, but during that time, no matter how you try to go about the schedule, something always seems to happen. You don’t know what type of disaster you’re going to have in a day. You just have to be prepared for anything. But they [the Board of Education] ask you to do lesson plans, they ask you to do all these daily preparations, but I don’t think that you can just ask, did I do this exactly with my plans. So you always have to deviate from a plan, make adjustments to the plan because something’s going to happen that’s going to take you away from what you really should be doing.... (5-6-99, 3-4).

BT teachers recognized, accepted, and prepared for the constant changes in schooling because the teachers’ practiced an art. They pointed to the unrealistic set of conditions demanded by prescribed lesson plans, and curricular policy and BT teachers made curricular decisions, based on their artistic judgment, to meet theses demands, but more significantly to meet the needs of their learners. Teachers make choices in light of students because teachers directly know children as learners. Schwab (1983) explains that:

Their (children) behavior and misbehavior in classrooms, what they take as fair or unfair in the course of teaching and learning, what rouses hopes, fears, and despairs with respect to learning, what the children are inclined to learn, what they disdain and what they see as relevant to their present or future lives, are better known by no one than the teacher. It is he who tries to teach them. It is she who lives with them for the better part of the day and the better part of the year (p. 245).

Schwab (1983) supports the role of teacher in curriculum development because teachers possess knowledge and understanding of learners. Although teachers
themselves rely on their understanding and knowledge of the learner, curricular
decisions and policy developed by outside experts do not always rely on the
significance of teachers’ knowledge and understanding (Cochran-Smith, 1992;
Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; McClure, 1991). As Ms. Thursday suggests:

I think the teacher should be making the decisions for the students. The
teachers should be because you see them most of the time. You know
what they can, what they can’t do, and what they’re capable of doing...like
the Board of Ed comes up with the ideas, but only you inside this room,
not even the principal or anyone else can actually know what these kids
are capable of...only you. There’s no other person who knows (Ms.
Thursday, 9-8-99, 19, 38).

Ms. Thursday supported Schwab (1978) in that teachers directly know
learners, and understand and account for their needs. Although policy attempts
to direct, and at times, dictate learning, “teachers are the gatekeepers of the
classrooms in which teaching and learning take place” (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999,
p. 136). Book Talk teachers made curricular decisions based on their
understanding of the teaching and learning context, and because they made
choices, they deviated from the mandated and prescribed curriculum. Because
teachers have their own unique way of perceiving the curriculum, teachers, as
well as students, need to be recognized in curriculum development, so that
relevant learning can occur.

Connelly and Clandinin (1988) propose an approach to curriculum
development that expresses the notion that all teaching and learning, all
curriculum matter, be looked at from the point of view of the teachers. They
argue that curriculum development is fundamentally a question of teacher
thinking and teacher doing. Although Book Talk teachers did not participate in
formal curriculum development, teachers were continually developing the
curriculum based on the choices they made for their students' learning because
"the best teachers teach children, not just the school's curriculum" (International
Educator, February 2001, p. 9). Thus, curricular conflicts exist because teachers
are caught in a persistent dilemma between upholding policy, accounting for
students' needs, and practicing their art. Furthermore, teachers' voices,
perspectives, and understandings are limited in curricular discussions and
curriculum development (Cooper, 1988; Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Schwab,
1983; Spillane, 1994), and the lack of teachers' influence in curricular
discussions, development, and decisions is reflected in unrealistic, and
sometimes ineffective, curricular policy.

Summary of Chapter IV

The Book Talk teachers' discourse sheds light on contradictory realities of
their professional context and the ways in which they cope with their realities. BT
teachers' contradictory experiences were significantly influenced by various
outside influences of teacher's work and knowledge. According to Book Talk
teachers, outsiders to the educational context are defined as lawmakers,
policymakers, educational researchers, the Board of Education, administrators,
and parents, who all have power and influence in the educational context, but do
not ever directly participate in the act of teaching and learning.
Educational experts and researchers created disparities in BT teachers' professional context because they directed knowledge for the profession but lacked inside knowledge and experience of the teaching and learning context. Ulichny & Schoener (1996) understand that "while the power and knowledge appear to reside with the researcher vis-à-vis the broader educational community, it is the teacher who has the most knowledge of the setting under investigation" (p. 519). Although we know that teaching is based on learned experience, the teachers' rarely contributed their inside knowledge and experience to the professed work of teaching because educational experts and their recommendations influenced teachers' practice, and also because the common isolation of teachers prevented opportunities to share knowledge and experiences (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999).

Isolation was a result of the schedule of the teaching day and was formalized in the teachers' professional context by the school's organizational structure. The school's organizational structure also formalized rules, procedures, instructions, and communications of the teachers' professional context, which directed their practice and professional development. The formalized work of teachers and the hierarchy of authority influenced BT teachers' professional context, and perpetuated their subordinate position in a hierarchical organization. The teachers' lack of power was reflected in the extent to which teachers participated in decisions for tasks associated with their work, including decisions regarding teaching assignments and employment.
The hierarchy of authority, which Book Talk teachers specifically referred to as a male dominant structure, usually made decisions for the educational context, and teachers, who are members of a gendered profession, accepted those decisions, even though decisions were sometimes counterproductive to their practice and professional development (Ben-Peretz, 1996; Blase et al., 1991), and limited teachers' influence and voice in the school context.

Book Talk teachers' voices were particularly missing from discussions of curriculum development, although the teacher's role in curriculum development and implementation is necessary because teachers directly know learners (Schwab, 1978). Commonly, outside experts, who lacked practical knowledge, understanding, and overall awareness of the realities of the teaching and learning context, developed and mandated curriculum and curricular policy, which had the potential to limit the teachers' influence. Thus, curriculum was often times inapplicable, irrelevant, and impractical to the immediate context of teaching and learning, according to Book Talk teachers, and BT teachers were faced with many decisions regarding curricular implementation. These teachers made choices for the curriculum, thus student learning, by practicing the art of teaching, accounting for students' needs and abilities, and upholding curricular policy. Curricular policy and teachers' artistic and professional judgment created contradictory experiences for BT teachers.

Book Talk teachers accepted the professional contradictions and curricular conflicts of their professional context, even though the teachers'
realities complicated and sometimes, impeded efforts for change and teacher development. Schools are characterized by a centralization of authority and teachers are employees in an organization with few formal rights, thus teachers' subordinate position in the hierarchy of education limited their influence in their professional context. Another reason teachers may accept outside influence of their work, according to Hiebert & Stigler (1999), is that education lacks a system for developing professional knowledge and for giving teachers the opportunity to learn about teaching and contribute to their professional work and growth.

The reality remains that teachers are isolated and rarely have the time and opportunity to participate in professional life outside the classroom (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Callan, 1998; Little & McLaughlin, 1993; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). Current demands of the educational context pressure teachers to take on new and additional responsibilities, as well as provide better results in student growth, however, not only are teachers provided with limited support, but they also lack learning opportunities to develop their practice to meet demands (Caldwell, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Day, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999). It has been recommended that professional development and developing collegial relationships can share the burden and provide support to set priorities among all the demands placed upon teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hargreaves, 1997b; Jipson & Paley, 2000; McLaughlin, 1997). Collegial relationships result from opportunities for professional development (Holmes Group, 1995; Lieberman & Miller, 1990;
NFIE, 1996), and as BT teachers described the reality of their professional context, building collegial relationships and engaging in meaningful professional development were limited experiences for teachers.

Understanding this reality sets the context for understanding teachers' thinking about professional development, its definitions and implications, which is taken up in the following chapter. Unique to Book Talk teachers' understanding of professional development was the influence of the Annenberg Grant and the significant professional development opportunities it facilitated in BT teachers' professional context. Although BT teachers commonly experienced a deficit model of professional development, prescribed by outsiders of the educational context (Day, 1997; Friesen, 1993; Little, 1992; McLaughlin, 1997), they also understood the significant effects of developing a collaborative and collegial culture that supports the new paradigm of professional development. Their understandings illuminate the reality of professional development for teachers, and this reality lends itself to understanding the opportunity for change in teachers' professional context.
Chapter V

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPLORED AND EXPOSED BY BOOK TALK TEACHERS

Teachers participate in a demanding and changing culture, and "professional development has the potential to cause the culture to become transformational, and it is the culture that continuously fuels educational change" (Sagor, 1997, p. 188). Professional development defined and discussed in Chapter II implicates change for both the culture of schools and teachers. The new paradigm of professional development recommends changes for teachers in more effective collegial relationships, more sharing in issues of knowledge and expertise, and more opportunities to build in continuous teacher learning to meet the growing influences and changes in their professional context (Fichtman Dana, 1994; Holmes Group, 1995; NCES, 1999; Renyi, 1998; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Lieberman & Grolnick (1997) suggest that "engaging educators in activities in which they learn to work interdependently, reflect on their practice, value their own expertise, and assume leadership roles is as central to the purpose of professional development as it is to the process of school reform" (p. 201).

However, currently, as Book Talk teachers reveal, teachers are not commonly involved in professional development experiences that build a professional culture based on collaborative working relationships. Book Talk
teachers reported that professional development experiences lacked opportunities to work productively with colleagues in their own school or from other schools (Journals, 8). “Talk about an ideal professional development would have been giving me a chance to go talk to other kindergarten teachers. Like getting us together somewhere so that we can just talk, or visit someone who they considered to be a master teacher. But have I seen another kindergarten teacher this year” (Ms. Wednesday, 10-18-99, 40)? The reality is opportunities for professional development were limited in the Book Talk teachers’ context, and opportunities for significant professional development were even more obscure.

As teachers recounted their experiences of professional development, they described the implications of those experiences and illuminated the reality of professional development in their professional context. Book Talk teachers described professional development based on their cumulative understanding of their experiences. Book Talk teachers clearly noted two distinct types of professional development experiences; those that were teacher-directed and those that were outside directed. BT teachers most commonly experienced professional development directed by outsiders of the educational context, which will be the focus of the first discussion of this chapter. Outside directed professional development usually was based on a deficit model of learning involving training to fill a deficit in teachers’ knowledge (Day, 1997; Friesen, 1993; McLaughlin, 1997), and this training was sometimes mandated in the teacher’s professional context.
The second discussion of this chapter describes teacher-directed professional development experiences. Hiebert & Stigler (1999) suggest that finding ways for teachers to share what they are learning will help build a professional knowledge base for teaching, and the Annenberg Grant significantly contributed to building teachers' knowledge base from within the profession by providing time and support for teacher-directed professional development. Teacher-directed professional development fostered an opportunity for teachers to contribute their knowledge to teaching, and this was a unique opportunity for the teachers, considering the reality of their professional development context. Teacher-directed professional development clearly contributed to the teachers' understanding of professional development.

The final discussion explores the implications of professional development for the participating teachers. BT teachers' describe professional development that involves informal collegial interaction as an opportunity to develop collegiality, learning, and change, and according to Book Talk teachers, these are significant outcomes of professional development. According to the teachers, collegiality has the potential to foster support, reflection, and learning, and learning can occur because teachers have an opportunity to communicate with other teachers who are viewed as resources of knowledge. Professional development that builds collegial relationships to facilitate learning has the potential to bring about change (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Franke et al., 1998;
Hess, 1994; Kinney, 1998; Matlin & Short, 1992; NFIE, 1996), as found in teacher-directed professional development, like the Book Talk project.

By exposing and understanding Book Talk teachers' definitions and perspectives of professional development, it is possible for teachers to contribute their voices and knowledge to the professional development context, and the professional knowledge base of teaching, rather than relying on the recommendations of educational experts (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994; Ulichny, 1997). Their voices are significant because currently "teachers have become passive and dependent in pursuit of their own voices" (Cooper, 1988, p. 46), thus, exposing the fact that professional development surrounding teachers' discourse lends itself to generating a voice for teachers (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Livingston et al., 1992).

**Teachers' Experiences with Deficit Models of Professional Development**

Outside-directed professional development permeated the Book Talk teachers' professional context, and this reality commonly defined professional development for the BT teachers. Chicago Public School professional development days are mandated and scheduled by the Board of Education and administration. "There's professional development and there are teacher in-service. There are two types of days. One is all day administration directed; one is half-day administration directed, half-day teacher-directed, although the
administration is controlling the time. But the administration is mandated to control the time" (Ms. Monday, 3-18-99, 6).

Time, as well as timing, contributed significantly to opportunities for teachers' professional development, and more importantly, opportunities for learning. The scheduling of professional development days in the CPS "was at the worst times," according to Ms. Monday (3-18-99, 6). She explains that:

Professional development days are put before spring break, they’re put before Christmas break, they’re put around the time the teachers' Report Cards are due. So all they want to do is sit in an in-service and do Report Cards. And can you blame them?...The CEO has not called me up and said, ‘Gee Ms. Monday, when do you think would be a good time for staff development?’ In which case I would say, ‘Gee, CEO, when there’s nothing going on for the rest of the week.’ Because when you put a staff development day before a report card day or you put it before spring break, or you put it at the end of June, or when you put it in the beginning of August, or the beginning of the school year, it’s not useful time. I mean how can you take what you learn and apply it when you’re going on summer vacation? You can’t. You forget it and it basically goes down the drain because I’m not going to remember the last three days in June (3-18-99, 6-9)?

Professional development was often times scheduled inappropriately because it conflicted with the realities of Book Talk teachers' professional context and their formalized work. Book Talk teachers recognized the advantage of rescheduling professional development days in the CPS, but because they did not usually contribute input or direct professional development, the teachers generally disregarded the Board scheduled professional development. Outside directed professional development was usually not "worthwhile or actually useful for the teachers," according to Ms. Monday. "I just feel a lot of times it's information that's not meaningful." She explains, "We need to talk to someone

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who knows how to talk to our population. Bringing someone in to talk about
behavior management who for example, has worked only with kids in the
suburbs or with the kids in rural areas is not realistic" (Ms. Monday, 3-18-99, 5-7).
Thus, professional development experienced by Book Talk teachers was often
times irrelevant to their context and commonly wasted the teachers’ time.
Outsiders attempted to fill a deficit in teachers’ knowledge and were unaware of
the realities of their professional context and the specific knowledge teachers
desired, and this discrepancy limited learning. Book Talk teachers attributed an
absence of learning to the lack of teacher input into professional development.
Ms. Thursday explains that:

We don’t sit around and ask teachers when we have staff development or
professional development here, something to relate to what we should be
doing or what we need to do....It’s the administration. It’s not the
teachers. It’s never the teachers together saying that this is what we
should be doing or whatever. It’s always the administration saying this is
what you should be doing. And I think it should be teachers who should
have some say or some type of input....professional development is really
not for professionals. Not in the classroom. It’s not the classroom as the
professional, put it that way. There’s always someone outside the
classroom. And sometimes it’s probably people that have never been in
the classroom....That makes you feel like you’re inadequate in a way
because what you might know that might work for your classroom might
not work for all classrooms, and everybody’s different. You know, as far
as individuals. So I think you need more input from teachers themselves
as far as professional development (5-6-99, 1).

Outside directed professional development contributed to the educational
gap between teachers’ knowledge and professed knowledge, as it contributed to
Ms. Thursday’s feeling of inadequacy. Ms. Thursday desired teacher input into
professional development because outsiders to the context of teaching and
learning usually directed professional development, thereby, professional development did not always meet her needs. Ms. Thursday supports the argument that the focus of study for professional development should be the teaching context, hence teachers and their classrooms (Day; 1997; Lampert, 1999; Tickle, 1989). However, outsiders, such as the Board of Education, prescribed professional development for teachers, which usually resulted in a deficit model of learning. Deficit models of professional development perpetuate an image of teacher-as-technician, a compliant tool of prescriptive teaching and learning (Friesen, 1993; Hargreaves, 1997a; McLaughlin, 1997).

Evidence of prescription was found in one of the CPS professional Development days, which was devoted to the IOWA Test of Basic Skills training. Ms. Thursday concluded that it “sucked” and “it's a waste to teach all the goals, learn all the stuff, and then as a school only be tested on reading and math” (Note, 5-2-00). Often times, deficit models of professional development resulted in teachers’ feelings of “frustration, anxiety, and agitation because we’re wasting precious time” (Ms. Tuesday, Personal communication, 8-23-99). Thus enforcing the viewpoint among teachers that deficit models of professional development commonly wasted their time because professional development held minimal relevance to the context of the teachers' practice.

Ms. Wednesday provides evidence of this by describing her understanding of the Board of Education professional development day at the Field Museum. Ms. Wednesday predetermined the irrelevancy of the workshop because she had
previously visited and experienced the Chicago Museums' workshops, however, she was mandated to participate in professional development of the same nature, thus repeating her experience, and wasting her time. She explains:

I read the Board's letter, and they have combined forces with the different museums in Chicago and the Chicago Public Schools, and I think they're just gonna kind of be telling us. It sounded like they're going to be giving us that thing about the different things that they offer to schools and ... the field trips and stuff like that, whatever. We'll see. God I hope not. That's the impression. They weren't like really specific. It's the Museum of Science and Industry -- the museum, and they'll sign some memberships...we'll be doing that all day. It's just for first year teachers, third grade teachers, and sixth grade teachers. I don't fall into that, but, that's how they [administration] treat me....I don't think it's gonna be any good to me. As I'm going there, I'm thinking I've been to the Field Museum workshop before. I know about all their different resources, and it's just another thing that they're doing to look good or something. I've been to stuff like that -- the Art Institute, the Terra Museum. I've been to them all....Maybe we'll get some freebies (10-18-99, 31-37).

The mandated workshop was an opportunity for the Museum personnel to tell and give information to teachers, thus it was non-participatory and centered around a deficit model of professional development. Ms. Wednesday's entire day was consumed by the mandate, although CPS teachers have the option to use one-half of their professional development time for self-directed activities, according to 44-31 of the Chicago Teacher Union Agreement (1999). Ms. Wednesday did not receive any "freebies" from her professional development experience, as she hoped, however, she was fortunate enough to receive a resource binder. Many teachers who attended the mandated, Field Museum workshop did not even receive resource binders. According to Ms. Monday, "the
Board of Education prepared 2,100 binders, which left 900 teachers without binders."

Ms. Monday called the Board of Education to report that some Marylin School teachers "didn't get the binder with all the materials, and the woman on the phone said, 'well, they will be getting the binders.' And Ms. Monday responded, 'well how will they be getting them? How would you know who did or didn't get the binders?' Well, they signed their names if they didn't get the binder and wrote NB for no binder.' Ms. Monday said, 'well they told me that they didn't inform anyone.' And she said, 'well I have a list of six hundred, so I'll just add them to the list.' So six hundred people signed NB, but how many didn't even know" (11-10-99, 6-7)? This mandated professional development experience for Ms. Thursday and other teachers who attended became immaterial to the teachers' professional context because it lacked materials, as well as significant learning for teachers.

Professional development that was organized by the Board of Education generally required teachers' compliance, and usually not their contribution to learning, as evident in professional development devoted to teacher recertification7. One of the final professional development days of the school year was dedicated to recertification, which is a relevant topic for teachers since it involves state licensing. Recertification requires that teachers engage in professional development to renew their state license to teach. It further outlines
the conditions and definitions of professional development, thus legitimating professional development for the significance of lawmakers and licensure.

To complete recertification, enrollment in university courses and engaging in professional development activities are required for teachers. Marylin School teachers were provided with a list of appropriate professional development activities and these activities were assigned a point value. All CPS teachers were required to gain 120 points of continuing professional development units (CPDU) within five years. The Board of Education will provide opportunities for professional development, and the CEO refers to these “series of refresher courses” as “training” that is “teacher run, managed, and taught....Every company gives training....We will have universities within schools....It is simple and cost effective” (Note, 4-27-00). The so-called teacher-directed professional development as described by the CEO lacks teacher initiative and influence, thus direction, and can be viewed as a decision based on cost, and not necessarily high quality professional development for teachers.

Professional development, directed by the Board of Education, generally occurred on a superficial level, based on a training model that was scheduled intermittently and measured by days, and even hours (Lortie, 1975). As was the case with Book Talk teachers, a training model often contradicts those suggestions being put forward by the new paradigm of professional development as articulated in Chapter II. Teachers' involvement in their recertification process and professional development was based on following a predetermined plan for
continuous learning. Although teachers may benefit from this mandated professional development, teachers can become inundated with counting units, credits, semesters, and years.

"Recertification is a turn off for teachers," according to Ms. Thursday. "Nobody tells you anything about recertification. Why didn't we have a voice? In our profession we are the bottom of the totem pole" (Note, 5-2-00).

Recertification was relevant for Marylin School teachers, however, the relevancy was created for them. CPS teachers must participate in recertification because it is necessary for a continuing license to teach, and this constitutes the CEO's definition of professional development.

The reality exists that professional development is commonly directed and defined for teachers, not usually by teachers, thus teachers have limited opportunities to contribute their voice or knowledge to professional development in the context described by Book Talk teachers (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Fay, 1992; Livingston et al., 1992; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Deficit models of professional development permeated the Book Talk teachers' context, and information given to teachers by outsiders was usually generic, thus inapplicable to the reality of BT teachers' practice. Although this type of professional development still dominates most schools, there is an increasing awareness that new forms are both possible and desirable (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Fullan, 1991; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Senge et al., 2000). This was the case with the Annenberg
Grant, which fostered a new form of professional development at Marylin School that lead to Book Talk teachers’ opportunities for teacher-directed professional development.

Teacher-directed Professional Development Experiences

As it becomes apparent that professional development programs are sometimes less effective than anticipated (Friesen, 1993; Little, 1992; NFIE, 1996), a change from outside directed professional development to teacher generated professional development has been recommended (Britzman, 1992; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Morley, 1999). This change occurs when schools provide a supportive environment that fosters collegial relationships by facilitating continuous learning and involving teachers’ in their professional development (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2000; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Little & McLaughlin, 1993). Book Talk teachers were fortunate to commonly experience teacher-directed professional development as a result of the Annenberg Grant. Book Talk teachers engaged in sharing practical knowledge around ideas and purposes that were important for them, rather than responding to other people’s agendas as sometimes organized by outside directed professional development (Hargreaves, 1997b). The Grant provided for on-site professional development that relied on teachers as resources for learning, as Ms. Monday explains:

We had a curriculum share fair and it was really good. We had teachers from four or five different schools. There were teacher presenters. There was a schedule of what was going on, and teachers went from room to
room and heard different presentations. Like I did the one about Book Talk and explained to people what we are doing with that, and there was some technology, you know computer/video type things, Internet, science, math, literature, writing. A total variety. Then we had set up in the hallways where teachers were stationed, and they could talk to people who came by.... It was really great, especially for the first time ever we tried something like that. The feedback we got was positive. Even if the teacher came back with one good idea, it was worth it (3-18-99, 1-3).

Teachers from all the participating schools of the Annenberg Grant gathered together and brought their knowledge and experiences to share with other teachers. Thus, teachers directed the relevancy, process, and product of the professional development experience, which was unique to teachers' current reality of professional development. Teachers were afforded the opportunity to direct and share their knowledge because of the Annenberg Grant, even though the administrators of the schools initiated the Grant. Thus, teacher-directed professional development can occur, but it is not necessarily teacher initiated.

Teacher-directed professional development was inherent in the goals of the Grant, according to Ms. Monday, who was the main author of the Grant Proposal. Ms. Monday and her efforts significantly impacted Book Talk teachers' experiences of teacher-directed professional development, as evident in the following description of the Grant's inception and purpose.

The whole idea is collaboration. The whole idea of this grant was to pay teachers for their time for sharing ideas for professional development. The principal really kind of started it years ago when she first became a principal because she didn't know anything about being a principal. I mean her husband was a principal, but she didn't want to go home every night over dinner and say, what do we know? So, anyway, she got together this group of principals, and they called those principals' caucus, and they would meet like monthly, I think maybe or even quarterly. And the principal's husband is a very visionary person, and he heard about the
Annenberg Challenge and decided that we should be part of the $5 billion. We're gonna get some of that money. And initially he wanted me to just quit my job and become the person in charge of the grant, and make like $50,000 a year just running the grant. And I just was not interested in something that was that tenuous. And I didn't have the experience, and I still don't have the experience. That's the kind of a thing that you need to have a certain amount of experience. I mean I appreciated the faith he had in me, but faith alone wasn't going to do that job. So we got together among four schools, and each school brought one or two teachers.

Another teacher and I worked on the grant mostly, and we wrote the whole proposal. And the whole thing was based on best practices and sharing best practices between and among teachers within schools, but also teachers within networks. I think there was always a little confusion about that [best practices] because I never meant the textbook definition. I meant what works, what's effective. So, we wrote this thing, we submitted it, it got rejected, we wrote it again, we submitted it, it got rejected, we wrote it again, and we submitted it, and we got a planning grant, which was $20,000, and it was $5,000 per school. The planning grant was basically I guess to see the lay of the land and plan out what we could do. I think it was two full years before we got the grant. The whole grant. First of all I had no concept we were going to get it. But we got it, $675,000, and it was nice to meet with these people, and I mean I really enjoyed getting together with the other teachers, and getting to know the other principals, and it really made me appreciate my principal (11-17-99, 8-16).

The Annenberg Grant supported a collaborative environment for the teachers to foster collegial relationships, thus supporting the new paradigm of professional development heralding collaboration. It has been recognized that reflective teaching, professional learning, and personal fulfillment are enhanced through collaboration with colleagues (Clark et al., 1998; Jipson & Paley, 2000; Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Paulsen & Feldman, 1995), and the Grant was based on sharing best practices with colleagues, in which participating teachers' determined the qualifications of best practices. The Grant also paid teachers for sharing their knowledge and expertise, which was an uncommon aspect of BT
teachers' professional development context, because more commonly the teachers had to pay to attend workshops, seminars, and courses.

The visions of the principals were significant to Book Talk teachers' professional development. Not only was a vision needed to pursue a grant for teachers' professional development, but also the vision must be directed and acted upon, and in this case Ms. Monday enacted the vision. Although Ms. Monday had never written a Grant of such monetary magnitude, she was supported by her principal, and other colleagues. Ms. Monday experienced an opportunity for professional development by writing the Grant Proposal because it required her to collaborate and learn from colleagues, and this was the foundation of Ms. Monday's vision of professional development. She explains:

I have found that the most important professional development often comes from sharing within the school and between faculty members. New teachers who are encouraged both to learn from more experienced teachers and to share their own new ideas feel doubly experienced. The school itself has such a wealth of ideas, that it is a natural place for shared learning to occur, not only between students, but also between professionals. Teachers often return from conferences so excited at having heard new ideas and having talked with other professionals in their field. I am always pleased to see this, and then to encourage them to find that same support and experience right within their own school building, where many teachers who are exceptional educators can be found. Encouraging these professionals to share from their own experience can open many doors, both figuratively and literally (Personal communication, May 2000).

According to Ms. Monday, professional development has the potential to provide support among teachers who share ideas and learn from colleagues, thus initiating possibilities for change. Ms. Monday's understanding of professional development enabled the teachers to direct the opportunity for
professional development, and the potential for learning to occur right within the school. Thus, teacher-directed professional development has possibilities for building a system that can learn from its own experiences (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2000; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Ms. Monday explains that:

What I see happens is teachers are able to see themselves differently as a result of this [teacher-directed professional development] because they are the authority. And by authority I mean like a facilitator. I don't mean like a top down I am in charge, and you're going to listen kind of thing. It's like I have information, I can give you some if you like sitting in this. Maybe by having you here, I will learn something because you will know something I don't know, and that's what happens. It is a really big part of it, so the teachers can view themselves as an authority. And the teachers who are being observed or participating as you know as pass-it-alongers, you can say, it's interactive. And they're able to see those teachers representing as something other than their next-door neighbor. And I think in many cases it makes teachers reflect "well, what do I know that I could share?" I do see that happen a lot. Like, 'Oh I do something like that, or I do this, and I wonder if people would like to know about it? So, I think that it develops people's sense of confidence that's a big part of it. And, it's reaffirming, like oh, I do that already (3-18-99, 3-4).

Sharing knowledge, reflecting on the teaching practice, and developing self-confidence are outcomes of teacher-directed professional development, according to Ms. Monday (Note, 4-8-99, 3). Opportunities for support and reaffirmation of one's practice are built into teacher-directed professional development, as a result of teachers contributing their knowledge about teaching. Ms. Monday's understanding of professional development supported teachers as resources, and her understanding of professional development contributed to the purpose and goals of the Annenberg Grant, and opportunities for teacher-directed professional development. BT teachers commonly associated the
Annenberg Grant and the opportunities it provided with experiences of significant professional development, which was attributed to Ms. Monday's influence.

Although Ms. Monday worked as an administrator, in the role of the instructional coordinator, she identified with teachers. "Sometimes I'm a teacher, sometimes I'm an administrator" (Ms. Monday, Note, 11-10-99, 10). Her administrative position and her teacher identity supported BT teachers, as well as opportunities for teacher-directed professional development at Marylin School. "My definition [of administration] is to provide good work for the staff, whether that is to facilitate continuing education, or whether it is to act as a liaison" (Ms. Monday, 3-18-99, 1). Ms. Monday's administrative role is concerned with teachers' ongoing professional development and opportunities for support, and Marylin School teachers recognized this. "Teachers come to me, and say, I know you will help me. I know you will use this in a positive way and will do something useful with it. I came to you instead of going to, and they name someone else. I mean, in a way it is nice, but on the other hand, it is awful. It's like, ok, that's my role, but that should be every administrator's role" (Ms. Monday, 3-18-99, 2).

Ms. Monday clearly associated the role of administrator with providing support for teachers, and BT teachers clearly sought her assistance and support. "I go to Ms. Monday sometimes with discipline because she's told me, basically, 'come to me if they [the principals] don't listen to you, come to me' " (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 13-14). Ms. Monday invited teachers to seek her support,
and her identification with teachers enabled her to offer significant support to the teachers. Ms. Monday and her efforts were crucial to creating a supportive environment in Marylin School, which is identified as a factor of the school that contributes to successful professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Elmore, 1990; Holmes Group, 1995; Little, 1992).

Ms. Monday's administrative role not only lent itself to opportunities for support, but also opportunities for change. A change in teachers' professional development at Marylin School can be attributed to the Annenberg Grant, as well as Ms. Monday's continuous efforts to provide opportunities for professional development. Marylin School teachers voted in November to restructure the school day and start three minutes earlier each day, which provided for four and one half, additional professional development days for the school year. The idea for restructuring resulted from Ms. Monday's initiative because of the obstacles she often faced when trying to plan a professional development day. She explains that:

My idea was the restructured day; I'm very fed up with the CEO and all this. Basically he told without asking us that we don't know how to professionally develop our staff, and so on the day when we have professional development we can plan something, but it doesn't really matter. Because even if they [Board of Education] don't have something going on, they plan something a day ahead of time. Or two days, or a week ahead of time, after we have speakers lined up, and money paid, or whatever we had planned. I'm sitting here saying impossible, impossible, impossible, and I finally realized the only way for us to ever have staff development as a full staff is if we had a couple of days a year. I wanted to do it [professional development day] once a quarter" (11-10-99, 5).
Marylin School teachers increased their professional development time because of Ms. Monday's initiative, not because the teachers planned the increased professional development days. Ms. Monday was frustrated by mandated and outside directed professional development, which disrupted on-site professional development, and she proposed to make a change in the current reality of professional development experienced by Marylin School teachers. Ms. Monday, who is an administrator, directed professional development for teachers, but only as far as initiating opportunities. However, without her initiative, Book Talk teachers would have rarely engaged in teacher-directed professional development. Thus, Ms. Monday's identity and role, as administrator and author of the Annenberg Grant, was significant to BT teachers' experiences of teacher-directed professional development, and opportunities for developing collegiality, learning, and change.

Teacher-directed professional development marked a change in the reality of teachers' professional development context as a result of the Annenberg Grant and Ms. Monday, and positively influenced teachers' understanding of professional development. The following discussion describes the teachers' understanding of professional development, and supports the teachers in contributing their voice to the knowledge about professional development, thereby creating the potential to bridge knowledge between teachers' understanding and outside sources of expertise (Day, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997). Book Talk teachers clearly define
professional development as having implications for collegiality, learning, and change, which often results from teacher-directed professional development.

**Understanding Professional Development: Definitions and Implications of Professional Development Experienced by Book Talk Teachers**

Book Talk teachers shared their experiences and perspectives about professional development, and by doing so, created a complex understanding of professional development from their perspective. The teachers' understanding of professional development was cumulative and based on the implications of the experience, not necessarily congruent with their professional development realities described in the previous discussions. As BT teachers recounted their experiences of professional development, they did not offer a textbook definition. Rather, they mentioned a variety of sources of significant professional growth beyond the usual school in-service activities. BT teachers used the terms professional development, staff development, in-service, and workshop interchangeably throughout the dialogue. Regardless of its label, meaningful professional development, according to BT teachers, results in collegiality, learning, and change. “Professional development to me is the collegiality, reflecting, the re-thinking, the attempting something in a new way but really planning it, really being aware of why” (Ms. Monday, 11-17-99, 19-20).

Ms. Monday understands meaningful professional development to be an opportunity for collegiality, learning, and reflection. Ms. Tuesday agreed and
defined mentoring as a professional development experience because there's collegiality” (11-17-99, 23). Ms. Tuesday also understood that “professional development can be an individual experience” (Note, 11-17-99, 16). According to Ms. Friday, professional development is learning and gaining information, and with information comes power. She explains that:

Professional development in my estimation is trying to make the person a professional....And in doing that they give the person power by giving them information. Information is power, that's the way I look at it. And that's what I try to give to my kids. The thing is, if you know what's going on in the Board of Education system, you know what's going on in America, let's put it that way. And all of education, then you have a better feeling of what's going on with the profession and branching out, taking classes in something you're really interested in (5-4-99, 6)

Professional development has the potential to promote opportunities for learning to further the development of the teacher, according to Ms. Friday. She understands that teaching involves continually learning and acquiring information. Her belief that information equals power is represented in her will to continually learn, which was essential for growth in Ms. Friday's professional context. Continuous learning is essential to the professional development of Book Talk teachers as evident in their understanding that professional development is an ongoing aspect of their professional context. Book Talk teachers had opportunities for ongoing professional development and continuous learning as a result of the Annenberg Grant.

According to teachers' journal responses, overall professional development experiences brought about through the Annenberg Grant and Book Talk during the school year had been sustained and coherently focused, rather
than short term and unrelated because they had time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas (Journals, 8). Professional development opportunities increased their knowledge by helping the teachers understand students and subject matter better, leading to changes and shifts in teaching approaches (Journals, 9). Not only did teachers report an increase in learning this school year, they also made connections to other teachers, which was a change in the teacher culture at Marylin School. Book Talk teachers describe the implications of professional development in the following three discussions surrounding, collegiality, learning, and change, and these implications of professional development contribute to Book Talk teachers' definitions of professional development.

Collegiality: Building A Supportive and Reflective Teacher Culture

Teachers view colleagues as valuable resources, drawing heavily on them for ideas, technique, support, and inspiration (Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1996; Little & McLaughlin, 1993; Matlin & Short, 1992). As Book Talk teachers connected to other teachers, they had the opportunity to develop collegiality, and their collegial relationships provided a vehicle to reflect, reaffirm, and support their practices. Collegiality is professional development, according to Ms. Monday. “It’s that sharing, that trust, that understanding that you’re not alone, and that other people are going through this” (11-17-99, 22). As teacher isolation
was broken at Marylin School, “teachers began to build a support group of people who came to see that they could work together, struggle collectively, and feel comfortable working as a group rather than alone” (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 1988, p. 154). Engaging in open supportive communication is part of building trust, and the Annenberg Grant fostered professional development opportunities that simply enabled teachers to communicate with other teachers, as BT teachers explain:

The big examples of professional development are Book Clubs and Teacher Talks. And although they're two entirely different things, the result is very similar because what it does is it brings teachers together who might have nothing else in common, and it gets them talking, and it helps them to know each other, and it gets them to trust each other, and then they're more willing to share with each other, and to learn from each other (Ms. Monday, 11-17-99, 16).

Another great thing about Annenberg was you talk to teachers, and you find out that you're not the only one. And then I start to feel better, and I start to relax more. But, not until I started talking to other teachers. I feel better because you start to be a little more realistic and just see things the way they are (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 11).

The Annenberg Grant broke isolation among teachers and encouraged teachers to engage in dialogue, which lead to developing a collegial community of on-site learning and support. “I really find that the Annenberg workshops are helping with colleagues. It's what I am looking for in community....I'm trying to use Ms. March's bin idea for books. And I'm still following up on that, and she's in the building, so I can still keep going back and learning” (Ms. Tuesday, 4-28-99, 18). Collegial interaction resulted in acquiring an idea, reflecting on one's own practice, and reaffirming doubts about one's work, as in the case of Ms. Tuesday.
"I really came away with having experiences that broadened my perspectives and reassured me as to my own expectations" (Personal communication, 3-2-00).

Book Talk teachers participated in professional development, whether teacher-directed or outside directed, to learn and be supported by their colleagues. Ms. Wednesday describes the need for support in her professional context and chooses to participate in outside directed professional development to meet her needs. She explains that:

On November 10th, I wanted to go to the kindergarten workshop that talks about how to set up your centers and the reading, those things that I really haven’t had experience with. And I think the principal’s gonna let me go. It’s just that she’s asking for the brochure and everything, and I already threw the brochure out. I paid for the workshop, and figured it wasn’t going to be a big deal. I thought all I had to do was let the principal know I was going. I’m entitled to go. It would be good if she paid for it, but I paid for it cause I wanted to make sure I got in....I’m having a little more trouble with the kindergarten curriculum just because the way they have it set up is that you get these packages like physical science, earth science, and all that. They come in those plastic packages. They’re no help whatsoever. That’s why I wanted to take that workshop basically because I’m hoping that somewhere they can give me like objectives, cause I feel like I’ve been driving blind.

I wanted to sit with another kindergarten teacher who’s been doing this for a while and say, you know, this and this is happening or I’m not sure what to do about this and just a chance to talk to somebody else about it. I just really need to talk to somebody and say is it too much to be able to do this, or am I expecting too little of them, or just because I have a good idea of the different abilities that they have, the teachers can tell you the different things that they can do, or the stage where they’re at. That’s why I’m kind of hoping that I’m going to go to this seminar on November 10th. If anything, they’ll be other kindergarten teachers there that I can talk to during lunch or something (10-18-99, 33-42).

Ms. Wednesday looked for a connection to other teachers to develop her
kindergarten knowledge base, and she was willing to participate in outside directed professional development for the slightest chance of engaging in collegial interaction. Ms. Wednesday's knowledge base lacked knowledge regarding curriculum, and she attempted to learn by participating in professional development. The administration had to approve the workshop Ms. Wednesday had paid for and selected to attend, and this could be viewed as the need to direct Ms. Wednesday's professional development. Regardless of the administration's influence, Ms. Wednesday clearly viewed teachers as resources for knowledge and support, and she sought professional development to engage in collegial interaction to further her learning.

Teachers involved in collaborative professional development make learning possible for others, as well as for themselves. In the new paradigm of professional development, teachers are stepping out of the classroom, thinking differently about colleagues, and changing their style of work in schools (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Morley, 1999; Paulsen & Feldman, 1995; Schlechty, 1990). As teachers work together as colleagues, they share knowledge and resources, create new knowledge and apply it. Thus, collegiality can result in fostering a supportive environment for learning (Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997; Matlin & Short, 1992; NCES, 1999).
Learning: Exchanging Useful Ideas and Continuously Learning

Book Talk teachers defined learning as exchanging useful ideas, and they also understood that learning is a continual part of teaching. BT teachers sought useful ideas from professional development and were motivated to continuously learn to improve student growth (NFIE, 1996; Rose, 1998). Ms. Friday feels that: “I give the kids a lot of extra stuff that they wouldn’t get any place else because I have a lot more resources than the average person here because I’ve gone to professional development for years” (Ms. Friday, 5-4-99, 5). Book Talk teachers supported the new paradigm of professional development, which involved teachers’ continual learning infused with their practice. Ms. Wednesday understands that “as a teacher you have to realize that learning never stops. I’m still learning, the kids are always going to learn. It just never ends. I mean, it’s just part of it (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 8). According to Ms. Monday, “a teacher is somebody who is willing to learn constantly and to learn from situations and to learn from other teachers” (3-18-99, 11). It becomes necessary for teachers to continuously learn because as Ms. Wednesday explains:

I think that I could be teaching twenty years, and there’s still more to learn because there are things changing all the time. And there’s always new ways to improve, new books coming out, or new techniques, anything like that. So I think that we should be required pretty much to keep going to school and keep the professional development going (4-29-99, 6-7).

Continuous learning is inherent for teachers’ success to meet the demands of change (Day, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997; NCES, 1999; Renyi, 1998),

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and change fuels BT teachers' motivation to learn. Ms. Wednesday wanted to
make improvements in her practice to incorporate change, but for other teachers
who did not desire to learn and improve, Ms. Wednesday recommended
requiring teachers to participate in professional development to continue
learning. It is important to clarify that Ms. Wednesday is not advocating for
mandated and outside-directed professional development, but she is advocating
for mandated continuous learning for teachers because she understands its
significance for her practice and for students. According to Ms. Wednesday,
teachers should have a choice in how they continuously learn, but teachers
should not have a choice in whether they continuously learn. Teachers should
have a choice in learning not only because teachers know students best,
according to Schwab (1983), but also because they participate in professional
development to benefit their students, as Ms. Thursday explains:

It was my choice to make myself better. If it's something that you need to
lead that you're not very knowledgeable on, it's better to go out and get
the extra help or extra resource to help the students better, so they have a
better understanding of it. Because if you understand it better, they'll
understand it.... So if it takes going to another teacher or going to other
workshops, to get the best going for the students, you'd better do it. I
don't think it should be mandated, you go here, do this, do that. You
should have a choice (5-6-99, 12).

Teachers should have a choice in their professional development so that
relevant learning for teachers and students can occur (Castle & Aichele, 1994;
Kennedy, 1990; Morley, 1999). According to Book Talk teachers, relevant
learning encompasses useful ideas that are practical, applicable, and significant
to the reality of teachers' practice, and this type of learning commonly occurs as
teachers acquire ideas. "What I enjoy about the professional development classes that I have gone to is that I come out feeling like I have new ideas and things I'll actually be able to use" (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 2). Professional development that is significant for BT teachers involved learning practical ideas, which often resulted from teachers sharing their knowledge and experience. As such, collaborative professional development is seen as the primary source of useful classroom ideas (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Lortie, 1975; Matlin & Short, 1992; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996), and the Annenberg Grant provided opportunities for collaborative professional development. Ms. Wednesday explains that:

With Annenberg we're sharing more ideas. We had a workshop and we ended up talking about counting the number of days in the school year. And we're doing it, too. It was something that helped us integrate the curriculum. So those are the things that you see all the time. In Book Talk, Ms. Tuesday and I were talking and I'm telling her that I'd like to do a read-a-loud, but I don't know what books to read. She'll tell me books that she's reading in the gifted classroom, and I read them here in my room. So the kids are doing more of the same things because we had talked about how the gifted and neighborhood programs are so isolated from each other and how the kids don't even play together. So even if it was a small thing, like we go out together for free time at the same time, it felt like we had made this huge step. They're at least playing with each other now. So, I think you can see the results of Annenberg around the school (4-29-99, 16-17).

Because the teachers at Marylin School experienced opportunities for informal collegial interaction, the teachers developed collegial relationships that fostered learning among peers. Ms. Wednesday built a collegial and trusting relationship with Ms. Tuesday that facilitated an open communication between the teachers to seek and share ideas. As ideas were exchanged between the
teachers, the teachers engaged in learning and made changes and improvements for their students' learning. The Annenberg Grant provided opportunities for learning by encouraging teachers to share ideas and seek teachers as resources for learning. Ms. Tuesday recalled a professional development day devoted to an off-site computer training program and realized that "we went through all the computer training, but then it wasn't in your room to follow up on. And then to have somebody come in to trouble shoot, and well, that Ms. July [computer teacher], that's really making a difference. So I've used her" (4-28-99, 18).

Using teachers as resources for on-site learning is supportive, collegial, and practical. Learning becomes context specific and learner specific when teachers learn from other teachers, and on-site resources for learning enables teachers to contribute to the development of teachers' knowledge. Thus, learning and collegiality are essential to significant professional development, according to Book Talk teachers, and professional development that fosters collegiality and learning has the potential to facilitate change.

A Change in Teacher and School Culture

Hiebert and Stigler (1999) assert that "changing schools to support teachers' learning requires changing the culture of schools because schools must be places where teachers, as well as students, can learn" (p.144). The Annenberg Grant fostered a change in school culture by creating a supportive
context and redefining professional development (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2000; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996). Professional development opportunities provided by the Annenberg Grant were unique because they were both mandated, and teacher-directed. Attendance by teachers was not mandated, but time for professional development was required by the school’s obligations to the Annenberg Grant. Book Talk teachers recognized the need for “good staff development to go on consistently” and this change in the school culture supported ongoing professional development for the teachers (Ms. Monday, 11-17-99, 18). Change occurred on an individual and local level, and change was significant because Book Talk teachers observed and noted changes in other teachers, administrators, the school environment, and themselves.

One of the most significant changes in Marylin School’s culture was overcoming teacher isolation. According to Ms. Thursday, “The Annenberg Grant has opened doors...we used to be isolated, and now teachers are coming out of their classrooms” (Note, 5-2-00). She explains: “I’ve even gone to another school to visit. I was in the big upper classroom, and saw how they actually work and see that they’re not different than the ones that are here. And even to get with another teacher, do something with another class, to work as a whole” (5-6-99, 6). BT teachers had opportunities to visit and observe other teachers, as well as collaborate with teachers, as a result of the Annenberg Grant. “With Annenberg, it’s just made the time, and it’s almost like the Grant forced the
administration to give us that time. It was something they had to do because they agreed to do it for the Grant. But Annenberg really did break the isolation. It's been the best thing” (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 16).

Changes in school culture, as well as changes in administration, were attributed to the implementation of the Annenberg Grant, and the teacher-directed professional development opportunities it provided. Ms. Monday explains that:

Something I've seen with staff development is that principals are also changing....Our principal always viewed teachers as professionals, but the other principals, that was not necessarily the case. In fact, in some cases, it was the exact opposite. Teachers were suspect. Teachers were wrong, teachers were uninformed, and now I see a change, particularly with one of the principals. He's just come such a long way. I mean he's willing to pay teachers more for work and things like that. He used to just think teachers should volunteer their time. I cannot give you a real example except to tell you that he has so much teacher-presentation going on in his building now. He used to have exclusively external staff development. And now, it's almost exclusively internal staff development (3-18-99, 4-5).

The Annenberg Grant changed principals' perspectives about teachers and teachers' professional development. Because teachers were viewed as resources for learning, according to the Annenberg Grant, principals began to see teachers as representatives of knowledge, therefore capable of directing their professional development. The principals supported their teachers by organizing time for teacher-directed professional development as outlined by the Annenberg Grant. The goals of the Annenberg Grant supported Hiebert and Stigler's (1999) notion that the principal must become personally and directly
involved in changing school culture by working closely with teachers and demonstrating that improving teaching is significant to the school’s development.

Teachers, however, must also become personally involved in changing school culture and “must take responsibility for weaving continuous learning into the fabric of the teaching job” (NFIE, 1996, p. 12). NFIE (1996) takes this position because, unfortunately, not all teachers strive for growth and change, as Ms. Monday also recognizes:

What I see is that there are teachers who are drawn to things like Annenberg, who are drawn to being on PPAC [Professional Problems Advisory Committee], because they do see the big picture. And we still leave the other people in the dust. So those are the teachers I don’t know how to reach. Well it’s [Annenberg] not reaching everybody. Some of these teachers, they don’t really want to know these things. They don’t really want to do things any differently. They’re not life long learners (3-18-99, 16).

Currently, professional development is mostly voluntary, except when mandated, therefore Valli, Cooper, and Frankes (1997) question whether professional development opportunities are reaching those teachers who would most benefit from participation. Not all teachers experienced change from the implementation of the Annenberg Grant, even though the Grant provided time for teachers’ professional development. Change occurred when teacher isolation was broken, and teachers became involved in their professional development. Teachers at Marylin School who practiced life long learning were more susceptible to change, thereby contributed to change.

It has been professed that teachers must be the driving force behind change because they are best positioned to understand the problems that
students face and to generate possible solutions (Day, 1997; Hargreaves, 1997a; Ladson-Billing, 1998; Lipman, 1998), and Franke (1998) asserts that building collegiality fosters the dynamics that can lead people to change. The Annenberg Grant changed Marylin School’s culture and the teachers’ culture by breaking isolation and providing time for teachers to direct their professional development, which resulted in developing collegiality and learning. According to Ms. Monday, “So much of teaching is sharing, learning results and sharing results, and changing. Change is learning” (BT, 11-05-99, 10). If teaching is based on sharing, learning, and changing, then professional development should provide opportunities for sharing, learning, and changing, as in the case of teacher-directed professional development, which involves building collegiality, continuously learning, and facilitating change.

Summary of Chapter V

As schools become more permeable, “openness, informality, care, attentiveness, lateral working relationships, and reciprocal dialogue” has been suggested by Lieberman and Grolnick (1997) as essential to effective professional development (p. 199). Currently, there is a movement from a professional development paradigm entrenched in a training orientation, toward a paradigm in which “teachers become simultaneously students of schooling and architects of their own professional development” (Bullough, 1992, p. 249).
However, as BT teachers reveal, the reality is professional development most commonly surrounds a deficit model of learning, usually directed by outsiders of the educational context, and sometimes BT teachers endured deficit models of professional development as a result of mandates in their professional context. Because outsiders were often times unaware of teachers' realities, limited learning occurred as a result of impractical and irrelevant professional development experiences. Teachers rarely contributed their knowledge or directly participated in outside-directed professional development; rather they were trained in some area to fill a deficit in knowledge. Because of the absence of relevant learning from professional development, teachers' time was often wasted, thus teachers tended to disregard professional development opportunities directed and mandated by outsiders.

Fortunately, BT teachers had experienced significant professional development, which often resulted from opportunities for teachers to direct professional development. When Book Talk teachers overcame isolation and engaged in informal collegial interaction, the potential for collegiality increased. They cited collegiality as a significant outcome of professional development, which directly resulted from the opportunity for teachers to connect and communicate with other teachers. Through the teachers' connections, they developed an opportunity to reflect, reaffirm, and support their shared work. Building collegial relationships within the teachers' culture, generated learning that evolved from within the profession of teaching, thus teachers were resources
of knowledge. Collegial relationships supported an environment that fostered continuous learning, and continuous learning was significant to teachers and student development because teachers continually learned to improve student learning. Professional development that involved a high degree of collegiality had the potential to foster change by recognizing that teachers can be the gatekeepers to learning and the change process.

The most significant change in Book Talk teachers' professional development context resulted from the Annenberg Grant. The Annenberg Grant forced a change in the school's organizational structure by providing time for teachers to direct their professional development. As a result, Book Talk teachers developed collegial relationships and had greater influence over their professional development. They participated in decisions regarding their professional work and growth, and contributed to their professional knowledge because teachers directed their professional development.

Book Talk teachers described implications of professional development, and by doing so they defined professional development. Implications of meaningful professional development experiences for BT teachers were consistent with those of teachers in Professional Development Schools (Hoffman, Reed & Rosenbluth, 1997; Nuebert & Binko, 1998; Zeichner, Melnick & Gomez, 1996) because The Annenberg Grant fostered an environment for meaningful professional development to occur. According to the Book Talk teachers, significant professional development occurred when isolation was
broken, teachers connected to other teachers, learning was developed, and change occurred. Teachers most commonly cited Book Talk, a professional development opportunity of the Annenberg Grant, as criteria for a significant professional development experience.

Book Talk was significant because Book Talk broke the traditional isolation among teachers at Marylin School. Book Talk teachers connected to other teachers by developing collegial and social relationships, and they gained insight by listening to other colleagues, internalizing feedback, and reflecting on their own work. Learning that developed from Book Talk discourse resulted in both teacher and student learning. The opportunity for teacher-directed professional development created a change in the way in which teachers experienced professional development at Marylin School.

The final chapter of the Results of Data Analysis describes Book Talk, its process and its implications in understanding significant professional development from the voice of the teacher. Because teachers' ideas commonly exist in isolation, the opportunity to share ideas represents a shift from looking to outside sources for knowledge to having other educators learning from teachers (Fay, 1992; Livingston et al., 1992; Franke et al., 1998; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Morley, 1999). When teachers share their ideas, they become the experts, according to Hendricks (2001). Hence, I examined Book Talk and its discourse because it was a unique, teacher-directed professional development experience.
that supports the new paradigm of professional development and represents a change in Book Talk teachers’ professional context.
Chapter VI

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

BOOK TALK: A UNIQUE, TEACHER-DIRECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY THAT FACILITATED COLLEGIALITY, LEARNING, AND CHANGE

It has been suggested that a requirement for improving education is finding time during the work week for teachers to collaborate (Blase & Blase, 1998; 2000; Day, 1997; Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lieberman, 1995). Collaboration, unlike traditional professional development, has been heralded by teachers, researchers, and policymakers as essential to teachers’ continuous learning (Book; 1996; Clark et al., 1998; Howey & Collinson, 1995; Levine & Trachtman, 1997; NFIE, 1996), and if we expect teachers to play a major role in improving education, then we need to provide an environment in which they can do this work as continuous learners (Holmes Group, 1995; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Renyi, 1998). As the current reality stands, teachers work alone, for the most part, and have little time to interact, much less collaborate (Callan, 1998; Johnson, 1990; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). However, unique to the participating teachers' realities, the Annenberg Grant fostered collaborative professional development opportunities, and specifically facilitated Book Talk, which was a significant professional development experience for the teachers.

Little (1992) found that organizations that provide teachers with frequent time to talk about teaching and opportunities to teach each other and learn...
together encouraged collegiality and experimentation. Collegiality can result in interdependent, deliberate work among teachers to address problems of teaching and learning, according to Little and McLaughlin (1993), and collegiality involves risk-taking, exchanging ideas, reflection, and support. Professional development that focuses on promoting collegiality has potential to bring about change and Fullan (1990) recognizes that promoting a professional culture in schools increases the capacity for schools to change. Professional development is not only the renewal of teaching, but also the renewal of schools (Fullan & Hargreaves et al., 1992; Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Schlechty, 1990). It has the potential to build a culture of learners among teachers, as in the case of Book Talk.

Book Talk is an example of a teacher-directed professional development experience with implications for breaking teacher isolation, promoting collegiality, and developing learning and change, thereby supporting the new paradigm of professional development (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Holmes Group, 1995; McLaughlin, 1997; NFIE, 1996; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Even though the Annenberg Grant created the opportunity for Book Talk, it was clearly the participating teachers who locally defined and directed its significance by using the opportunity to discuss the demands and realities of their professional context.

As a result of Book Talk and its discourse, participating teachers exchanged and gained useful ideas for literature integration, developed support
mechanisms to cope with social influences in the classroom, expanded their knowledge base from within their own teacher culture, and had the power to direct their learning. Hence, they were the experts. Book Talk provided an opportunity for teachers to “talk, know, share, and trust,” as it created the time and space for teachers to collaborate (Ms. Monday, Note, 11-17-99, 15). Ms. Tuesday explains that “these chances on Friday mornings to get together with fellow teachers were inspiring, authentic, and very useful. For me, the Annenberg project has offered an honest opportunity for listening to each other” (Ms. Tuesday, Personal communication, 5-17-00).

Book Talk commenced Friday mornings in the school’s library and was subjected to daily school realities because Book Talk was an on-site professional development opportunity. Book Talk occurred while faculty meandered in and out, administrators interrupted to speak with teachers, and teachers were summoned to meet with unexpected parents. However, nothing compared to the countless interruptions from the intercom during discourse, and on two occasions, teachers reminded me to note the intercom disruptions in my observations. The professional development experience of Book Talk reflected the reality of school life, thus Book Talk was not an isolated element of the teachers’ professional context.

Book Talk started at 8:15 a.m., fifteen minutes before mandated teacher arrival, but punctuality was not practiced. “As the hour goes on, it grows a little bit,” observed Ms. Tuesday (4-28-99, 6). Teachers trickled into the library, and
Book Talk was a comfortable environment to arrive late and pick up the conversation. Completing tasks associated with their formalized work, such as grading papers or counting lunch tickets, was not an uncommon practice of teachers during Book Talk. Book Talk was an informal professional development experience, and the teachers participated in Book Talk because it was informal.

Ms. Thursday explains:

I like it [Book Talk] because it's informal because everything here is so structured. You have to have this; you have to have that done. When you go, whatever time you feel like you want to go, and I can say this book stinks, I didn't like it or love it, and express your opinion and not feel bad about it. And I also can get some good out of it, and say well, I really enjoy this book, and it made me think about when I was in school, but I don't like that or whatever. It's just very informative that way. You don't have to come prepared with anything. That's what I like about it the most, because it's informal (5-6-99, 2).

It has been recognized that informal, collegial interaction is one of the most important aspects of professional development (Howey & Collinson, 1995; Matlin & Short, 1992; NCES, 1999), and Book Talk represented a space for informal collegial interaction, which attracted the teachers to participate in this specific professional development opportunity. Teachers who participated in Book Talk used first names when talking and referring to each other, even though teachers are usually referred to by their last names in the school context, which creates a more formal relationship, rather than personal. Just knowing a teacher's first name was something new and relevant for Ms. Wednesday, a new teacher (Note, 10-12-99, 9). A few teachers participated in Book Talk just for the collegial interaction, and not everyone who attended read the book. The
principal and the assistant principal attended the first two sessions, but did not read the books. Those teachers who had read the books engaged in learning by interacting with colleagues and also by the act of reading. As one teacher describes:

The books are great. They're just fascinating. They're so well written. There's no violence per se. There's no sex. And the language is rich. It captures your attention. And here they are, books for children, which is something just totally new to me. It's just totally engrossing and culturally enriching, as well (Ms. Tuesday, 4-28-99, 5).

Not only were the books new, engrossing, and culturally enriching, but the experience of Book Talk was as well. Book Talk did not have a leader or facilitator of the conversation, so sometimes silence, followed by "Who wants to start?" initiated the conversation. At times, a teacher would be so interested in the book and immediately the dialogue would begin. Once the dialogue started, it was continuous. As teacher isolation was broken at Marylin School, a community was formed; a reflective community engaged in reciprocal discourse.

At this point, a schedule of Book Talk is provided to further define and understand the topics of Book Talk discourse.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>11-5-99</td>
<td>Revealed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-12-99</td>
<td>Guest Teacher-Author's visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-19-99</td>
<td>Julie by Jean Craighead George</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-17-99</td>
<td>Julie of the Wolves by Jean Craighead George</td>
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<td>1-28-00</td>
<td>Seed Folks by Paul Fleischman</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-25-00</td>
<td>Charlotte's Web by E.B. White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-17-00</td>
<td>Summer of Swans by E.B. White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-14-0</td>
<td>Max the Mighty by W.R. Philbrick and Rodman Philbrick</td>
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The topics of teachers' discourse stemmed from the monthly novel and current school events, as well as from teachers' reflections on personal and historical experiences. The book themes were often "straight out of reality," and humor was often present when discussing teachers' realities (Ms. Thursday, BT, 4-14, 00). Book Talk discourse most commonly surrounded the book content and its application and relevance for the students' and teachers' reality.

The topics of discussion were significant to the teachers, and its content furthered the implications of the professional development experience because the topics covered a vast range of knowledge. Not only did teachers engage in discourse surrounding relevant literature and recommendations for implementing the books with their students, but also, themes from the book were extracted and compared to real life, and then related to the specific realities of the teachers' professional context at Marylin School. Their specific realities, which were based on their biographical context, previous experiences, and current students, parents, and colleagues, were shared and connected to the book themes. The connections made by BT teachers were the significant issues for the teachers, thus learning becomes more indirect, collaborative, and multi-perspective, as Hargreaves (1997b) observes.

Teachers' discussions encompassed topics about society, race, family relationships, human qualities, personality types, emotions, and developing
imagination, as well as curriculum integration, students' writing skills and reading interests, critical thinking, building vocabulary, and character development. These topics were continually discussed in relation to the role of the teacher, and these intended and unintended outcomes were significant topics that enriched the dialogue of the professional development experience, as well as added to the participating teachers' knowledge base. The specific and significant knowledge that teachers gained from their participation in Book Talk is attributed to the opportunity for a teacher-directed and teacher generated professional development experience (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Franke et al., 1998; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996).

Because the teachers directed their own professional development, they decided to read a book about a teacher, written by a teacher for the first Book Talk session of the 1999-2000 school year, instead of children's literature, which had always been read. It all started when "Ms. Thursday and I bumped into each other in the hall, and I said, 'oh, a former teacher recommended a book. It's a diary of a teacher's first year.' And she says, 'oh we gotta get it for Book Talk' (Ms. Tuesday, 9-29-99, 11-12). The recommendation initiated Book Talk for the 1999-2000 school year, and the reading resulted in Ms. Monday arranging a visit by the teacher-author to Marylin School. She announced the author's visit at the end of the first Book Talk session to the teachers:

Well, I have a little announcement so listen up now. I was so enamored of this book that I spent about two weeks trying to figure out where the author might be, and I couldn't find her, and I even called the publisher, but I knew we couldn't afford the honorarium to have her here, so I was
talking to the book fair rep, and I asked her if she has heard of this book. And she said, 'I know this woman. She's at Sunny School.' So I called Sunny School and they told me that she was on leave. So I asked if I sent a letter to their school, if she would get it, so I sent it last Friday. She called me Tuesday morning at home, and if everything goes fine, she'll come here next Friday to talk with us" (BT, 11-5-99, 11-12).

The teachers' gasps, followed by “Oh my God” and “I love it,” concluded Ms. Monday's announcement. Ms. Monday clearly pursued and initiated the Guest Teacher-Author's visit, and directed professional development for the following Book Talk session, however, because Ms. Monday could identify with teachers, she knew her initiative and direction would be a positive experience for BT teachers. Teachers applauded and thanked Ms. Monday as the school bell rang, and the first Book Talk session came to a close.

The nine o'clock entry bell usually signaled the end of Book Talk, thus Book Talk sessions never formally ended. Even as students poured into the building, conversations continued, and teachers were reluctant to head to their classrooms and begin their daily routines. This is a typical characteristic of the Marylin School teachers' professional context in which the meeting, whether it is over or not, must end in order to meet the needs of children. Even though the teachers were provided with time for professional development, facilitated by the Annenberg Grant, time pressures limited BT teachers' opportunity for professional development. Book Talk teachers still needed time to read the books as well as schedule time to meet for Book Talk sessions. As Ms. Tuesday explains:
Last week we had the Annenberg Book Talk book to finish by Friday. I used two days to read the book. I've never done that in the classroom. While my student teacher was teaching I was reading in the back of the room. I felt very guilty because I should have at least been circulating...I was totally engrossed to the point that the assistant principal came in, and I looked up, and she was standing there, and I thought, oh my gosh, I'm in this book. Granted it's the Annenberg book for Friday, but still (4-28-99, 4-5).

Teachers can become frustrated because collaborative professional development entails teachers giving their own additional time (Franke et al., 1998; Office of Policy and Planning, 1998). Ms. Tuesday wanted to read the book for Book Talk, and made time during the school day to read, even though she felt guilty about abandoning the direct instruction of her students. Ms. Tuesday prioritized professional development because professional development was significant for Ms. Tuesday. However, time pressures clearly influenced the teachers' professional development context, regardless of the significance of Book Talk for the teachers.

Hiebert and Stigler (1999) explain that "time is a precious commodity in teachers' schedules, and finding time for teachers to work together presents a challenge" (p. 144). The final Book Talk for the 1999-2000 school year was reflective of time obstacles in Book Talk teachers' professional context. Participating teachers did not know that the Book Talk session on 5-12-00 was their last opportunity for teacher-directed professional development. With a month left in the school year, teachers planned to meet again, however, the Marylin School teachers' time was used for mandated professional development and tasks associated with their formalized work, such as "planning a field trip,
writing lesson plans, and preparing for the IOWA Test of Basic Skills" (Ms. Thursday, Note, 5-2-00). Time was a significant resource for Book Talk teachers that was often consumed by the demands of the immediate school context and its demands. This was evident in the teachers' professional context the following school year when the Annenberg Grant was terminated. As Ms. Tuesday explains:

We have not set up the Book Talk. We hope to start again; many of us really want to. But we are busy with lesson plans due Tuesday, grades dues next Tuesday, my $1500 ordering due for gifted, spelling bee candidates were due today and now we on each floor, must select a Black American to have a room by room, floor by floor context that the students will be tested on to see who knows the most and will win the award of knowing the...? It just never ends. Oh, and yearbook pages are due and of course done by the class teachers. I really miss our Book Talk (Personal communication, 1-12-01).

Even under these demanding conditions, the teachers finally found time during the following school year to organize Book Talk because the significance of Book Talk as a meaningful professional development experience prevailed. The teachers' voices provided evidence of Book Talk as a network that was compelling enough to keep people coming back, which is often a difficulty of networks, according to Lieberman and Grolnick (1997). Teachers participated in Book Talk because it was teacher-directed, informal, collegial, educative, and beneficial for their specific student and teacher reality.

The following Readers Theater presentation provides evidence of Book Talk as a significant professional development experience as Book Talk teachers describe the opportunities it facilitated and its implications. The analysis of
teachers' Book Talk data is presented as a conversation among the participating teachers because discourse was the foundation of Book Talk. Furthermore, the teacher's voice is significant because it is a primary source for understanding teacher's knowledge and thinking (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Cooper, 1988; Shkedi, 1998). Book Talk supported an opportunity for developing teachers' voices, and the following analysis is written in a script format to illuminate their voices. Instead of teachers discussing a novel for the topic of Book Talk, teachers discuss the professional development experience of Book Talk, but their discussion takes place in the same format as a Book Talk session.

Scene: A group of seven or so teachers enter the school library sporadically for about ten minutes. During that time, teachers individually pull their chairs away from tables to arrange themselves in an open circle, while Ms. Monday organizes the juice and doughnuts. Teachers are already discussing Book Talk while they are arranging themselves and eating.

Ms. Thursday: I was so happy when we got the Annenberg thing. I loved it so much when we started doing the Book Talk, and I said that they don't even have to pay us if they don't want to. I just want to get together and read the books and discuss them. Just to hear from other teachers and what they're going through. You want to know sometimes you're not the only one having this problem (10-28-99, 13).

Ms. Wednesday: The Annenberg professional development here, the interchange and just talking to other teachers in the school makes such a big difference for me just because more teachers are willing to go and put in that time. Before that, it was mostly, you'd stop by occasionally, but it was nothing ever planned or nothing very organized. I think Book Talk has been good in that it has brought us together. And I think that we're going to keep seeing each other and keep doing these things. I go for the chance to just talk to other people that you work with because it can be just an isolating job. I mean, you're with the kids all day (4-29-99, 3).

Ms. Thursday: Before we started Annenberg, we were like to ourselves. We never got a chance to talk to other people, unless you saw me in the hallway to even know what they are doing. So I think that made our faculty and staff a little
Closer, a little more warming to other people. Which is a good idea altogether....Just because they started with the Annenberg, with the books and things, I've noticed the language arts teacher and myself have gotten together as far as selecting books like literature, like novels, like what we're going to be doing next. It's more teacher connected. So it's not like I do what I want to do in my room, do what you want in your room. It shouldn't be like that. Yeah, it's more teachers connecting that way" (5-6-99, 2, 6-7).

Ms. Thursday: I think the Annenberg has worked a lot, has worked great here because you get a chance to see other teachers on other levels, how they work with kids and what they do. And you'd be surprised at how many ideas you can just pick up from listening to other teachers. Because the Book Talk is a good thing, you know. I really like it. When I go down to Book Talk, and I talked to Ms. Tuesday when she's talking about her first graders, and you listen to other people on what they're doing with their class, it's just so very nice to know that. Just because I teach eighth grade, something I do with eighth grade could be done in kindergarten, I mean first grade, on a lower level. But I think that was the best thing to happen with our school...how to help the staff as a whole (5-6-99, 2).

Ms. Wednesday: Well what I like about the Annenberg professional development here is that a lot of times at these workshops we end up talking about things that we do that maybe the other first grade teacher doesn't do or the gifted teacher does. So it's almost like an interchange of ideas. And it's really nice because it gives me a chance to see what the other teachers are doing and try and do those things too. So then the students are not going to the next grade with completely different backgrounds (Ms. Wednesday, 4-29-99, 2-3).

Ms. Thursday: What I like a lot about [Book Talk], too, is that my students see me reading books here, they get all picked up, they want to know, well, what I am reading and can they read that? And a couple of books...they did the book, too, and they really enjoyed it. And I like it because they got to a point where they really didn't want to put the book down. So they let me know they were interested in reading that. And you'd be surprised how many avenues you can open up just by opening a book and reading (5-6-99, 2).

Teachers involved in this study recognized that Book Talk provided an opportunity to break the traditional isolation among teachers, and as isolation was broken, teachers began connecting with other teachers at Marylin School. Once teachers connected, they began to develop collegial relationships, and as
collegial relationships were formed, Book Talk teachers commonly engaged in
dialogue that was reflective, supportive and reaffirming. The dialogue also
resulted in opportunities for teacher learning, and more significantly for these
teachers, student learning. According to Ms. Thursday, "The main priority should
be the students. You go and learn as much as possible, what they should learn"
(5-6-99, 7-8). Book Talk teachers developed their learning, in light of their
students, by sharing and exchanging ideas in a community of discourse, directed
by the participating teachers, hence, they expanded their knowledge.

Networks develop their own ways of communicating and meeting,
depending on context and character that become distinctive to their work,
according to Lieberman and Grolnick (1997). The conversation presented above
represents how participating teachers experienced and responded to a topic
during Book Talk. The dialogue was manipulated by three or four speakers and
more so by an individual speaker, and this was a common practice of the
participating teachers, in which depending on the topic, specific teachers would
facilitate the conversation. Ms. Thursday facilitated the above Book Talk
discussion because she was impacted the most by this opportunity.

At the end of the school year, Ms. Thursday received the Most Improved
Teacher Award from the Marylin School administration. Ms. Monday asserts: "I
have seen the most change in Ms. Thursday. She comes to every one [Book
Talk], but I mean she is the most changed. I think she sees that all these
programs are so worthwhile and especially for someone who is a lifelong learner
like she is to be given these opportunities right in the building" (3-18-99, 1). Ms. Thursday, as well as her colleagues, recognized a change in her collegial relationships and development as a result of professional development opportunities provided by the Annenberg Grant.

As Book Talk progressed, Ms. Thursday noted that the act of reading became more enjoyable for her, and more importantly, Ms. Thursday developed a collegial relationship with Ms. Tuesday based on their participation in Book Talk, regardless of the difference in their teaching levels. Ms. Tuesday comments: "Book Talk has made a difference. I really enjoy my relationship with Ms. Thursday, and that's totally through the Annenberg Book Talk...so that was definitely a connection because you can cut across the professional aspects of the school" (9-29-99, 11-1). Ms. Thursday was usually seated next to Ms. Tuesday at faculty meetings and professional development activities, and traditionally, Marylin School teachers sit with peers according to grade level or subject taught. Ms. Thursday and Ms. Tuesday both recognized and valued their new relationship (Note, 5-2-00), and this change was clearly attributed to the opportunity for Book Talk.

Change not only involved developing collegiality and learning for individual teachers, but teachers also made changes to the reality of their professional context as a result of their discourse. Just the opportunity for professional development was a significant change in the teacher and school culture at Marylin School. However, professional development also facilitated opportunities
for curricular and professional change, as well as provided an opportunity to support teachers to cope with changes in their professional context.

**Change: A Significant Implication of Book Talk**

Hargreaves (1997b) proclaims that "schools must become places that stimulate and support teachers to make changes themselves," so that teachers can provide for their own professional development and make decisions about professional practices (Blase & Blase, 1998; 2000; Castle & Aichele, 1994; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Livingston et al., 1992; Morley, 1999). Book Talk teachers reported increased experiences with change in the school culture as a result of teacher-directed opportunities for professional development, which was facilitated by the Annenberg Grant. According to Book Talk teachers' journal responses, during the 1999-2000 school year, teachers had increased discussions with colleagues about what helps students learn best, the development of new curriculum, and the goals of the school. Book Talk teachers expressed having received more meaningful feedback from colleagues and attended more professional development activities organized by the school. The teachers were creating a culture of collegiality, learning, and change, and Marylin School provided an environment to support teachers involved in this change process.

Book Talk was an opportunity for change, resulting from the teachers' discourse, and Book Talk provided a place to discuss change, as well. For
example, in the story of *Seed Folks*, which centers on segregation and unity in a multi-ethnic neighborhood, one teacher used this Book Talk forum to discuss the segregation of her bilingual students, the need to integrate with other classes, and ideas for integration. She used the opportunity to make immediate changes for her students in her specific teaching situation, and as a result of teachers' discourse, teachers developed applicable ideas for integration. The teachers shared their curricular perspectives, and by doing so, they initiated a conversation about the absence of a second language from the United States curriculum. Teachers debated about students who know two languages and the responsibility and sometimes burden it places on a bilingual student. Teachers agreed that it was a disservice to exclude second language learning from the curriculum (BT, Note, 1-28-00).

These teachers had a voice in curricular issues and their knowledge provides a unique and contextual understanding of bilingual education. Their voices can be a catalyst for change, especially since teachers' voices and input are commonly lacking from formal curricular decisions (Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; McClure, 1991; Solomon, 1998). Although teachers did not change the national bilingual education curriculum, they made changes for their immediate context of bilingual education as they contributed their knowledge to the discussion, and this individual change was a unique experience for the teachers. Book Talk teachers not only affected curricular change for their realities, but also made changes regarding their professional development. Book
Talk teachers' involvement in making decisions for their professional development was also a unique opportunity for teachers facilitated by Book Talk.

Although *Saving Shiloh* was scheduled for the tenth Book Talk session, teachers collectively decided to read *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges instead. Ruby Bridges was scheduled for a school visit later in the month, and the teachers made a decision that was relevant to their reality. They changed the planned professional development book topic to meet the needs of their situation, and the teachers were able to make their professional development context specific because Book Talk was teacher-directed. Teachers based their decision on their need to prepare students for Ruby Bridges' visit, and they sought colleagues for ideas.

The story describes school integration in the South, and the discussion that followed the reading of *Through My Eyes* centered on roles of the teacher, how to teach Ruby Bridges and her story, the place for Ruby Bridges in history, the definition of a hero, why her story was not exposed previously, the need for strong African American stories, and specific student, teacher, and school experiences of discrimination. Teachers from the South shared biographical history, which developed a deeper understanding and gave additional perspectives of "Southern upbringing" for teachers from the North (BT, Note, 5-12-00).

The professional development opportunity to discuss race in schools, a current reality for teachers, was rare. During interviews, teachers did not recall
attending a professional development workshop or conference that discussed how to cope with racial or discriminatory issues in classrooms. Thus, this Book Talk discussion was unique and relevant because it was teacher generated, and learning resulted from the teachers' opportunity to direct professional development.

Book Talk teachers created a supportive environment to discuss the demanding realities of the teachers' professional context, and unique to Book Talk discourse was the teachers' understanding of society and its influences in their professional context. Social influences were attributed to “poverty, demographic changes, an erosion of traditional values, and a breakdown of supportive families” (Fullan, 1997; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 170; Levin, 1994; Schmoker, 1997). Teachers and students at Marylin School, and across the nation, faced “the tragedy of Littleton, Colorado, the images of plastic surgery, and the messages of Jerry Springer and Who Wants to Marry A Millionaire?” (BT, Note, 2-25-00). Students in schools are products of our society, and Book Talk teachers echoed Giroux (1996) and his belief that the American society exudes a disturbing indifference toward youth. Teachers recognize this indifference because it influences students' development in schools where teaching and learning take place, as well as contributes to the demanding realities of the teachers’ professional context.

Students brought social and family values to the classroom, which influenced the teaching and learning context. According to Ms. Thursday, “kids
don’t care. It starts at home. No family values" (Note, 5-2-00). Book Talk teachers experienced fear and concern for their students’ well being, education, and basic needs as these teachers struggled with family issues surrounding physical abuse. Ms. Tuesday encounters a dilemma: "I don’t know whether I should call home to talk about their child’s behavior. I’m afraid he will get a ‘whooping.’ What would you do (Ms. Tuesday, BT, 3-17-99, Note)?" Book Talk teachers were at the center of tensions between school, and social and family influences, and the teachers used the Book Talk opportunity to examine social tensions because they felt supported, and had no other means to do so. The participating teachers reported a lack of professional development experiences surrounding social influences in the classroom, like violent behaviors and discriminatory attitudes of students.

Book Talk teachers experienced and responded to discriminatory issues in the classroom, daily, because "kids learn discrimination at home, at an early age" (BT, Note, 5-12-00). For example, "One of my preschoolers, an Hispanic girl, told a little black girl who was playing with a white doll, ‘No, you can’t play with a white doll.’" (BT, Note, 5-12-00). Discrimination permeates schools because children bring learned, discriminatory values into schools, which are acted out in the teaching and learning context, as evident in the following anecdote.

The latest magazine [from Teaching Tolerance] has a nice little article, Responding to Hate at School, on when a teacher goes by a classroom and the kids are yelling about gay and lesbian things, and it’s all negative. And she says, I’ve got to speak to this issue, and she goes back in, and she says, I picked up Oliver Sissy by Tomie de Paola to deal with it. It’s a nice nutshell lesson that I can do about name-calling. Because the kids
have done it in the past years. They've gone, oh, Ms. Tuesday, he just called me gay. And I think what do I do (Ms. Tuesday, 10-13-99, 16-17)?

Discrimination is a societal reality, which is reflected in schools, and Book Talk teachers were forced to cope with discriminatory behaviors by addressing them in their teaching. BT teachers recognized the reality of discrimination in their classrooms, however, they were much more aware of an increase in violence in students' behaviors, which they attributed to an increase in violence in society overall.

Ms. Friday recalled that "there was a shooting, and it was at the Olympics....That was such a terrible thing to happen to us. We had a big assembly on it, and everything....And I'm thinking how they [the shootings] have affected our lives" (9-23-99, 13). Violent attitudes were reflected in students, as evident in the Columbine school shootings that year, which impacted schools across the nation.

What is the point on all these killings and all this fear? Right away, Clinton got a task force ready as a direct result of the killings in education. What can we do with the children in the schools? So all these people are on character education, on getting the things for the doors, the electronic surveillance, getting more guards in there (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 23).

Violence permeates schools, and students have clearly been affected by violence acted out in society. Outsiders, such as politicians, have responded to violence in education by mandating a curriculum to develop morality as well as increasing security and protection against violent behaviors. Book Talk teachers' discourse sheds light on the increase in violence, lack of morality, and discriminatory behavior in schools that influence the classroom environment,
student interactions, and most significantly burden the teachers' professional context.

For example, Book Talk teachers were mandated to implement a Character Education curriculum developed by CPS\textsuperscript{8} to address the lack of morality among students. According to Ms. Thursday, because "parents aren't paying attention" (Note, 5-2-00), character education is now the responsibility of schools (Elkind, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997; Schmoker, 1997), therefore the responsibility of teachers. "They want you to teach character value and that should come from home. But then they don't get it at home; you got to prepare them somewhere" (Ms. Thursday, 9-28-99, 22). Book Talk teachers further explain that:

Character education is a trip to be doing because actually your kid coming to school at a certain age, they should know this, they should know that. But, they're putting so much in the hands of teachers to do everything. Because a kid's character is built by the time they're three years old basically. So when you come to school, they should be sharing and caring or whatever. But, why teachers? It comes with your teaching anyway, so why should it be mandated that you do it? If you're teaching, it's been done already. But something like that should actually come from home because the very beginning should come from home (Ms. Thursday, 9-8-99, 15).

The problem is that parents are sending their kids to school, and they want you to do everything....That character education really bugs me. They're trying to fix the problem by making us do more instead of fixing where the problem's starting in the first place. Because if kids came to school, and they had been taught to do things a certain way and behave ... because some of them do respect. And the simple thing like not hitting other kids, I mean, they learn that stuff from somebody. They came to school knowing how to hit somebody already. I didn't teach them that. Somehow it's my fault that they haven't taught their kids to get along with other kids.... This is not the teacher's fault. This is not even the school's fault. I wish I could tell parents well, this isn't really my problem and it's...
not even your kid's problem. It's your problem. You're doing something wrong (Ms. Wednesday, 10-7-99, 38-43).

A direct relationship between less parent responsibility and greater teacher burden clearly existed in Book Talk teachers’ work. The reality is “I’ve had parents who just never come in. Never come in for the Report Card. Never ask about anything. Never see them. They are afraid to give you phone numbers” (Ms. Wednesday, 10-18-99, 9). Schools account for the lack of parent responsibility by instituting curricula and providing services, thus teachers are forced to compensate for parents' deficiencies, and deal with feelings and emotions of children who have not been well parented (Elkind, 1997; Levin, 1994; Schmoker, 1997). “I don’t know what the parents are doing; just having them, just drop them on you and want you to do everything for them or what? I don’t know. It’s hard (Ms. Thursday, 9-28-99). Ms. Friday feels that “you are a babysitter and this is a babysitting service and free” (Ms. Friday, 9-23-99, 12). She explains:

The parents don’t give lunch to the kids. That was a big thing when we closed off the lunch—going home for lunch....Well, when that happened in the 70's, that gave the parents less responsibility....We give them [students] shots, we give all the care, the dental care and everything, all this. Why do we have this dental care? Why do dentists come to the school? This is bullshit. Our school, the kids should be reading and writing, not going to the dentist. The parents should take them to the dentist....The school does everything for them (Ms. Friday, 9-23-99, 19-20).

Schools are providing after school care, as well as nutritional and health care to students, because students need this care and are not receiving it from their parents. However, services, like dental visits in schools, take time away
from teaching and learning, thus, social work is impeding classroom work with children, according to Fullan (1997). Currently, teachers' roles have changed because schools have changed to meet the void in parenting and teachers' roles have expanded because the social context of schooling is continually changing to meet society's changing needs (Books, 1998; Day, 1997; Fullan, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997). Teachers are expected to assume and carry out their new roles with limited collegial interaction or collaboration, although Darling-Hammond (1994) suggests that professional development often provides support to teachers during times of change. The Book Talk teachers could not recall ever attending a workshop or seminar that surrounded the influences of society on the teaching and learning context, therefore the opportunity for discourse surrounding society, which was facilitated by Book Talk, was unique, as well as relevant to the teachers' professional context.

Lieberman and Miller (1990) emphasize networks, collaborations, and coalitions as crucial to providing support to practitioners examining their practice. As a result of the Annenberg Grant, Book Talk teachers found a supportive opportunity to examine their immediate practice by developing collegiality, directing learning, and expressing their voices and concerns. A new paradigm in professional development recognizes that meaning develops in context (Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Lampert, 1999; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996) and that teachers need to recognize themselves as "centers of meaning-making, as producers of legitimate knowledge that is worthy of being shared and
deserves to be acted upon" (Bullough, 1992, p. 256). The new paradigm of professional development promotes schools as learning communities, where learning takes place from within the community (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Little, 1992; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Schlechty, 1990; Senge et al., 2000), and the Book Talk community reflected this understanding. Book Talk met the criteria for a professional development experience by promoting a culture of collegiality, learning, and change, thereby expanding teachers' knowledge and power to build a learning community.

Summary of Chapter VI

Book Talk was unique because the current organization of schools complicates and sometimes impedes opportunities for collaboration (Callan, 1998; Day, 1997; Hargreaves, 1997b; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999), thus, the Annenberg Grant forced a change in school culture by creating time for teachers to collaborate and recognized the significance of teacher-directed professional development by facilitating Book Talk. Book Talk was about teaching ideas, taking risks, and sharing similar experiences, and Book Talk engaged the teachers' specific interests because it was site-based. Teachers involved in this inquiry frequently cited Book Talk as a teacher-directed professional development opportunity that had implications for developing collegiality, learning, and change.
Book Talk overcame teacher isolation by creating a space for teachers to contribute their knowledge and experiences to their professional context. When isolation was broken, the teachers had an opportunity to connect to other teachers, thus developing collegiality from their connections. Collegiality fostered relationships that were reflective, supportive, and reaffirming. As Book Talk teachers connected to other teachers, they participated in learning by exchanging useful ideas and sharing experiences. These teachers were continually learning because they were provided with opportunities for ongoing professional development, which represented a change in their professional context.

Teachers involved in Book Talk connected to other teachers through a discussion of children's literature, however, children's literature became a secondary purpose of Book Talk. Teachers clearly participated in Book Talk for collegiality and the opportunity to learn from other teachers' experiences. Professional development, according to BT teachers' voices, needs to provide for collegiality and shared learning, and teachers used Book Talk opportunities "to label, articulate, and share their knowledge and the dailiness of their work" (Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997, p. 212). Thus, the primary purpose of Book Talk became a place of support to discuss the demands and realities of the teachers' professional context. One significant demanding reality, revealed by Book Talk discourse, was the influence of society in the teachers' professional context. Because teachers directed their professional development opportunity, Book Talk
became a place to discuss social tensions and to support teachers as they struggled to account for social influences in their professional context (Elkind, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Giroux, 1996; Levin, 1994; Schmoker, 1997).

The collaboration that developed from Book Talk was based on shared work, shared interests, and shared struggles. These teachers engaged in an opportunity to think through their beliefs, share ideas, challenge current instructional reform efforts, blend policy and practice, identify professional and personal needs, as well as develop literacy innovations (Matlin & Short, 1992). These shared topics and the opportunity for discourse helped to create and define the teachers' voices of this inquiry. Teachers' voices and their perspectives of professional development result from exposing teachers' actions, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs (Fay, 1992; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Gitlin, 2000; Shkedi, 1997), and Book Talk, as well as this chapter, contributes to understanding teachers' professional development from the point of view of the teacher.

The literature, as well as Book Talk teachers' voices, revealed a new paradigm of professional development that promotes collegiality and continuous learning in teachers' professional context. Again researchers, as well as the participants of this study, herald collaboration as a professional development practice that breaks down teacher isolation and facilitates learning through the sharing of teachers' knowledge and experience (Clark et al., 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Howey & Collinson, 1995; Jipson & Paley, 2000; Zeichner,
Melnick & Gomez, 1996). The new paradigm of professional development discussed in the literature and in the Results of Data Analysis represents a change in teacher and school culture (Caldwell, 1997; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Johnson, 1996; Lieberman, 1988; Senge et al., 2000). Although changes are recommended and needed in schools to carry out the new paradigm of professional development, teachers often face obstacles to change, most significantly teachers’ limited influence over their professional context and professional knowledge (Day, 1997; Cooper, 1988; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; McMurtry, 1992; Morley, 1999). This belief was strengthened “by pointing to the way in which job intensification, the schedules of the teaching day, and teacher isolation limit opportunities for teachers to constrain their influence” (Callan, 1998; Gitlin & Russell, 1994, p. 190; McLaughlin, 1997), and this was outlined by the participating teachers in Chapter IV.

Teachers experienced professional development in the reality of their professional context, and the voices that emerged from both Book Talk and interview discourse exposed and examined teachers’ concerns regarding their realities. I understood their concerns and the specific context of their concerns by listening to the nature of both Book Talk and interview discourse, and by being a member of the teaching culture (Doerr & Tinto, 1999; Sagor, 1997). My experiences as a teacher, as well as my position as researcher, informed my understanding of the teachers’ concerns. To better understand professional development and the environment in which it occurred, I examined professional
development in light of the teachers' discourse. As Book Talk teachers revealed the professional contradictions and curricular conflicts of their work, their concerns emerged as significant realities of their professional context.

As Book Talk teachers described their realities, it was found that professional development takes place in a context that does not always lend itself to change. Because professional development is viewed as both a product of current educational reform and a means to achieve some of its goals (Abdal-Haqq, 1989), understanding professional development from the teachers' point of view is pivotal to educational change. Ladson-Billing (1998) recognizes that teachers, "whose opinions, perspectives, and practices are either undervalued or not valued," gain limited access to professional development based on opportunities for collaborative change (p. vi). Thus, it has been suggested that there is a need to recognize the centrality of the teacher in current reform efforts, as well as a need for systemic and organizational change to affect true change in schools (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Caldwell, 1997; Lipman, 1998; Livingston et al., 1992; Louis, Toole & Hargreaves, 1999). In the following concluding chapter, I discuss the context of teachers' professional development by recognizing and examining change in the educational context: the possibility of change, as well as the reality to change. Currently, change is an educational trend, which receives much discussion and little action, and the reality of changing schools is "knowing what must be done and actually doing it" (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 101).
Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

Reality Check: Changes for schools

The demands of the job have never seemed so formidable. Teachers must keep up with their swiftly expanding fields of knowledge. They must learn new ways to coach all children toward higher standards, and must build stronger bridges to increasingly diverse students and their families. And they get little time, support, or resources for their own professional growth, or for sharing collegial feedback to improve their practice (Cushman, 1999, p. 1).

Teachers, commonly jacks-of-all-trades, face continual change, and the system of schooling, and society’s needs, place teachers in compromising roles. Change in knowledge can inflate the work of teachers and according to Bearden (2000), “the exponential growth of information suggests that not only will teachers need to make change in pedagogy, but that their curriculum will also have to change in dramatic ways” (p. 11). Furthermore, schools and teachers are compensating for a change in family and society, and teachers endure burdens and increased roles and responsibilities for their work as a result of a lack of social and parental responsibility for children (Elkind, 1997; Giroux, 1996; Schmoker, 1997). Necessary time to keep up with change is a constant pressure in teachers’ professional context (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Grant & Murray, 1999; Johnson, 1996; Office of Policy and Planning, 1998). As Book Talk teachers described professional and curricular realities of their professional context, it became evident that the teachers were commonly jacks-of-all trades.
and masters of none because they had limited opportunities for significant professional development, growth, and change.

Although schools are in a constant state of change, the basic system of schooling runs essentially as it always has because changing schools requires changing complex, structurally and culturally embedded activities, and according to Schlechty (1990), “this means not only attending to the rules, roles, and relationships of an organization, but also recognizing systems of beliefs, values, and knowledge of the culture of schools as well” (p. xvii). Furthermore, because teaching is a cultural activity, “the widely shared cultural beliefs and expectations that underlie teaching are so fully engrained into teachers’ worldviews that they fail to see them as mutable,” which further complicates efforts for change (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999, p. 179). Darling-Hammond (1988) recognizes that although teachers are involved in change by adapting to reform efforts, their professional context rarely improves because of “the balkanization of the occupation” (p.68).

Increased reform efforts in schools have created significant, yet often times ineffective changes in the teachers’ professional context because these changes have focused primarily on ensuring accountability by raising standards, increasing time on task, prescribing the basics for learning, and automating teaching (Apple 1990a; Howe, 1996; Kohn, 1999; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). Rather than focusing on change efforts surrounding standardization, it has been suggested that teachers would benefit from efforts related to developing their
professional growth and improving working conditions in schools (Blase et al., 1991; Callan, 1998; Lieberman et al., 1995; McLaughlin & Little, 1993). For example, in California, it's estimated that "30% to 50% of teachers leave the public schools within five years as a result of burnout, low salaries, abysmal working conditions, and bureaucratic interference," and it is suggested that these realities "must be addressed before true education can occur" (Bathen, 2000, p. 6).

Teachers are not always successful because they are not given manageable situations, according to Bathen (2000), and as a result, teachers often endure blame for educational deficiencies, even though their perspectives are commonly lacking in formal decisions regarding the school context, student growth, and their professional development (Elmore, Peterson, McCarthy, 1996; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). Outsiders to the educational context commonly direct the knowledge and work of teachers, which has the potential to limit teachers' authority in educational matters and makes them less able to respond to demands from society (Day, 1997; Elkind, 1997; Lortie, 1975). Because "public voice, uniformity, and efficiency ultimately lessen the involvement of teachers in a broad spectrum of important teaching decisions," the public and professional control over education often contradicts each other, and it is rarely acknowledged in current debates of school reform (Darling-Hammond, 1988, p. 63). Book Talk teachers exposed the contradictions and
conflicts that contributed to the reality of their professional context and by doing so, illuminated obstacles to significant professional development and change. These obstacles surrounded paradoxes between the maintenance of teacher isolation and building collegiality in schools, and the influence of outsiders' expertise and recommendations in teaching and learning and developing teachers' professional knowledge.

Change in schools is dependent on continuous learning and support for teachers' dual roles as learner and practitioner (Blase & Blase, 1998; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; McLaughlin, 1997; Paulsen & Feldman, 1995), as well as changing the school's organizational structure, which has potential to infuse professional development into the teachers' professional context, as evident in the implementation of the Annenberg Grant. However, change can be very difficult as a result of long-standing norms and the lack of collegial interactions among teachers (Goodlad, 1990; Grant & Murray, 1999; Johnson, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Despite the consistency of research findings on the impact of collaborative work cultures and professional learning communities, teachers continue to work in isolation, often resulting from the schedule of the school day, and this can be debilitating to their development (Callan, 1998; Day, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Lipman, 1997).

Findings of this inquiry indicate that several changes must occur to enable teachers to assume a greater role in their professional context. Time must be provided for teachers to break out of isolation to engage in collaborative and
collegial relationships. Teachers must participate in the school context to assume greater control and leadership over their professional work and development, which involves developing their experiential knowledge base and sharing their experiences with colleagues. Learning must be a continual process of professional development, acquired by inquiry, not simply by the technical transmission of knowledge. Teachers must take charge of their learning by engaging in teacher generated professional development, thereby promoting collegial responsibility within the culture of teachers. Teachers and teaching have potential to improve when teachers are given greater direction over their professional development, more participation in decision-making, and greater trust from outsiders to the educational context (Blase & Blase, 2000; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Livingston et al., 1992; Lipman, 1998; Morley, 1999).

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between professional development and the school's organizational structure by exploring the nature of a group of teachers' experiences in an innovative, teacher-directed professional development opportunity. This inquiry provided a space to share teachers' perspectives and experiences of professional development, and I exposed teachers' voices and perspectives by pursuing this inquiry, so that they may contribute to the knowledge and understanding of professional development. According to Book Talk teachers, significant professional development is limited in the current organization and context of schools, and they believe this is because social, political, cultural, and structural influences
invade the professional context of teachers. However, unique to these teachers' understanding of professional development was the Annenberg Grant and its opportunity for Book Talk, a teacher-directed professional development experience. As a result, these teachers recognized that when time was provided for professional development and professional development was directed by teachers, significant implications for learning evolved, even within the realities of the school context.

The following Summary of Findings describes Book Talk teachers' realities of professional development by illuminating their understanding of professional development, and by describing the professional contradictions, curricular conflicts, and social tensions of their professional context. These influences have the potential to impede the teachers' professional development and growth, however, uniquely and fortunately, teachers overcame such impediments by participating in Book Talk, thus creating a change in their professional context in the process. The final point for discussion in the Summary of Findings surrounds the significance of the teacher research process for the participating teachers and the significance of teacher research as a professional development experience that promotes collegiality, learning, and change.
Summary of Findings

1. Professional development must overcome a deficit model of learning and provide for teacher-directed learning.

It has been suggested that professional development is essential to meet never-ending, demanding changes of teachers' professional context (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Day, 1997; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997). Yet, professional development was not a common reality of Book Talk teachers' context. When Book Talk teachers did participate in professional development, their understandings and perspectives were often influenced by outside sources of professional development. They commonly experienced traditional deficit models of professional development, which were sometimes irrelevant and inapplicable to the reality of teaching and student learning for their context, but often a mandate of the teachers' professional context. Deficit models of professional development were usually ineffective in promoting learning because deficit models employed outside experts to the educational context to train teachers and this understanding commonly disregarded teachers as experts (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Friesen, 1993; Fullan, 1991; Griffin, 1991). BT teachers received specified knowledge from workshops and seminars, yet rarely contributed their unique and relevant knowledge and experience towards their professional development.

Fortunately, as a result of Book Talk, the teachers had an opportunity to direct their professional development, to engage in sharing ideas and supporting
each other, and to contribute to the knowledge base of teaching as they began viewing themselves as resources of knowledge. Because of their experiences from Book Talk, facilitated by the Annenberg Grant, Book Talk teachers shared a common definition of professional development, contrary to their more common experiences of mandated and outside directed professional development. Professional development, according to Book Talk teachers, is an opportunity to develop collegiality, learning, and change, and these were significant implications of Book Talk.

Participating teachers reported that involvement in Book Talk was a positive experience, individually and collectively, and the teachers further provided evidence of the significance of Book Talk by their continued and voluntary participation. They preferred the informal conversation of Book Talk to that of formalized professional development, although, BT teachers engaged in both informal and formal professional development to continue to develop their learning. Book Talk was significant to the teachers because they directed and made decisions for their professional development, and the discourse that resulted from Book Talk contributed to the construction of the teachers' understanding of their professional context, as well as their professional development. As a result of their participation, the teachers had an opportunity to be an expert, share their knowledge and experience, and learn from each other as they assumed roles of learner, colleague, expert, and decision-maker. Book Talk teachers valued exchanging ideas with other teachers, and especially
valued professional development that was site based because teachers learned from and supported their colleagues in their own professional context at their own school.

Because of Marylin School's obligation to the Annenberg Grant, teacher isolation was reduced, and time was provided for collegial and collaborative professional development. Thus, there was a change in the culture of the school and the teachers, and more importantly, the schedule of the teaching day to support Book Talk. According to teachers' journal responses, overall professional development experiences brought out by the Annenberg Grant and Book Talk during the school year had been sustained and coherently focused, rather than short term and unrelated because they had time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate new ideas. Professional development opportunities increased the teachers' knowledge by helping teachers understand students and subject matter better, and leading to changes and shifts in teaching approaches. In the case of Book Talk teachers, teacher-directed professional development facilitated change in their professional context, and the opportunity for teacher-directed professional development was unique because it required a cultural and structural change at Marylin School. Although changing the culture and structure of schools is no small task (Grant & Murray, 1999; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lipman, 1998; Schlechty, 1990), it is necessary in supporting change as evident in the case of Marylin School.
According to Book Talk teachers, the structure and culture of schools influenced opportunities for professional development, and these teachers recognized that the concern for the actual difficulties facing teachers is not always accounted for in educational discussions (Bathen, 2000; Bearden, 2000; Blase et al., 1991; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Book Talk teachers recognized professional, curricular, and social realities of their professional context, which have the potential to limit professional development, as well as reform. These realities are addressed in the following three points.

2. Professional development must recognize professional contradictions in teachers' work and overcome organizational obstacles to provide opportunities for professional development.

Book Talk teachers' work was composed of numerous professional contradictions, which directly influenced the context of teaching and learning, and teacher growth and change. Primarily, professional development must overcome teachers' isolation because isolation impedes professional development and change by limiting collegial relationships and opportunities for learning, which are essential to changing (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Day, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Lipman, 1997). Teachers work alone and spend most of their time with students engaged in teaching, therefore, they have little time to develop social and collegial relationships, much less collaborate or engage in professional development (Hargreaves, 1997a; Little & McLaughlin, 1993, Lieberman et al., 1995). Although the new paradigm of professional development promotes collegiality to develop continuous learning and collegial
relationships were indicative of BT teachers’ understanding of significant professional development, the isolating factor of the structure of schools restricts building collegiality, and thus does not support the new paradigm of professional development.

Isolation, which resulted from the organization of the teaching day, was a significant paradox to the teacher’s professional development, as was the influence of professed knowledge. In BT teachers’ realities, outside experts to the educational context developed professional knowledge for teaching and learning, which often became recommendations for teaching and learning, and were sometimes imposed, resulting from the understanding that the knowledge produced from educational experts usually sets precedence and authority in the educational context (Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996, 2000). Educational experts and researchers created disparities in BT teachers’ work because they directed knowledge for the profession, and sometimes their knowledge was irrelevant and impractical to teachers’ immediate context of teaching and learning. The influence of educational experts and their recommendations in teachers’ professional context illuminates a common reality that teachers’ inside knowledge and experiences are often isolated from the professed work of teaching and from within the teaching culture, and the isolation of teachers and their knowledge can be viewed as an obstacle to change.

Not only do teachers work in isolation, but they also work in an organizational structure based on a hierarchy of authority. Often times, as a
result of teachers' subordinate position in the hierarchy of schooling, outsiders influenced the teachers' professional context, thereby directing their practice and their professional development by formalizing rules, procedures, instructions, and communications of teachers' professional context. The teachers' limited influence was reflected in their limited participation in decisions regarding the school context and their professional growth. Book Talk teachers attributed their restricted influence in their professional context to the hierarchical organization of schools (Blase et al., 1991; Caldwell, 1997; Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999), which the teachers recognized as including high-ranking positions filled by males, as well as to the gendered profession of teaching (Ben-Peretz, 1996; Hendricks, 1991; NCES, 1996). As a result, Book Talk teachers' did not commonly contribute their knowledge to decisions for their professional context, which in return decreased their opportunities to develop a voice in their professional context.

3. **Professional development must attempt to resolve curricular conflicts in teachers' professional context**

Reese (1999) understands that teachers today face curricular conflicts because he realizes that “the tyranny of the test, the dictates of the minute, and the headline of the press, can keep us from educating our children” (p.11). Currently, curricular policy developed by outsiders to the teaching and learning context, created conflicts for BT teachers in their professional context because teachers had to find a way to implement their unique and experiential knowledge base, meet students' needs, and adhere to mandated and prescribed curricula.
BT teachers reported an increase of outside influence in their professional context due to mandated accountability measures, such as a structured curriculum, prescribed lesson plans, and standardized tests (Cohen, 1996; Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Howe, 1995; Ladd, 1996), and the fact that the teachers' schedules were accounted for down to the minute as evident in the use of CPS time distribution sheets.

However, curricular policy and standardized accountability measures developed to ensure learning cannot possibly account for realities of the classroom, as well as specific teacher and student backgrounds and needs (Kohn, 1999; McClure, 1991; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998). The teachers' constant battle with time created pressures in curriculum implementation, and BT teachers endured intrusions on learning as a result of disruptions from constant changes in the school context. The teachers reported a lack of resources in their classrooms and an increase in student needs. It becomes evident in Book Talk teachers' realities that teaching and learning occurs within a set of conditions, therefore, BT teachers were faced with choices throughout curriculum implementation (Solomon, 1998; Spillane, 1994).

Curriculum that was provided through textbooks, mandates, or prescription was balanced between the reality of the teaching and learning context, and the understanding that teachers practice an art (Eisner, 1994). Teachers practice an art because teachers teach students who bring their backgrounds and needs to the classroom, adding variation and depth to the
teaching and learning context (Duckworth, 1987; Lipman, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997; Schwab, 1983). The curriculum that students receive is a reflection of the choices teachers make when they interact with students in real contexts of learning. Therefore, teachers are central to student development, as well as curriculum development and implementation, although curricular policy sometimes disregards the centrality of the teacher, thus creating curricular conflicts in their professional context. Furthermore, as a result of outside influence over curriculum, teachers’ knowledge and voices were yet again limited in their professional context (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; McClure, 1991; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994), but fortunately for the participating teachers, they encountered opportunities to develop and implement an innovative literature curriculum as a result of Book Talk, which contributed to their new role as curriculum experts and signified a change in the way Book Talk teachers think about curriculum.

4. **Professional development must provide support for the social tensions in teachers’ professional context.**

Book Talk teachers and their realities support the understanding that changes in society influence the context of teaching and learning (Day, 1997; Giroux, 1996; Levin, 1994; Schmoker, 1997). Fullan (1997) recognizes that society is more complex and chaotic, and the boundaries between schools and their communities are intersecting. According to Book Talk teachers, the most significant change in society is the division of home and school; hence the division of responsibilities between teachers and parents. Schools service
families, and schools are expected to provide support and parenting to children of “fractured, over programmed, or stressed families” (Hargreaves, 1997b, p. x).

Schools today are expected to teach morals, values, and build character in students, and the difference between schools and childcare facilities has become more difficult to discern, according to Elkind (1997). Book Talk teachers cited a lack of parent responsibility as a significant social influence that directly increased responsibilities for the teachers. Teachers’ responsibilities and roles have expanded to meet societal demands because schools are becoming “dumping grounds for social and economic problems that are really other people’s responsibility” (Schmoker, 1997, p. 128).

Book Talk teachers were burdened by social influences in their professional context, and teachers were forced to contend with violent and discriminatory attitudes of society reflected in student interactions in the classroom. Book Talk teachers addressed an increase in violent and discriminatory behavior and a lack of morality among students and accounted for society’s failures, thus society’s needs, by taking on additional responsibilities in their work, as evident in the CPS mandated Character Education curriculum. Currently in schools, teachers play parts of parents, nurses, social workers, police officers, and counselors, while maintaining their original role as professional educator. Because society’s demands are projected through students’ needs, which are prioritized in the school context, learning for students
as well as teachers becomes secondary to taking on the growing needs of society.

Fortunately, Book Talk teachers were able to discuss the burdens of society and find support to cope with social influences in teaching and learning as they participated in Book Talk. Because teachers directed the opportunity for professional development, they exchanged dialogue encompassing ideas and experiences pertinent to their professional context, which assisted teachers in meeting the social needs of their students. This opportunity for dialogue and support was necessary to the teachers because ironically, as the teachers compensate to meet society’s demands, they often times bear the blame from society for educational deficiencies, thereby creating an additional paradox in teachers' professional context, and a need for support.

5. Professional development must recognize teacher research as an opportunity for collegiality, learning, and change, and provide opportunities for teacher research in teachers’ immediate professional context.

Teacher research was inherent to the purpose of this inquiry as I examined the relationship between professional development and the school’s organizational structure by soliciting first-hand experiences and perspectives from teachers. The Reflexive Account found in Appendix A is written to demonstrate the significance of the teacher research process for the participating teachers and myself. Unique to the findings of this inquiry was the implications of the teachers’ participation in the teacher research process, which reflected outcomes of the teachers’ participation in significant professional development.
The teacher research process developed and enhanced collegial relationships between the participants and myself, and among the participants, thus created an opportunity for support, reaffirmation, and feedback. The process provided time and space for reflection and learning as well, and thus represented a change in the teachers' professional context. Book Talk teachers recognized collegiality and learning as significant outcomes of professional development, and interviews served as an opportunity to engage in a significant professional development experience by facilitating collegial interaction and discourse in the teachers' professional context.

Teacher research was also an opportunity for change because the teacher research process contributes to developing teacher voices (LeCompte, 1995; Hogan & Flather, 1993; Wells, 1995), and currently teacher voices are lacking in the educational context (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Cooper, 1998; Fichtman Dana, 1994). The academic community of education professors and researchers have the potential to undervalue the perspectives of teachers, and valuing teachers' voices can give insight into a wealth of information untapped by most educational researchers (Gitlin, 2000; Lampert, 2000; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996, 2000). Currently, some have advocated that teachers investigate their own practice and setting, thereby not only permitting the teachers' voices to be developed and exposed, but also to establish a new set of parameters defining teacher knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Patterson et al., 1993; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). The opportunity for this teacher research inquiry
supported the role of teachers as producers of legitimate knowledge and attempted to bridge the gap between the perspectives of teachers and researchers because the researcher of this inquiry was a teacher.

A precept underlying this inquiry was an interest in incorporating voices of traditionally unheard, undervalued members of the educational context into research, and the chapters of the results of Data Analysis, as well as the Reflexive Account (Appendix A), serve as an avenue for Book Talk teachers' voices and stories to be exposed. By using teachers' experiences to specifically describe the nature of their dilemmas, their voices and stories revealed persisting paradoxes in their professional context. The contradictions, conflicts, and tensions in teachers' work seem inescapable as teachers practice an art in a structured environment filled with authority, policy, accountability, and outside expertise. Teachers accept the realities of their work and acquiesce to the fact that outsiders influence knowledge, teaching, and learning. Although teachers are the gatekeepers to student learning, they are not commonly involved in the formal discussions, decisions, and development of education.

In summary, the professional, curricular, and social realities of teachers' professional context complicate and can impede teachers' professional development and the potential for change. According to Book Talk teachers' voices and stories, the realities beyond teachers' control are defined as, but not limited to, the following influences of teachers' professional context: 1) Teachers work in isolation; 2) Teachers are pressured by time; 3) Teachers are
subordinates, thus outsiders of the educational context direct teachers, their work, their knowledge, and their development; 4) Teachers teach from mandates and prescriptions, thereby automating teachers' practice; 5) Teachers are expected to meet society's demands, hence teachers' roles are expanding; 6) Teachers lack influence and power, and in return, teachers, their knowledge, and their voices are limited in the educational context. The realities beyond teachers' control serve as a basis for suggestions for needed changes and the need for reform efforts to address these realities, which will be explored in the following discussion.

Professional Development and School Reform

Rethinking teachers' professional preparation and development, as well as improving their working conditions, has been identified as fundamental to significant school reform efforts (Bathen, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Fullan, 1991; Holmes Group, 1995; Lieberman et al., 1995; NCES, 1999). Hiebert and Stigler (1999) project that in order for teachers to change and be successful, they will have to work together to infuse the best ideas into their practice, and teachers will need time to collaborate to develop their learning and improve practices to ensure teacher and student growth. Teachers' participation in their professional context has potential to improve teaching and learning as teachers contribute their knowledge and experience to discussions and developments of
the educational context (Griffin, 1999; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Lipman, 1998; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996).

My inquiry examined an innovative, teacher-directed professional development opportunity that exposed teachers’ voices surrounding their experiences of Book Talk and explored significant features of professional development. Book Talk teachers were specific about their professional development needs and how best to meet those needs. BT teachers recognized the need for professional development, and the teachers valued directing their professional development experience, as Book Talk became a vehicle to make changes. They wanted on-site professional development that used colleagues as sources for ideas and support because the teachers wanted professional development that was useful and applicable to their specific context, and on-site, teacher-directed professional development has the potential to ensure relevancy. Book Talk teachers cited collegiality as essential to developing ideas as they shared and reflected on experiences, and they recognized that they made changes in their practice as a result of increased collaboration with colleagues. Collegiality is considered the primary method for learning, professional growth, and change in the new paradigm of professional development (Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 1999), and currently, there are a growing number of researchers who suggest that professional development should be self-directed (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Kennedy, 1990; Nystrand, 1991). Collegiality is found in teacher-directed professional
development, thus, the self-directed teacher collaboration, facilitated by Book Talk, became a catalyst for change.

Collaboration has the potential to foster discussion of substantive and controversial educational issues, and collaborative cultures are powerful learning tools because they engage teachers in collective work (Howey & Collinson, 1995; Jipson & Paley, 2000; Lipman, 1998; Zeichner, Melnick & Gomez, 1996). Collaborative cultures commonly develop shared learning and build trust, resources, and support to deal with the complexity of the teaching and leaning context (Clark et al., 1998; Hargreaves, 1997a; Paulsen & Feldman, 1995). Darling-Hammond (1997) recommends in order for teachers to cope with demands brought about by reform initiatives, teachers must seek support by surrounding themselves with others who have similar feelings. Schools with enriched opportunities for teachers to work together and experience initiative may be the environment more conducive to learning and change (Blase & Blase, 1998; Holmes, Group, 1995; Ladson-Billing, 1997; Little & McLaughlin, 1993).

Thus, schools must build in support to build on teachers' existing knowledge bases and to engage teachers in practices for continued learning (Franke et al., 1998; Renyi, 1998; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996) because teachers are essential to change (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Lipman, 1998). Teacher participation, as well as teacher collaboration, is central to reform because collaboration and the opportunity for professional development can generate dialogue for change (Fay, 1992; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Louis,
Toole & Hargreaves, 1999). Furthermore, teacher participation in reform efforts has the potential to develop collegial responsibility, risk-taking, and especially promote a culture of innovation and change (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997; Morley, 1999; Schlechty, 1990).

The reform literature recognizes the significance and the centrality of the teacher’s role to affect change and recommends increasing time for teachers to collaborate, building on teachers’ knowledge and experiences, and changing teachers’ roles from that of passive servant to educational activator. Based on the findings from this inquiry, in order for these reform efforts to be made into a reality, the following changes are suggested: 1) A change in relations of power in the educational context, 2) A structural change in schools, teaching, and learning, 3) A change in the organizational schedule of the teaching day, and 4) A change towards teacher-generated learning for all teachers - veteran teachers and future candidates.

1. Changing Power Relations: A change in the way we understand and view teachers and teaching as a profession

Teachers are often overlooked in educational reform efforts, although teachers are at the heart of the educative process (Ladson-Billing, 1997). Reform efforts often times overlook the complexity of the job of teaching and the importance of context by standardizing change, which can destroy, rather than build the profession (Cohen, 1996; Day, 1997; Kohn, 1999). Teachers need more flexibility and discretion to meet children’s needs in a complex paradoxical
world (Fullan, 1997; Hargreaves, 1997a; Schmoker, 1997); however, the reality is
teachers are often confined to narrow roles that limit opportunities for growing
suggests that more teacher authority and professional opportunity is central to
reform, and in order to achieve greater teacher influence, it is necessary to
challenge and restructure relations of power in the educational context.

Teaching has not been granted the status of other professions and is
unfairly targeted by society, according to Hiebert and Stigler (1999). Teachers
are accountable to societal demands because teaching is largely treated as
lower-status work and teachers as semi-skilled workers (Eisner, 1994; Elkind,
1997; Ingersoll, 1999), and this is evident in teachers’ low salaries (Kirby &
Grissmer, 1993; Nelson & O’Brien, 1993; Rollefson, 1993) and media images of
teachers (Ayers, 1994; Kantor, 1994; Swetnam, 1992).

Although the work of teachers affects the future of society because
teachers’ work prepares students to participate as citizens in society, teachers
are rarely heralded for influencing and contributing to outstanding members of
society. Thus, the status of their profession is not reflected in the significance of
their work. For example, by examining the media portrayal of teachers, teacher
characters are commonly portrayed as weak individuals, thus do not represent
powerful role models (Ayers, 1994; Kantor, 1994; Swetnam, 1993). This may
suggest that society does not view teachers as influential, powerful professionals.
The media portrayal of teachers has the potential to negatively influence
society's perspective of the teaching profession and contribute to the profession's lack of power and low status in society.

Furthermore, the low salary of teaching also contributes to the lack of power and low status of the teaching profession in society (Kirby & Grissmer, 1993). Teachers possess skills from multiple professions, yet their professional salaries are not equated with other skilled professions. Although teachers are expected to implement their unique skills, they are not compensated for the value of their skills and knowledge base. Teachers lack power in society as a result of low salaries and negative media portrayals, and this can affect the teachers' power rating and professional status in society. And more significantly for BT teachers, is the fact that the teachers' limited power in society can be reflected in schools and teachers' professional context, as evident in the influence of powerful outsiders, such as parents.

"Parents have considerable rights in the school affairs of their child because the institution of school legitimates parent influences" (Johnson, 1990, p. 172), and BT teachers were forced to cope with the influence of parents' power in their work because the position of teachers make them subject to control by superordinates (Caldwell, 1997; Myers & Goldstein, 1997; Rosenholtz, 1989). It is ironic that parents have power in schools when they are often incapable of raising their own children. Parents' power in schools and parents' lack of responsibility for parenting lead to a contradictory reality of teachers' professional context. Although teachers compensate for parental failure and
neglect by expanding their professional roles, parents at times have more power than teachers in schools to influence the context of teaching and learning, and society's influence over teachers' professional context provides evidence that teachers are not professionals, but public servants. Teachers are frustrated and burdened because they have limited power over their realities, including whom they teach, what they teach, and when they teach (Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; McClure, 1991; Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994).

Schools are key institutions in which the knowledge of those who hold economic and social power is transmitted and legitimated, thus not only are choices made about what is taught in schools, but schools are also responsible for economic and cultural reproduction (Apple, 1990b; 1995; Goodlad, 1991). In this view of education, the dominant culture controls what is reproduced in schools, and teacher and students are indoctrinated by the economic and social values of the dominant culture (Apple, 1990b; Lipman, 1997). The contest over what knowledge is legitimate and how students' identities are constructed is central to what goes on in schools (Apple, 1995; Goodlad, 1991), and must be examined for true reform to occur.

Lipman (1997; 1998) establishes that there is a need to challenge existing power structures, which contribute to values, practices, and policies in the educational context, because there is little potential for change in a context characterized by domination. Currently, teachers have become "marginalized victims of reform because they often serve as scapegoats for problems" and their
needs and opportunities for learning, growth, and support are not commonly recognized in reform efforts (Hargreaves & Evans, 1997, p. 13). Challenging relations of power in schools to provide for teacher development calls on changing the structure of schools, as well as changing the structural control over the teaching and learning context.

2. A Structural Change in Schools, Teaching, and Learning: A movement from the hierarchical organization and prescription of education to a community of learners and teacher developed teaching and learning

Educational change should not revolve around a process of teacher compliance, but a process of working together, exchanging ideas, feedback, and support, and an opportunity for discourse (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Fichtman Dana, 1994; Fullan, 1991; Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996). It has been recommended that a change in the structure of authority of schools will lead to more effective schools (Caldwell, 1997; Lipman, 1998; Morley, 1999) because such organizational changes can foster a climate that will contribute to teachers’ exchanging ideas and making schools into learning communities, which is urgent for bringing about change (Hargreaves, 1997a; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Senge et al., 2000).

Although the new paradigm of professional development has been cited as a catalyst for change (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Holmes Group, 1995; Lieberman, 1988; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; NCES, 1999), the reality of bureaucracy, imposed reform efforts, and standardization permeate teacher’
professional context and have created limited opportunities for promoting learning communities and significant change (Callan, 1998; Day, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997). Teachers confront unprecedented demands for reform, which often result in developing policy and standards to reform teaching and learning (Elmore & Fuhrman, 1994; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; Ladd, 1996). For example, reform efforts that focus on standardized testing can restrict learning in schools because test scores drive the schools (Apple, 1990b; Hargrove, 2000; Kohn, 1999), thus the teaching and learning context.

Reform can be translated into national and local curriculum projects that redefine teaching and learning, and reform is often imposed by accountability, standardization, prescription, policy, and overall influence by outsiders to the educational context (Brooks, 1991; Cohen 1996; Day, 1997; Lipman, 1998). These systemic reforms usually subject teachers to contradictory mandates and inhibit opportunities for significant change because teachers are tools of other people's purposes (Goodlad, 1991; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; McClure, 1991; SooHoo & Wilson, 1994). Although Hargreaves (1997a) suggests that change is better realized by teachers in schools and that policymakers, lawmakers, researchers, and Boards of Education must learn from teachers, the reality is teachers implement reform policies, not direct reform efforts. Teachers work in an environment that promotes accountability and standardization although teachers most benefit from a collaborative environment that promotes risk-taking.
Currently, most schools do not foster an environment conducive to learning (Callan, 1998; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Matlin & Short, 1992), and the bureaucracy of most schools stifles the authority of teachers to make educational decisions (Blase et al., 1991; Lieberman et al., 1995; Lipman, 1998). Caldwell (1997) rejects the factory model of school based on an organizational hierarchy, because bureaucracy and centralization of schools can deskill teachers' practice, as well as complicate efforts to build a collaborative community of learners (Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989). It has been suggested that a decentralized organization is needed in schools in which reform focuses on the self-management of schools and promotes teacher collaboration, teacher participatory decision-making, and teacher-centered change, which can foster a change in teaching and learning (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Fay, 1992; Griffin, 1995; Johnson, 1996; Morley, 1999).

Fortunately, there are change efforts implicating a movement from authoritative and centralized direction of teachers' work to more collegial and professional influence over teachers' work (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 1999; Hoffman, Reed & Rosenbluth, 1997; NFIE, 1996). Schools involved with the change process move from a top-down, standardized system of schooling to an environment of learning and support for teachers to examine their context and practice. In contrast with mandated top-down reforms of the past decades, change is encouraged by teachers' opportunity for collaboration and decision-making, thus bottom-up change occurs in the structure of schools (Griffin, 1995;
Matlin & Short, 1992; Lipman, 1998). Bottom-up change results from teachers participating and collaborating in the educational context, thus teachers break out of isolation and contribute to their professional context. In order for teachers to overcome isolation, an organizational change is needed in the schedule of the school day.

3. Organizational Change: Changing the schedule of the school day to provide time for teachers’ professional development

Collegial responsibility, which can result from continuous opportunities for professional development, is needed to develop teachers’ growth and promote possibilities for change. However, there are substantial impediments to developing collegiality among teachers, and it must be recognized that teachers work in circumstances and environments not conducive to learning (Day, 1997; Ladson-Billing, 1997; Ogawa, Crowson & Goldring, 1999). The everyday conditions of schooling mean that teachers spend a disproportionate amount of time coping with the immediate demands of our job, which ensures that teachers have insufficient time to reflect on their purposes and practices (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Caldwell, 1997; Callan, 1997). As a result of isolation and lack of time, the knowledge base of teachers is not resourced to promote teacher development, and collegial relationships are fragmented. Without collegial relationships, collegial responsibility among teachers is lessened, and the potential for change can be weakened. Ultimately, isolation is
debilitating to teachers’ professional growth (Bathen, 2000; Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Lipman, 1998).

Time is limited in teachers’ work, but time for professional development, learning, and dialogue must be provided to affect change (Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996; NFIE, 1996; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Providing time means restructuring the schedule of the school day to account for time for teachers to collaborate and engage in learning (Caldwell, 1997; Ladson-Billing, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997). Administration is crucial to supporting professional development because they have the power to change the school’s organizational structure, at least the authority to change the schedule of the school day. This was evident in the vision of local principals who initiated and enacted the Annenberg Grant and opportunities for teachers’ professional development. Ms. Monday’s administrative role further enhanced implications of the Annenberg Grant for teachers by supporting and organizing Book Talk. Thus, administrators must establish time for teachers to collaborate, learn, and grow by reorganizing the schedule of the teaching day. As teachers are provided with time to engage in learning opportunities, teachers must also be given the power to direct their learning.

4. A Change towards Teacher-Generated Learning: Changing the way we think about teachers’ learning

The new paradigm of professional development promotes teacher influence, thereby opposes reform imposed by centralization and standardization.
(Castle & Aichele, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994). It has been suggested that reform efforts must shift focus on policy from the structure and regulation of teaching to increased dependence on teachers' experiential knowledge "necessary for day-to-day coping" (Day, 1997; Fullan 1991, p. 34; McLaughlin, 1997). Learning must be made integral to the task of teaching and built into the everyday work of teachers, according to Renyi (1998). Thus, reform must promote the new paradigm of professional development involving shared learning, joint work, and collaborative commitment by building learning communities in schools (Franke et al., 1998; Fullan, 1991; Homes Group, 1995; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Goodlad, 1994; Schwab, 1983; Senge et al., 2000).

Learning communities are based on shared values, collaboration, and reflective dialogue, and Louis, Marks, and Kruse (1996) suggest that teachers must be able to engage in in-depth conversations about teaching and learning for change to occur. Learning often is dependent on connection with colleagues in which professional dialogue, feedback, and support from colleagues is enhanced (Clark et al., 1998; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997). Commonly, traditional professional development has not enabled teachers to exchange ideas or interact with colleagues (Adelman & Panton Walking-Eagle, 1997; Little, 1992; Griffin, 1991) because in this view, "teachers are trained to be skilled experts, not learners, to be solo actors, not collaborators" (McLaughlin, 1997, p. 86).
Traditional models of professional development are usually mandated by outside experts and based on teacher training and competency, thus information is delivered to teachers to fill a deficit in knowledge (Day, 1997; Friesen, 1993; NFIE, 1996). Traditional professional development is often times viewed by teachers as ineffective because knowledge is generic and decontextualized and transferred to teachers, not developed by teachers based on the needs and characteristics of their individual contexts (Fullan, 1991; McLaughlin, 1997; Senge et al., 2000). For example, in deficit models of professional development based on curricular reform, learning is hindered because teachers are updated about specific curricular reform mandates, not engaged in curriculum development. As a result, personal commitment and involvement are limited when teachers’ participation is contrived and they follow dictums devised by others (Hargreaves, 1994; Helsby & McCulloch, 1996; McClure, 1991).

Successful teacher learning is based on teachers’ motivation, and professional development must mean more than collecting course credits and certificates (Hargreaves, 1997a; Lortie, 1975), as it is commonly represented in teachers’ professional context.

New images of learning shift from policies that direct teachers’ work to strategies that develop the capacity of teachers’ learning (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Louis, Toole & Hargreaves, 1999; Renyi, 1998; Zeichner, Melnick & Gomez, 1996). Thus there is a top-down support for bottom-up changes, as found in Book Talk (Hess, 1994; Lipman, 1998; Matlin & Short, 1992). No longer
can professional development be conveyed by the government and policy makers as single solutions for top-down implementation of policies, according to Hargreaves and Evans (1997), because the new paradigm of professional development recognizes the importance of learning in everyday situations (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Little & McLaughlin, 1993; NFIE, 1996; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). Teachers learn by doing, reflecting, and collaborating, and teachers need support for inquiry and collaboration, thus reform must focus on rebuilding schools as learning communities (Blase & Blase, 1998; Day, 1997; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1996). Teachers' involved in learning communities decrease isolation, develop trust, and generate professional discourse based on their context for teaching and learning.

Professional development is dependent on understanding teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices, and the teachers' classrooms become the focus for continued learning (Britzman, 1992; Bullough, 1992; Lampert, 1999). This understanding pushes the conception of professional development because the teachers determine what is critical and constitutes an opportunity for learning. In this view, professional development is life-long, self-managed, and differentiated for teachers' individual needs (Castle & Aichele, 1994; Franke et al., 1998; NFIE, 1996). This represents a shift in teachers' understanding of learning because currently, teachers do not commonly direct their own learning, as evident in traditional models of professional development (Griffin, 1991; Fullan, 1991; Little, 1992). In the new paradigm of professional development,
teachers teach teachers as they collaborate, build collegiality, and learn from one another (Holmes group, 1995; Lieberman & Miller, 1991; NCES, 1999; Nystrand, 1991), thus the new paradigm promotes teacher-directed professional development.

This inquiry supports the significance of teacher-directed professional development and cautions that strategies exist that recognize teachers in professional development, but because they do not actually allow teachers to direct professional development, these strategies can be used as a lever to make teachers comply (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Hargreaves & Evans, 1997; Lipman, 1998). Therefore, it is inherent to professional development that teachers influence, contribute, and direct the professional development experience.

According to Book Talk teachers, teacher-directed professional development has the potential to facilitate continuous learning as well as foster change. Teacher-directed professional development represents a change in learning from traditional, deficit models of professional development to a collaborative-teacher generated model of knowledge. Because teachers have the power to be in charge of their own learning, teachers have the potential to change as they share knowledge, reflect on the teaching practice, develop self-confidence, and practice continuous learning (Clandinin et al., 1993; Matlin & Short, 1992; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996). It has been recommended for change to occur, continued professional development and life long learning must be infused into the teacher’s professional context, so that change is “self-
sustaining and generative" (Franke et al., 1998, p. 69; Hyde, Ormiston & Hyde, 1994; NFIE, 1996; Renyi, 1998).

In order to meet the changing and growing demands that teachers face in their classrooms, NCES (1999) asserts that teachers must be willing to learn and relearn their trade. Because there are fewer family resources and violence is the number one public concern, children face social crises that challenge schools and teachers (Books, 1998; Giroux, 1996; Levin, 1994). We must take into account social changes of the world because it is necessary to understand children in the context of the complexities of modern social life. Currently, teachers are responsible for spiritual, cultural, moral, mental, and physical needs of children (Elkind, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Schmoker, 1997). Thus, teachers' roles are changing as a result of social change and new demands on schools.

Real life classroom contexts complicate reform efforts because students bring experiences, values, cultures, expectations, and life conditions to school. The need to offer diverse learning opportunities to diverse students defies a formulaic approach to the delivery of education, traditional professional development, and the organization of educational environments (Caldwell, 1997; Callan, 1998; Howe, 1995; Sheldon & Biddle, 1998; Senge et al., 2000). This is evident in teachers' struggles to meet rigorous standards and students' needs, and change their practice to reflect new ideas about teaching and learning (Grant & Murray, 1999; McClure, 1991; SooHoo & Wilson, 1994). As teachers' roles expand, teachers must assume dual roles as teacher and learner. Schools must
recognize and provide for teachers’ changing roles so that learning is made integral to teachers’ everyday work (Hiebert & Stigler, 1999; Morley, 1999; Renyi, 1998; Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1996).

Therefore, reform must focus primarily on a change to increase teacher participation and decision-making in curriculum and pedagogy (Ladson-Billing, 1998; Livingston et al., 1992; Morley, 1999) because only teachers directly know and understand students and their needs, thus teachers have the most knowledge to affect learning and change (Rose, 1997; Schwab, 1983; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996, 2000). Because public policies, political climates, social environments, and cultural activities shape reform, it is essential to situate school reform in the political, social, and cultural contexts of schools (Apple, 1990b; Goodlad, 1991; Lipman, 1998). Schools exist and contribute to socio-economic contexts, and these contexts must be considered because they inform the teachers’ roles. The reality is “the impact of the system and legislation, the social deprivation of families, the burdens, and the blame are often endured by teachers” (Myers & Goldstein, 1997, p. 125), and teachers are forced to compromise their work in one area in order to fulfill equally important responsibilities in another (Alderman & Walking-Eagle, 1997; McLaughlin, 1997; Solomon, 1998). Thus, reform must envelop structural, social, political, and cultural change, thereby changing values, beliefs, and institutional norms, which is no small feat, but inherent to the reality of reform in schools (Grant & Murray,

In closing, I offer several recommendations for further study and acknowledge that this inquiry was limited to the perception of five teachers who uniquely experienced a teacher-directed professional development opportunity. More investigation of teachers who have participated in teacher-directed professional development is needed to determine if the findings from this study are unique to the participants or if they are shared by a larger group of teachers.

Investigation into teachers who rarely or never participated in Book Talk or the Annenberg Grant professional development opportunities is needed to further examine teachers' motivation for participation in professional development. All the participants in this inquiry volunteered to participate in Book Talk. It would be interesting to examine a teacher-directed professional development model with teachers who are resistant to participation. Or at the opposite end of the spectrum, adopting the Book Talk model in a Professional Development School and investigating the experiences of those teachers could have implications for further developing teacher-directed professional development.

It would also be beneficial to conduct a similar study in one of the four other participating schools of the Annenberg Grant. Although the Grant's goals were the same for all schools, implementation of the Grant varied. This investigation could further define the relationship between professional development and the school's organizational structure by examining
implementation and experiences of professional development provided by the Annenberg Grant.

Teachers of this inquiry worked in a public school system. Investigating teachers of private, suburban, or alternative schools could add to teachers' perspectives about professional development and illuminate differences and similarities of professional development in various school settings.

As my inquiry examined the relationship between professional development and the school's organizational structure through teachers' perspectives, investigation into administrative perspectives of the relationship could further develop understanding of the relationship, as well as offer a different perspective as a result of the administration's position in schooling.

By the nature of teacher research, my inquiry offers teachers' perspectives about professional development and the reality in which it occurs. Currently, teachers' voices are limited in the educational context as well as their professional context, which includes the context for professional development (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Cooper, 1988; Fichtman Dana, 1994). Among the literature available on professional development and change, there has been a limited number of studies reporting teachers' perspectives and direct experiences of professional development. My inquiry served as a vehicle for teachers' voices to take shape and be exposed because it was based on the premise that the meaning that teachers make of their experiences is important to their work. This inquiry sought to illuminate teachers' understanding of professional development.
and how it is carried out in the reality of the school's organizational structure by recognizing the importance and need to honor teachers' voices and perspectives.
Notes


2. The Chicago Public Schools publishes an annual, School Report Card for each of its schools describing the demographics of the school, the composition of the teacher and student population, school programs, and grade level results of test scores from the IOWA Test of Basic Skills. School Report Cards are available at individual CPS schools or from the Chicago Board of Education.
3. The author of the first book for Book Talk 1999-2000 is referred to in Book Talk and interview discourse as Guest. The author is a teacher who wrote a book about her first year teaching experiences, and she attended the second Book Talk session.

4. The CPS standards based curriculum, also known as the Chicago Academic Standards (CAS) can be viewed at the following website: intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Standards/

5. The CPS structured curriculum and its lesson plans for teachers can be viewed at the following website: intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Lessons/StructuredCurriculumTOC/structuredcurriculumtoc.html

6. The CPS time distribution sheet is mandated to be posted outside of every classroom in CPS. No formal record or citation of the time distribution sheet exists from the Chicago Board of Education, but the time distribution sheet is available at individual Chicago Public Schools.


8. The CPS Character Education curriculum can be viewed at the following website: intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Lessons/CharacterEducation/index.html
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Appendix A

A Reflexive Account of the Teacher Research Process
This Reflexive Account provides a space to reflect on my dual roles as teacher and researcher, and illuminates the details surrounding the context of my inquiry. I was continually engaged in the act of reflection throughout data collection and data analysis, which was inherent to the teacher research process (Patterson et al., 1993; Stephens & Meyer Reimer, 1993). The Reflexive Account of this inquiry also strengthens the validity and reliability of my findings by providing a description of the interview context and a deeper understanding of the relationship between the participants and myself (Mishler, 2000).

Because relatively little has been written from the standpoint of the researched participants on the nature of involvement in the research process (Florio & Walsh, 1981), particularly teacher research, this appendix serves as a space to reflect on the significance of the teacher research process for the participants. Primarily, the teacher research process facilitated an opportunity to develop and contribute to teacher voices (Hogan & Flather, 1993; LeCompte, 1995; Noddings, 1991; Schubert, 1991). Teachers used my position to have their voices heard and teachers genuinely expressed their voices as they were involved in the teacher research process, although they commonly struggled to create and project their voices in the school context or in groups, such as Book Talk. Teacher voices that were created from the one-on-one communication process of interviews facilitated open communication, and teachers rarely struggled with finding and expressing their voices because communication was confidential and shared between colleagues. However, as the teachers engaged
in protected dialogue, their voices were limited to the intimate context of the interview, and were not heard by other constituents in the school context. Sometimes teachers did not want their voices to be known, so they used quiet or whispering voices during interviews while discussing topics about administration, parents, or students (Note, 10-17-99).

Ms. Thursday's second interview began with her asking, "No one's gonna listen to this but you, isn't it? (Ms. Thursday, 9-8-99, 1) When Ms. Tuesday was discussing the administration, she added, "I sure do hope this is between us. (4-28-99, 2) The relationship between the teacher-researcher and the participants is built upon collegiality and confidentiality (Hollingsworth & Sackett, 1994; Gitlin & Russell, 1994; Ulichny & Schoener, 1996; 2000). A trusting and supportive relationship was developed between the participants and myself, otherwise, teachers would have been more reluctant to share perspectives and voices as they most commonly were in the school context and with administration. My relationship with my participants enriched interview discourse by facilitating dialogue that was uninhibited and real, thus contributing to teachers' coming to voice.

In addition to creating teachers' voices and equally significant, BT teachers' involvement in the teacher research process resulted in a significant professional development experience for the teachers, including myself (Miller & Hunt, 1994). Book Talk teachers viewed the teacher research inquiry as a significant professional development experience because as teachers engaged
in interviews, they had an opportunity for collegial discourse. "You are so good for my ego...It [the discourse] gives me ideas, actually" (Ms. Monday, 3-18-99, 17). As interviews provided a space for collegial discourse to take place, collegial relationships were developed, reflection and learning occurred as a result of the discourse, and by the opportunity to exchange ideas, and changes in the Book Talk teachers' context were recognized. Interviews provided an opportunity to overcome isolation in our context, and interviews provided a space to share experiences and ideas, and support one another. As we supported each other, we reassured our doubts and developed confidence, and we looked forward to the interview because we needed support, and found it there.

The participating teachers used interview time to discuss their immediate situations, pressing issues, or specific students, whether it was specifically related or not to the interview schedule, and the opportunity to discuss their realities contributed to developing their voice. Because the interviews were not formally structured, the teachers influenced the interview context by sharing, reflecting, and creating their stories. It is simply that the interviews provided time for two teachers to engage in a conversation, and conversations are important means of connecting to others because they help lessen the isolation teachers feel and serve as a vital source of support (Mercado, 1992). Ms. Tuesday further explains:

I look forward to these [interviews]. I've looked forward to these 'cause it really is an amazing conversation. It's also because I think we share so much respect and ideology. I mean, that you know teaching tolerance, and I mean again, that you agree with how people are to be respected and
treated and that's unique. So that part's been really, really, really nice (10-13-99, 33).

Because Ms. Tuesday and I were able to share our perspectives during interview discourse, we discovered our similar perspectives about teaching and learning, thus our perspectives supported each other's practice. Support resulted from the opportunity to engage in collegial interaction, and sometimes support involved much more than professional support, as in the case of Ms. Wednesday.

The discourse of Ms. Wednesday's first interview was highly interpersonal and emotional as she recounted the story of her dismissal, and both, Ms. Wednesday and myself, cried during the interview. As Ms. Wednesday struggled to develop her voice and recount her experiences, the interview facilitated an intimate context for one-on-one, verbal and non-verbal expression to communicate support (Narayan, 1991; Noddings, 1991). Our relationship was developed from the need for support, and I supported Ms. Wednesday because I understood the personal and professional effects of her dismissal experience. I shared a story very similar to Ms. Wednesday's experience, and her need for support gave voice to my story, as I explained:

And the same thing happened to me my third year of teaching. I taught on the south side, I was FTB, but my principal was different than our principal. She was really Hitler style. I was always nervous going to work. I'm an adult, you know, with a degree and I was displaced because of a minority quota. She didn't reach minority quota. She made me come to school September 9th. She didn't tell me over the summer, so that I could look for another job. I came to school with all my stickers, all my stuff, and she tells me that first day, 'you have no position.' And it was the same
thing. But you have no control over that. But it didn’t matter that I had a degree, it didn’t matter that you had a degree (Author, 9-13-99, 23).

My story of injustice had been silenced, but because of the discourse that arose in our interview, my story was given a place to be exposed (Hogan & Flather, 1993). I appreciated the opportunity to share and voice my unjust experience, thus, the interview also provided me with an opportunity to share my experiences and develop my voice by supporting other teacher voices. Even though I was devastated by the experience, as well as unemployed, I did recover and gain employment, and I offered support, as well as hope to Ms. Wednesday. Ms. Wednesday concluded our interview, by adding, “This was therapeutic” (Note, 9-13-99, 2). Ms. Wednesday sought professional therapy while she was a participant of this inquiry and often times she shared conversations from therapy during interviews. Ms. Wednesday associated the interview discourse with therapy because the interview was a place to reflect and work things out (Note, 10-7-99, 7).

Remember when you said, ‘does my new principal know how I feel?’ You told me that once, and I always still think about that. I don’t think she knows how I feel. Maybe you have a good idea, and you are a good therapist. I can tell you what’s going on, but I don’t think she has a clue how stressed out I am (Ms. Wednesday, 10-7-99, 24).

Ms. Wednesday associated our collegial relationship, as well as our researcher and teacher relationship, with a therapist and patient relationship. Ms. Wednesday was able to share her feelings of stress with me, and she used the interview as an opportunity to voice her fears, concerns, doubts, and frustrations (Narayan, 1991). Ms. Wednesday always thanked me after the
interviews because she enjoyed "talking", but I was always grateful for her openness and willingness to share. I rarely started off with any questions for Ms. Wednesday because she always had something she wanted to share with me. Because collegial interaction was an uncommon experience for teachers, but a significant experience, Ms. Wednesday used the interview as an opportunity for support, and I encouraged Ms. Wednesday to develop a voice in her professional context as we discussed her immediate realities and probed for solutions. This uncommon experience became a coping mechanism for Ms. Wednesday, and it created a trusting and collegial relationship for Ms. Wednesday and myself.

Interviews not only fostered collegiality between the participants and myself, but also among the participants. My relationship with my participants was interwoven by our role as teachers, and my role as researcher was an extension of my teacher role that afforded communication among the teachers. Ms. Tuesday supported my relationship with Ms. Wednesday, which resulted from pursuing this inquiry, and Ms. Tuesday always inquired about Ms. Wednesday and her well-being. Ms. Tuesday made references during interviews of wanting to support Ms. Wednesday by visiting her, and I encouraged Ms. Tuesday to make a visit (Note, 9-22-99, 3). Ms. Tuesday finally visited Ms. Wednesday at her new school, which made Ms. Wednesday "so happy," and this opportunity for support resulted from their involvement in this inquiry (Note, 9-29-99, 4). Ms. Friday also knew I was interviewing Ms. Wednesday, wanted her phone number, and told me to tell her "hello". I knew the message signified support and that Ms.
Wednesday needed support, and I was able to deliver a message from another colleague because of my teacher-researcher role (Note, 10-14-99). After Ms. Friday contacted Ms. Wednesday by phone, Ms. Wednesday thanked me for delivering the message because she was grateful for the opportunity to speak with her former colleague (Note, 10-21-99). Support and communication among the participating teachers increased because of the opportunity for teacher research, and this change for teachers was gratefully recognized.

I also used the interview context as an opportunity for support because I felt trusting and comfortable enough to share my experiences as a result of my collegial relationships. During one of the interviews, Ms. Thursday and I specifically discussed her students, their behaviors and attitudes, and their learning abilities and disabilities. I recounted the experience I had with her class the last period of that day, in which I did not even try to teach the students because I could not manage them. I tried twice to start the directions, but I could not shout over their voices, so I just stopped and taught the students who wanted to listen. I felt frustrated and guilty that I did not teach all of them, but then Ms. Thursday reaffirmed her students' behavior and her frustrations in teaching them, and explained, "sometimes they're impossible to control and they're the ones who are not learning a thing, and you're the one who keeps on trying" (Note, 9-28-99). I felt understood and supported, and I could resolve my feelings about what had happened with her students in my class as a result of the opportunity to
share with another colleague, and I would have probably not had the opportunity to be supported, if not for the interview context between two colleagues.

Book Talk teachers were also involved in the process of reflection as a result of engaging in collegial discourse during interviews. "I am beginning to look at and think about the teaching practice because of the questions you ask" (Ms. Wednesday, Note, 10-12-99, 11). Teachers reflected on interview discourse well after interviews ended, as well as used the interview for an opportunity to reflect. Ms. Tuesday usually began interviews by talking about an experience that happened during the day. Ms. Tuesday would reflect on the experience by recounting and sharing the experience with me, and she was continually reflecting and concerned for her relationship with her students (Note, 9-15-99, 2). The interview educated, caused awareness, and created support, which made Ms. Tuesday feel "good" after an interview (Note, 9-22-99, 3). Not only were the participants involved in the process of reflection during interviews, but I also engaged in reflection as a result of interview discourse.

Ms. Monday and her administrative position was unique to this inquiry, and her administrative perspective offered viewpoints that were different from my own teacher perspectives, and the perspectives of the other participants in this inquiry. I was able to see, not always understand, a different perspective of the educational context, and this different perspective caused me to reflect on my own perspectives. By engaging in collegial discourse, the opportunity for reflection occurred for both the participants and the researcher of a teacher
research inquiry, as did the opportunity for learning. I significantly engaged in learning when I conducted interviews with Ms. Friday. Ms. Friday shared her knowledge and experience by developing a teacher-learner relationship during interviews, and Ms. Friday’s discourse exuded experience, story, and voice.

Ms. Friday was a veteran teacher, and in her eyes, I was a novice. She told me once, “As a young teacher, you should probably keep your mouth shut” (Ms. Friday, 10-14-99, 35). Even though I had seven years of teaching experience, a master’s degree, and completion of courses for a doctoral program, Ms. Friday was certainly the expert, and I was certainly the learner. She would always say, “You know I’m just giving you a lot of stuff” (9-23-99, 7). Ms. Friday directed the interviews by introducing topics that she wanted to discuss and what she thought was pertinent to the inquiry. Sometimes she had notes ready for the interviews, and she would start with, “Let’s talk about” or “I’m going to tell you” (Note, 10-21-99). Ms. Friday deemed interviews to be more significant for me than for her. Being young, new and a novice can have considerable advantages when interviewing older, more ‘senior’ teachers (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995), and the advantage of interviewing Ms. Friday lead to significant learning for myself.

Ms. Friday used the opportunities facilitated by the teacher research process to share her knowledge and experiences, and she voiced what she thought was significant for this inquiry surrounding professional development. Ms. Friday’s voice had been developed prior to this teacher research inquiry, and
she did not struggle with expressing her voice. Even more so, she used the teacher research process as an opportunity to expose her voice. I learned because Ms. Friday was truly a resource of knowledge (Clandinin et al., 1993). She related the reality of her work and her professional development experiences to events of society and local and national history. She recounted her experiences, and by doing so, she created an opportunity for me to learn from her experiences. The following dialogue describes a conversation between Ms. Friday and myself and demonstrates how reciprocal teaching and learning emerged during our interviews.

Ms. Friday: You know I gave you a sheet of paper the other day from the...

Author: The court cases?

Ms. Friday: Yeah and I was starting to write down some more. I didn’t know if you were going to approach it that way....Well, anyway, I’ve started writing down here and I’ve got a series of incompetent leaderships and that was from the superintendent of schools. Now this is local information, so I don’t know if you want to talk about it nationwide, you know. It’s a series on incompetent leadership on superintendents. I wrote them down and then I started thinking about it. The superintendents of the schools in the states are always politically elected, okay? And a lot of them you will find out don’t even have degrees.

Author: In education?

Ms. Friday: Or degrees – yes.

Author: So they’re elected by whom? The people?

Ms. Friday: Right. But superintendent of schools in the state is elected by the people.

Didn’t you know that?

Author: All right. Don’t yell at me, I know. I know. All right.
Ms. Friday: You’re writing your doctorate and this has to go, you know, you’re gonna have to pull in something to fill up those pages. I hate to tell you, but, anyway, this is good stuff. You can fill this all in and your whole thing can be on this. You understand (Ms. Friday, 9-23-99, 1-2)?

The interview was pure discourse, and learning was taking place as I was educated by Ms Friday’s knowledge (Note, 9-23-99). Ms. Friday was concerned for my task of writing a dissertation, and she used the interview as an opportunity to teach me topics that she deemed significant to write about in a dissertation, thus our teacher-learner relationship developed. Often times, she asked me questions, and I was aware of my inability to answer some of her questions and my lack of knowledge about specific topics. “I am a student in continuing education, yet I am unaware of so much information. How can a teacher learn and be aware of all the information out there?” Furthermore, I reflected, “How can a teacher learn in the reality described by Book Talk teachers” (Note, 10-14-99)?

As Ms. Friday shared her knowledge, her voice forced me to reflect on my teacher role, my researcher role, and my doctoral student role. These opportunities for learning and reflecting marked a change in Book Talk teachers’ realities, as well as my own.

Change occurred on a small, yet significant and individual level for Book Talk teachers, as a result of interview discourse and their participation in this study. The opportunity for interviews further broke teacher isolation at Marylin School and just the opportunity to engage in a conversation facilitated by interviews was a change for Marylin School teachers and myself. Unique to
teachers' professional context was the opportunity for Ms. Monday's first interview to be conducted outside of school at a Sushi restaurant during the school day. The administration gave us an hour to meet off campus during school hours, and this was a rare opportunity, since I had never left school during the day to meet with another teacher or go to lunch for that matter (Note, 9-14-99). The administration welcomed my researcher role to the participating teachers' time by allowing teachers to use their preparation periods for interviews. I was grateful for the time during school hours because teachers had to give their after school time to attend interviews. The administration supported opportunities for building collegiality, which resulted in opportunities for teachers to interact.

Even the simple act of knowing and using a colleague's first name was a significant change in the teachers' culture at Marylin School, and Ms. Wednesday discussed several situations referring to this positive change in knowing and using teachers' first names (Note, 10-16-99). Knowing first names of teachers was an outcome of both Book Talk and interviews. Prior to this inquiry, I referred to participating teachers by their last names, however, I responded to teachers during interviews and referred to them in my field notes by using their first name, with the exception of Ms. Friday. I have always referred to Ms. Friday by her last name, which was established by our veteran-novice and teacher-learner relationship. First name usage signified a connection and break down of
isolation among teachers, and the teacher research process clearly provided an opportunity to develop more personal and collegial relationships.

Change that resulted from this teacher research inquiry was not only recognized by the teachers of Marylin School, but the administration as well. When Ms. Friday and I completed one of our interviews and checked out in the office, after school, the principal commented, "We have to get you two some lives." Is it so strange or uncommon that a teacher would spend an hour of her time after school talking with another teacher (Note, 10-14-99)? This change in the teachers' behavior at Marylin School was noted by the administration, and this change also demonstrated the absence of collegial communication among Marylin School teachers. Interviews, which provided the opportunity for collegial interaction, fostered a change in the teachers' culture at Marylin School, and this change was most noticeably recognized when data collection for this inquiry ended.

Even after the interviews were completed, Ms. Tuesday came to me for feedback and support about a suspension of two of her first grade students, and confessed her guilt for not advocating and speaking up for them in the suspension decision. While she was recounting the story, the entrance bell rang, and there was not time for the discourse that she sought. I tried to follow-up with Ms. Tuesday in the hallway, but it was so difficult to talk. I wanted to drop her a note or have another interview, so she still knew that I supported her, even though data collection was over. At that moment, I felt as if I had used Ms.
Tuesday for the interviews and now when she needed me, there was not time to support her. I knew I could not solve everyone's problems or be there for everybody, but I missed the opportunities for interviews, as did Ms. Tuesday, because interviews were simply a chance to talk to another colleague, and now that opportunity was absent from our context.

Because teachers had an opportunity to develop their voices as a result of the teacher research process, their voices were once again silenced after the inquiry terminated. Clearly, Ms. Tuesday does not project her voice in matters involving administration, thus her voice remains dormant. Ms. Tuesday struggles with sharing her teacher voice in the school context, although she really has something to say, but lacks an opportunity to say it. As I missed collegial opportunities, I recognized the significance of the interviews, and the change that had occurred for both the participants and myself by engaging in a teacher research inquiry (Note, 10-18-99, 11-12). The interviews genuinely created supportive and collegial relationships, and collegiality and support were absent from our realities once interviews were completed.

Ms. Tuesday also recognized the significance and absence of collegiality after interviews ended, and she suggested that all the participants of the study meet for dinner. From that idea, I invited the five participating teachers to dinner after the interviews ended. We had never met as a group, nor had we ever met socially. Everyone attended the dinner, except for Ms. Monday, and this was the first time that Ms. Wednesday was reunited with her colleagues from Marylin.
School. Ms. Wednesday appeared to be nervous and was quiet throughout the dinner, but the other teachers were glad to see Ms. Wednesday, and hugs and smiles were exchanged (Note, 12-99, 17). By participating in this inquiry, the teachers had an additional and unique opportunity to engage in collegial discourse outside of school in a social setting, and Ms. Wednesday had an opportunity to connect with her former colleagues. Ms. Wednesday spoke infrequently during the conversation and struggled to develop her voice among this group of teachers, however I knew Ms. Wednesday's voice existed. She just chose to project her teacher voice in one-on-one conversations, like the interviews.

The dinner served as yet another opportunity for the teachers to connect, reflect, and exchange ideas. Ms. Friday monopolized the conversation, however, the other teachers looked to Ms. Friday for her expertise and explanations of certain issues, thus they looked to Ms. Friday because she was a resource of knowledge. Ms. Friday's voice commanded teachers' attention and interest as she shared her perspectives, knowledge, and experiences, and her voice was an invaluable learning tool for the teachers at dinner that night (Clandinin et al., 1993; Noddings, 1991). The conversation lasted three hours, and all the topics of conversation were school related. The teachers told me that I should have brought my tape recorder to dinner because they recognized the significance of the discourse taking place, and they wanted it captured (Note, 12-9-99). The most significant change for teachers surrounded the opportunity to interact with
colleagues and develop collegial relationships. Teachers provided evidence of this by changing a social situation, like dinner, into an opportunity for collegial discourse, and teachers would not have met in this setting with these particular teachers, if not for the opportunity for this teacher research inquiry.

This teacher research inquiry and its process resulted in a change for Book Talk teachers' realities by creating opportunities for collegiality, reflection, and learning (Miller & Hunt, 1994; Stephens & Meyer Reimer, 1993). I also reflected, learned, and developed collegial relationships as a result of my participation. Book Talk teachers recognized collegiality and learning as significant outcomes of professional development, thus interviews served as an opportunity to engage in a significant professional development experience, and increased professional development opportunities for the teachers. Furthermore, the teacher research process contributed to developing teachers' voices by facilitating opportunities for collegial interaction and discourse (Fichtman Dana, 1994; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994; LeCompte, 1995).
Appendix B

Definition of Terms
Definition of Terms

I have listed below the terms causing the most confusion, synonyms, and accepted definitions found in the current literature. To avoid confusion in the dissertation, I will use the italicized terms.

**Professional Development:** professional development practice, professional development activity, staff development, staff training, teacher training, teacher development, and in-service education. Judith Renyi (1998) describes high-quality professional development as an "ethos-a way of being in which learning is suffused throughout the teachers' working lives" (p.12).

**Teacher Research:** practitioner research, action research, teacher action research, and insider research. Doerr & Tinto (1999) define teacher research as research by a particular people on their own work to help them improve what they do, including how they work with and for others. Teacher research, viewed as a critical, reflective, and professionally oriented activity, might be regarded as a crucial ingredient in a teacher's professional role (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995).

**Collaboration:** framework, model, or practice of professional development. Collaboration represents a supportive culture of an educative community of practitioners engaged in dialogic learning (Bullough & Gitlin, 1989).

**School's Organizational Structure:** The school's organizational structure may be described in terms of 1) formalization (the extent to which rules, procedures, instructions, and communications in the school are written), 2) hierarchy of authority (the extent to which teachers are or are not allowed to participate in decisions involving the tasks associated with their position), and 3) participation in organizational decision-making (the extent to which teachers participate in
decisions about the allocation of resources and school policies). I adopt the term, school organizational structure, from Cheng’s (1996) quantitative study, *Relations between teachers’ professionalism and job attitudes, educational outcomes, and organizational factors*. Cheng cites Hage and Aiken (1967) and Robbins (1990) to describe school organizational structure as a framework for teachers to perform their tasks and cooperate with others.
Appendix C

Informed Consent
Description and Explanation of Procedure

Teachers who have consistently attended Annenberg Book Talk sessions are invited to participate in a study that focuses on how teachers experience and define professional development. Professional development will surround such issues as teacher collaboration, continuous learning, and dialogue. The examination of these issues through your own teacher perspectives has possibilities in creating a voice for teachers.

I ask you to participate in this study only if you want to participate. If you decide to participate, I will ask you to do the following things:

- Participate in approximately five, one hour in length tape-recorded interviews with the researcher during after school hours.
- During interviews you will be asked to reveal information focusing on ones' teaching practice, social and professional relationships with colleagues and administration, as well as your educational background and training.
- Participants will also engage in brief journal reflections focusing on the above mentioned interview topics.
- Continue participation in the Annenberg Book Talk collaborations in which you will be observed and tape-recorded by the researcher.

The information collected for the study will be used for research purposes only. You have the right to exclude any information about you that I collect. This includes anything you write, say, or do that I may use or write about. You have the right to quit or leave the study at any time you wish. By agreeing to participate, you do not have to reveal, share or do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable or that you feel is unfair or not in your best interest.

Potential Benefits

The following statements describe potential benefits of your participation in this study.

- This study has the possibilities to empower teachers by creating a teacher voice and in helping to understand the context in which professional development occurs.
- Further understanding into the teaching context and teachers' professional lives creates opportunities to improve teaching for both beginning and experienced teachers.
- Teacher's participation in interviews can provide an opportunity for teachers to share and reflect on their experiences.
Risks and Discomforts

Time from participants is needed for the interviews therefore, participants will endure loss of their after school time. These interviews have possibilities of engaging teachers in reflection and discussion of professional and personal issues that may create emotional discomfort. Participants run a risk of revealing personal and professional information and having that information revealed to others.

In order to protect a participant's identity, all participant names will be changed to ensure anonymity. Only pseudonyms and false names will be referred to in the data. Only the researcher will listen to the interviews. You have the right to review and exclude any information about yourself that you do not want revealed. Anything that I write or present about the study will be available to you.

As a participant, you have the right to refuse to answer any questions that arise that make you feel uncomfortable or upset you.

Compensation

Your participation in the study does not provide any monetary compensation. You will not benefit professionally, academically, or financially from any publications or presentations about this research study.

Consent

Consent: I have been satisfactorily informed of the above-described procedure including its possible risks and benefits to me. I agree to participate in the research study. I know that Alicia Meno may be reached at 312-944-0588 and will be available to answer any questions I may have. In addition I may contact Dr. Kuzmic, committee chairman, at 773-325-1669. If I have questions about my rights as a research study participant I may contact the Institutional Review Board at 773-325-7388. I understand that I am free to withdraw this consent and discontinue participation in this project at any time, even after signing this form. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

_________________________ __________________________
Date Signature of participant

_________________________ __________________________
Date Witness to Signatures

IRB protocol AM061000SE, approved 080300
Appendix D

Interview Schedule
Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Teacher Education
Describe your formal teacher education experiences.
Where did you learn the most about teaching? By whom?

Professional Development
Describe the last workshop or conference you attended.
How often do you speak with another colleague about teaching and learning?
Why do you attend Book Talk?
What's something new that you learned from a colleague? How did you learn it?

Decision-Making
What types of decisions do you make in the classroom?

School Organizational Structure
Formalization: How are rules, procedures, instructions and communications in the school written?
Hierarchy of authority: How are teachers allowed to participate in decisions involving tasks associated with their position?
Participation in organizational decision-making: How are teachers allowed to participate in decisions about allocation of resources and school policies?

Teacher social norms
Intimacy: Describe your social relations with other teachers.
Esprit: Describe the morale among teachers.
Hindrance: Describe what hinders or burdens your work.
Disengagement: Describe your engagement in school activities.
Appendix E

Journal Prompts
Teacher Journal

I am Teacher. Hear my Voice

When I first decided to become a teacher, I thought that to teach meant...

At the end of my first semester of teaching, to teach meant...

Now, to teach means...

How has your definition of teaching changed with time and experience?

I am Teacher. I define Teaching

I define teaching as...

I define students as...

I define my best students as...

I define my most difficult students as...

I define my supervisor as...

I define my classroom as...

I define learning as...

I define the subjects I teach as...

I experience the school building as...

I experience the central administration as...

I feel most competent at (time of day or year) ________________________
when I am in (names of places) _________________________________
with (names of individuals or groups of people) _____________________
doing (list of activities) ________________________________

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I feel most inept at (time of day or year)______________________________
when I am in (names of places)_____________________________________
with (names of individuals or groups of people)_______________________
 doing (list of activities)____________________________________________

Describe a situation in your own experience as a student when you felt...

Competent...why?
Embarrassed...why?
Stupid...why?
Warm...why?
Small...why?
Praised...why?
Hurt...why?

Recall a time when...

I was surprised how one student responded to me...
I was surprised how an entire class reacted...
A class period that I wish had never happened...
An incident that was my "baptism of fire"...
The day I lost my innocence...
I was forced to change...
I felt a strong conflict between teaching and the rest of my life...
I felt a strong connection between my teaching and the rest of my life...
My best hour...

Which event taught you what teaching is really about? Why?

Complete this sentence.

Other than education, the training or experience that would have best prepared me for the teaching responsibilities I now have would have been....................

**Teacher Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This school year, how often have you:</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>Twice</th>
<th>3-4 times</th>
<th>5-9 times</th>
<th>10 or more times</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussed with colleagues what helps students learn best?</td>
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<td>2. Discussed with colleagues development of new curriculum?</td>
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<td>3. Discussed with colleagues the goals of the school?</td>
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<td>4. Received meaningful feedback on your performance from colleagues?</td>
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<td>5. Visited other teacher’s classrooms?</td>
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<td>6. Had colleagues observe your classroom?</td>
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<td>7. Received useful suggestions for curriculum materials from colleagues?</td>
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<td>8. Invited someone to help you teach your class?</td>
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<td>9. Participated in a network with other teachers outside of your school?</td>
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<td>10. Discussed curriculum and instruction matters with an outside professional group or organization?</td>
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<td>11. Attended professional development activities organized by your school (include meetings that focus on improving your teaching?)</td>
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</table>
Overall my professional development experiences this year have:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Been sustained and coherently focused, rather than short term and unrelated.</td>
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<td>13. Included enough time to think carefully about, try, and evaluate my new ideas.</td>
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<td>14. Been closely connected to my school’s improvement plan?</td>
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<td>15. Included opportunities to work productively with colleagues in my school.</td>
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<td>16. Included opportunities to work productively with colleagues from other schools.</td>
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<td>17. Helped me understand my students better.</td>
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<td>18. Deepened my understanding of subject matter.</td>
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<td>19. Led me to make changes in my teaching.</td>
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<td>20. Helped my school’s staff work together better.</td>
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<td>21. Changed the way in which teachers talk about students in this school.</td>
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<td>22. Shifted approaches to teaching in this school.</td>
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Appendix F

Annenberg Grant Proposal

(School names have been omitted from this document to assure anonymity.)

Project TEAM:

Teachers Engaged As Mentors

Proposal Submitted
to the Annenberg Foundation by the Schools of the Near Northwest Neighborhood Network

August 4, 1997
Proposal Narrative

Vision and Premises
Project TEAM is built on the following premises:

1. To provide continuous improvement, a school must rely on the strengths within its own professional staff: teachers and principals who have succeeded in making a difference in the education of students. Successful teachers must be encouraged and supported to provide role models for other teachers in their own building and in other neighborhood schools. This program is designed to identify those teachers and to provide them with the means to assist others in achieving similar success. When teachers provide models of success, other teachers in similar schools are motivated to change their own teaching strategies. Not only does the impetus for change come from within so that it can be sustained, but teachers will see that success and high achievement are attainable with the kinds of students they are teaching in their own school and classroom.

2. Teachers work best when information sharing is continuous, and when it is other teachers who support instructional improvement. To break the isolation in which teachers are currently working, they will be encouraged to work in teams. Each teacher will be a member of two teams: a team organized by grade level, and a study group organized around subject matter, thematic area or teaching strategy. Priority areas identified in the school improvement plan of each school will determine study-group topics. Mentor teachers will lead both types of teams; grade level teams will persist throughout the school year, while study groups may vary in length and regroup according to the interests of participants. School schedules will be adjusted to allow time for team meetings, and substitutes will be used to extend common planning time during the school day.

3. Hands-on learning, learning through experience, is the best kind of learning, not only for students, but also for teachers. Project TEAM therefore is designed to restructure all participating schools into laboratory schools. Much as doctors learn to practice in a clinical setting, teachers in our schools will learn by watching others teach and by getting input about their own teaching from other teachers. The schools will be restructured to provide three types of clinical settings; the regular school day; extended after-school tutoring; and a summer school program designed to develop the skills of both students and teachers.
4 Parents form an integral and necessary part of student learning. Our schools need to mobilize parents, and provide them with the basis for the same type of self-sustaining mentoring program provided for teachers. Parents will be recruited and learn to tutor not only their own children, but to assist teachers and other parents as well.

**Background of Schools, Network and Partnership**

The schools in our network are all actively involved in making school reform work at the local level. All four schools have active and functioning Local School Councils, and all have long-range plans with budgets designed to carry out those plans.

Prior to this year's Planning Grant, the four schools in this network have been working together for three years under the auspices of the external partner, the Near Northwest Neighborhood Network (NNNN). NNNN has organized a Principals' Caucus in which principals have visited each others' schools and discussed matters of mutual interest. A common concern is the vast number of students who are performing below grade levels in reading and math:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Percent Below Level in Reading</th>
<th>Percent Below Level in Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The percentages are lower because the Regional Gifted Center North is housed there.*

The principals of the four schools, as well as teachers and parents, have been active participants in the Principals' Caucus organized by NNNN because many problems extend beyond the individual school boundaries and involve the larger neighborhood. Discussing mutual problems, joining efforts toward their solution, and involving the entire community is an effective way to do business. This application is the natural outgrowth of this interactive process initiated by NNNN and continued and intensified throughout the period of the Annenberg Planning Grant.

Each school also has existing relationships with one or more universities, particularly University, the academic partner of the network. Ties with University, its Educational Alliance, as well as ties to other universities will provide external resources to help this network to identify existing best practices.
and assist teachers in disseminating those best practices through mentoring and workshops within the schools.

All four schools have similar profiles, as the table attached to this proposal shows. Network schools have a larger percentage of Hispanic students than the average Chicago public school; at School the minority population is evenly split between Hispanic and African American students. The poverty rate in all of the four schools is very high, over 80%, and in three schools it is over 90%. The School differs from the other three because it is a magnet school that houses the regional gifted center. Three of the schools are moderate in size (from about 500 to 750 students). School is a larger school (1250), and has recently reorganized into three semi-autonomous clusters by grade level to mitigate the effect of size on school climate and student achievement.

Following are short summaries of the status of reform at each school, as well as information about the external partner, the Near Northwest Neighborhood Network.

**Elementary School** is dedicated to making school reform a working reality. Even before the formal passage of the School Reform Act, the School Community was actively developing long-range plans and spending priorities. Parents, teachers and community leaders have had an active role in developing those plans.

Test scores have risen dramatically at School in 1996, and a majority of students in all tested areas now meet expectations (from 52% to 89%). The school has been recognized as an exemplary school serving primarily poor, Hispanic students. School improvement has followed the successful graduation of a cohort of students in the "I Have a Dream" program. A much larger than usual percentage of students in this cohort have graduated from high school and have entered college. This program has raised the expectations of academic success for all students, and these expectations are increasingly being met.

The curricular focus of School Improvement Plan are the areas of mathematics and science, with an emphasis on subject-matter integration.

**Elementary School** has a dedicated staff and parent volunteers actively involved in school reform. In addition to the regular program it has computer and science labs, and a band program. After-school programs include extended-day reading for neighborhood and gifted students, a Great Books Program, and a Future Teachers Program. The upper grade center is self-contained. There, the school offers various prevention programs designed to help effectively prepare teenagers for life, and to keep them from using drugs, getting pregnant and joining gangs.
School has partnerships with several external agencies including ASPIRA, Chicago Chamber of Commerce, Association House, Barretto's Boys' Club, St. Mary's Hospital, the Chicago Police Department and the Puerto Rican Parade Committee.

The curricular focus of School Improvement Plan are the areas of reading, writing and language arts, with an emphasis on subject-matter integration.

**Elementary School and Regional Gifted Center** has a hard-working LSC and a pool of parent volunteers with exceptional skills. The community has had an active voice in setting school policy. The school has developed an excellent afterschool program, specializing in the arts, physical education, computers and academic remediation. An external partner, the Foundation, has funded this program which has enabled many special activities at the school including a band-program and a theater program. The latter greatly benefits from a theater-style auditorium. About one third of the students come there to attend the Regional Gifted Center program.

The curricular focus of School Improvement Plan are the areas of reading and mathematics.

**Community Academy** offers a variety of programs and opportunities, which have been developed as part of its school reform initiatives. There is a Gifted Science Program for the upper grades, and a Gifted Bilingual Program for grades one through eight. The school's "Arts Centered Educators" Program consists of 15 teachers and five cooperating artists who develop and implement art centered curricula designed to utilize art as a medium of discovery learning. Choral and instrumental music are also offered.

Academy is also a Total Quality School, having received training in the methods of Total Quality Management through the Kellogg School of Business at Northwestern University. It is also a participant in the Chicago Systemic Initiative, designed to improve instruction in mathematics, science and technology.

School has recently reorganized itself to form three schools-within-a school, a primary, intermediate and upper-grade unit. This reorganization has improved school climate within each of the grade-level clusters, and is expected to increase student achievement.

The curricular focus of School Improvement Plan are the areas of reading and mathematics, with an emphasis on subject-matter integration.
The Near Northwest Neighborhood Network (NNNN) is a multi-issue, institution based community organization that serves the neighborhoods in which these four schools are located. NNNN's mission is to develop the will and the vision to stabilize and revitalize the community, thus providing quality to both family life and work within it. This is accomplished by organizing institutions, primarily churches and schools, and other neighborhood groups to work through Leadership Teams and Partnerships on the issues of education, community safety, jobs and housing; and to build Core Teams within institutions through leadership training to revitalize the institutions. More than 80 local community institutions are now active in the NNNN's organizing initiatives, including the Neighborhood Schools Network.

NNNN has a history with school reform that began with the early organizing efforts that created the legislation for school reform. For about two years, nearly all of NNNN's organizing resources were devoted to reform. The schools and parents in the Network were very active during that struggle. Since then, NNNN has participated in citywide coalitions for school reform. It has conducted LSC training, and has been active in LSC elections by recruiting parents to run, conducting orientation workshops for parents and community residents, conducting training workshops for candidates, publicizing elections, and waging voter turnout campaigns. One of its efforts has been to pull schools together by creating an elementary school Principals’ Caucus. Through this caucus, schools move toward working with each other to establish academic excellence and allied issues as their priority, and become connected with community institutions that can provide appropriate help. This Annenberg Network is an outgrowth of that Caucus, and has resulted in developing the TEAM project over the past few years. NNNN will dedicate organizing resources to this network program to insure its progress. There is also a parent organizing effort in progress focusing on the issue of reduced Chapter I funding for local schools.

Program Narrative

Program Goals

The TEAM program has the following goals:

- identify, cultivate and replicate best practice in teaching;
- improve teaching methods and techniques of educators, thereby enhancing their confidence and self-esteem as professionals in education;
- provide teachers in the TEAM Network with time to grow, develop and learn through course work and workshops conducted by teachers who have been identified as mentors;
provide time for mentor teachers to share best practices with other faculty members, allowing all the teachers involved in the Network opportunities to learn, interact and reflect in a collegial atmosphere;

- provide opportunities for teachers and mentor teachers to interact in a variety of settings, including observation and clinical settings, during the regular school day, during after-school activities and during summer school;

- develop and incubate more mentor teachers, thus continuing the cycle of training more teachers to be mentors of best practices;

- familiarize parent and community volunteers with the TEAM program; identify and train a small cadre of volunteers, thus enabling them to assist in classrooms and create a more effective student-adult ratio;

- include the community at large in this effort to help nurture young people, making kids and their success a priority for everyone;

- mobilize support from local universities to enable staff to achieve these goals;

utilize the resources provided by the Annenberg grant to increase student achievement in the areas of priority targeted by the School Improvement Plan.

Within each school, the resources of the program will be used in different subject areas to reflect the priorities of the School Improvement Plan, priorities which were developed in response to a careful assessment of student needs. Areas of focus include mathematics and science at School, reading, writing and language arts at the School, and reading and mathematics at the and Schools. A common goal for all four schools is to increase subject matter integration and higher order thinking skills.

Program Description

The following section of this proposal provides a description of Project TEAM, its organization and activities. This constitutes both a revision and an elaboration of the grant proposal submitted to the Annenberg Challenge Grant in September of 1996, which was funded as a planning grant. Principals, teachers and parents at each school have contributed to the development of this new proposal.

How Project TEAM addresses the issues of reducing isolation, restructuring time and reducing size will be discussed in the next section.

Program Organization and Staffing

The Near Northwest Neighborhood Network will serve as the fiscal agent for Project TEAM. In addition, NNNN staff will provide organizational support in mobilizing community and business resources to participate in the program. A
proposal submitted by NNNN to another funding agency would provide additional support for the parent component of Project TEAM by allocating a staff member to coordinate parent activities.

University - the staff of the College of Education, the Illinois Writing Project, and the Educational Alliance - will be the academic partner for Project TEAM. Faculty from other universities will be asked to participate when needed. Through its Educational Alliance, University is connected to several other Chicago area universities, and all four schools have independent ties to faculty at different colleges of education. University faculty will be used to facilitate the mentoring process and to assist in the identification and dissemination of best practices in relevant subject areas.

The network coordinator will serve as director for Project TEAM. The network coordinator will be chosen jointly by the principals of the four schools. The network coordinator will be responsible for all activities of the project that require joint action by all schools, such as joint inservice programs and teacher exchanges, and will be the project's major liaison with the Annenberg Challenge Grant (see job description in appendix)

The principals of the four schools will provide the administrative leadership for Project TEAM, and NNNN and the network coordinator are responsible to the principals. The principals oversee the budget and approve individual expenditures, and they hire and evaluate TEAM staff members. Principals will hold monthly TEAM meetings to obtain input from the network and site coordinators and to approve pending decisions.

A TEAM site coordinator is appointed at each school by the principal. The site coordinator organizes TEAM activities within each school. Site coordinators work closely with the overall network coordinator; they meet weekly with the network coordinator and, as a group, provide the day-to-day leadership of the program. Site coordinators are teachers or assistant principals within each school who take on the additional responsibility for this project.

A parent coordinator at each school will be selected and trained to work with parent volunteers. The parent coordinator recruits parents and assists in organizing parent training and parent placement in classrooms. Parent volunteers at each school will assist teachers in classrooms after receiving training. They will be paid a small stipend at the end of each semester, after completing 100 hours of service.
Program Activities

The major goal of Project TEAM is to improve student achievement in the areas identified as priorities in each school's School Improvement Plan by improving instruction. All resources of the project will be focused on supporting teachers within these schools to lead the effort for instructional reform. Mentor teachers will be selected to work with teachers, both within their own school and in the other schools of the network. Mentor teachers will be provided with the major resource usually lacking in schools, additional time for planning and coordination. They will also receive training in the mentoring process, and will be able to call on university faculty to support their efforts. This will allow dissemination of best practices that are found within the four schools, supplemented by information from other schools and from research. Faculty from University will be able to assist individual teacher mentors in the areas of mathematics, reading, science and writing and language arts.

Academic Component

One of the major goals during the planning grant period was to define academic priorities for the TEAM Project during the implementation phase. The four schools have different needs in this respect, and so there will be differences between schools in the academic focus of TEAM activities. However, some common elements will be present in all four schools.

Subject matter focus for TEAM activities will be determined by the priorities specified in the School Improvement Plan of each of the four schools. The focus at the School will be science, reading and higher order thinking skills; will also promote integration of bilingual and monolingual students in the after-school program. School will focus on an integrated language arts/writing curriculum, as well as mathematics and science. The focus at School will be improving reading and mathematics. School will focus on reading and mathematics, as well as the integration of the fine arts into the curriculum.

Although the approach to best practice will be pragmatic rather than dogmatic, the general principles of progressive education will be encouraged. These principles include a child-centered curriculum that maximizes student interest and involvement, combined with hands-on experiential learning. Authentic projects and readings will be promoted, with lessons that provide a purposeful context. A democratic, collaborative classroom climate will be promoted in which students are challenged to perform to high expectations.

Aligned with this common focus, instruction that integrates subject matter areas is one of the goals in all four schools of this program. Schools will focus on the integration of reading and writing with mathematics and/or science. Subject area
integration will be the focus of grade-level teams, and mentors will be supported in efforts at promoting integrated instruction and learning. Teachers leading study groups and doing inservice training during the year will be selected on the basis of these principles as well: The topic chosen should fit the subject area priority of the school, and the topic should span more than one subject area.

Curricular priority and the theme of integration will determine the selection of grade level mentors, the selection of study group leaders and presenters at inservice meetings. Furthermore, parents and a core of substitute teachers hired through the Annenberg Challenge Grant will be prepared in activities that relate to the curricular focus within each school. Other parts of this report will contain more detail on these components of the revised Project TEAM plan.

Dissemination of Best Practices by Mentor Teachers

The major dissemination activities are as follows:

- grade-level team meetings;
- mentor teachers visiting the classrooms of other teachers in their own and in other buildings;
- other teachers visiting the classrooms of mentor teachers;
- mentor teachers working with other teachers in the after-school program;
- mentor teachers working with other teachers in the summer school program;
- inservice workshops scheduled within individual schools and jointly by all four schools.

In all of those activities, mentor teachers will work jointly with university advisors, who will also help coordinate the activities in each subject area to insure coherence and avoid the haphazard offering of bits and pieces of curricular and instructional information.

To insure that the school curriculum matches the newly revised Illinois goals, one of the initial activities of the project will be a mapping of each school's curriculum in the target areas with the goals and objectives of the Illinois State Board of Education and the Chicago Public Schools. Grade-level mentors will be closely involved in this activity.

Grade Level Teams. Grade level teams now exist in each of the schools, and their function will be increased to maximize sharing between teachers. Meetings of grade level teams on a weekly basis will be facilitated by planning of teachers' preparation periods to coincide. Some after-school planning time will also be allocated to grade level teams. Grade level teams are coordinated by mentor teachers, but will utilize the expertise of all teachers on the team.
Study Groups. Teachers will meet in small groups before or after school to address specific topics related to the priority areas of each school; a mentor teacher who has applied to lead a specific workshop will coordinate each workshop. The length of workshops will vary according to the topic.

Teachers Working Together in the Classroom. Through the use of substitutes, mentor teachers will be freed to work with other teachers in the classroom to assist with new instructional techniques and to provide feedback. To facilitate this process and to enhance professional growth of teachers, training in techniques of non-threatening clinical supervision will be provided to mentor teachers. Teachers will also have opportunities to observe mentor teachers in their own classrooms.

The Use of Substitutes. A core group of substitutes will be trained to participate in Project TEAM. These substitutes will be used primarily to replace teachers who are visiting the classrooms of other teachers during the day. Substitutes will be instructed in providing specific lessons to classes, lessons that exemplify subject-matter integration, that fit into the curricular priorities of each school, and that can stand alone. A series of such lessons will be developed with the assistance of teachers and university faculty members in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics and science appropriate for each grade level.

The Clinical After-School Program. The after-school programs now existing at each school will be expanded, and a clinical component will be added. In the after-school program, teachers can try out new techniques of diagnosis and instruction. They can collaborate with each other and with mentor teachers. The School, for instance, has used the after-school program to pioneer a new science program. Students who have participated in this program are used as teacher helpers once the program is implemented in the classroom. Some schools are planning to combine bilingual and monolingual students in the after-school program. The after-school program will come to serve students while also serving as a "laboratory school."

The after-school component of Project TEAM is intended as an important extension of the regular program. In the after-school program, student-adult ratio is usually more favorable than in the classroom, and there is less pressure on teachers to stick with a specific curriculum. This setting will provide an opportunity for sharing, mentoring, and for trying out new instructional techniques. Time will be set aside in the after-school program for teachers to work cooperatively, for workshops, and reflection. Thus, the after-school program will provide a clinical setting with a major focus of improving instruction.
This program will be "clinical" not only in the sense of providing hands-on learning for teachers. It will also focus on diagnostic teaching, with teachers working cooperatively in discussing the problems of individual students and developing programs that promote individual student achievement. Too often, it is difficult in a classroom of 30 students to focus on the academic needs of individual students. This will be easier in the after-school program.

The after-school program will also be used to introduce new curriculum, and will permit teachers to experience and refine new instructional modules in this collegial setting. Parents will be invited to participate in this activity, so they can assist teachers in implementing new programs in the regular classroom. This approach has been piloted, successfully, at School during the planning grant period.

The Clinical Summer School Program. Like the after-school program, the summerschool program will contain a clinical component in which teachers collaborate and mentor each other. Instruction during the day will be combined with workshops after school that will serve to reinforce best practice and allow teachers to reflect on teaching and learning.

The summer school provides a clinical setting in which teachers can collaborate on improving instruction without the pressure of large classrooms. Because students are present only during the morning during summer school, more time will be available during summer school for collaboration and joint deliberation. Thus, regular workshops will be an integral component of the summer school project. As in the after-school program, these workshops will not only deal on instructional practice, but also provide opportunities for diagnostic work focused on individual students and their academic or behavioral problems.

Selection of Mentor Teachers

There will be two types of mentor teachers in this project: grade level leaders and study group leaders. Grade level leaders will be selected for the year, and will coordinate the activities of specific grade levels: primary, intermediate and upper, with smaller groupings depending on the size of the school and the number of grade level mentors that will be funded. Study group leaders will provide workshops and mentoring for shorter periods of time, and will be selected because they exhibit excellence and best practice in one area of the curriculum related to the school's priorities.

The leadership team composed of the four site coordinators and the academic partner developed criteria for mentor teachers early during the planning grant period. These criteria were then shared with teachers at each of the schools and modified. It should be noted that there are two types of mentor teachers in
Project TEAM: grade level mentors who work in this role during the entire academic year; and study group leaders who share more specific skills and instructional activities with fellow teachers.

The following criteria have been developed for mentor teachers at joint meetings of the site coordinators. These criteria have been modified somewhat at meetings of teachers within each of the individual schools, but all four schools have agreed to the following principles for the selection of grade level mentors:

- Mentor teachers will demonstrate best practices in the priority areas selected by each school.
- Mentor teachers have at least three years of successful teaching experience.
- Mentor teachers demonstrate superior teaching, as shown in classroom visits and in examples of student work (portfolios).
- Mentor teachers are knowledgeable about the Illinois and CPS curriculum frameworks.
- Mentor teachers should be interesting and motivating to students.
- Mentor teachers should demonstrate leadership qualities.
- Mentor teachers should use some form of alternative assessment.
- They must make a one-year commitment to working as mentor teachers in Project TEAM.

The selection process for grade-level mentors has similar components in all four schools, although there are some variations. In all schools, staff nominates grade level mentors. Teachers who are nominated submit an application consisting of a brief form, documentation of teaching excellence, and an essay (not included in all schools). A selection committee then makes recommendations to the principal, who makes the final selection.

Study-group leaders submit an application that describes the specific topic they would like to address and provide documentation of their success with students in that area. They also indicate the way they would prefer sharing their particular area of expertise with other teachers. Several alternative modes of presentation include a series of workshops before or after school with groups of teachers, working in the after-school program to demonstrate and share their expertise; or working with individual teachers by exchanging classroom visits. Although these teachers may also present at inservice meetings, they are encouraged to engage in more long-term activities with individual or groups of teachers.

Study group leaders will also be selected by the network coordinator and the principals at each school, through classroom visits and analysis of Iowa test results. Teachers whose students show consistent above average growth in the subject areas targeted for improvement, and whose teaching is rated superior, will be selected as study group leaders. Analysis of test score gains by

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classroom is important to show teachers that student achievement at expected levels occurs regularly in their own school in some classrooms. The methods of obtaining these results will be shared with other teachers.

Although there will be few grade-level mentors, the role of mentor is defined broadly enough to allow many teachers to participate in Project TEAM in that function. Teachers can choose to lead study groups to share an area of expertise with a small group of colleagues, or they can present individual workshops. They may propose to work individually with just one or two colleagues, exchanging classroom visits. During the first year of the project, it is expected that at least 20% of teachers take an active role as mentors. The mentoring process will affect all teachers in the school through the grade level teams and activities during regularly scheduled inservice meetings. During the first year, it is expected that about half the teachers take part in activities beyond those that are required: by participating in study groups; by observing mentor teachers or being observed; by participating in the after-school program; and by participating in the summer school program.

During the planning period an application process was developed for teachers interested in mentoring opportunities, both the one-year grade level positions and the more short-term positions. Among those who apply, teachers will be chosen in such a way that all grade levels and priority subject areas will be appropriately covered. All schools have indicated great interest among teachers in applying for mentorship positions. Grade level mentors will serve for the entire year, but the position will then rotate to provide leadership opportunities for a larger number of teachers. Study group leaders will serve for as long as necessary, from individual inservice sessions to regular meetings during an entire semester.

The form to be used by teachers to apply for mentorships is attached in the appendix of this proposal. This form was developed during the planning process with input from teachers at each school and will be used with some modifications by each of the four schools.

Parent Participation

During the period of the planning grant, one parent from each school was selected as parent coordinator. The selected parents are parents who are now very active in their schools, and are looking forward to the more structured and guided participation provided for them in this program. The parent component of Project TEAM is designed primarily to increase the adult-student ratio at the four schools; in addition, it is hoped that intensive involvement of some parents can be used as a means to stimulate greater participation in school activities of all parents.
During the planning grant period, teachers who attended the scheduled sessions of the Annenberg Challenge were favorably impressed by the presentation of the Neighborhood Association and its parent involvement program. Project TEAM will therefore include a modified version of this parent involvement model. Parents who were chosen within their schools as parent coordinators fully supported this plan.

Parents who volunteer for participation in this program will be assigned to classrooms to work with individual teachers. They will receive initial training in workshops that focus equally on their role within the classroom and on issues of a more personal nature relating to self-development. Later, parents will also learn to assist with specific activities that relate to the curriculum goals in each school, similar to the workshops designed for substitute teachers. In mathematics, for instance, parents will learn to use place value charts to help students connect the concept of place value to simple operations of addition and subtraction. In language arts and writing, parents will learn to assist students in the making of books that can be displayed in the school library.

When they are available, parents will participate in the after-school program, which is used throughout Project TEAM as a major component of disseminating good teaching. At the School, the usefulness of involving parents in the after-school model was demonstrated during the planning grant period. After-school sessions were used not only to teach science to students, but also to model the teaching of a new curriculum for teachers. In the process, both parents and students who participated in the after-school activities later served as assistants to teachers implementing the new science program in their classrooms.

As in the program after which the TEAM parent participation program is modeled, parents will receive a small stipend. Parents who remain involved for one semester, and who work in the classroom for at least 100 hours, will receive a $500 stipend at the end of the semester. This is to encourage consistent participation and to reward parents who have contributed freely of their time.

Parents who participate in the first semester of the program will be given an opportunity to become mentors for parents chosen at a later time. With the assistance of teachers and other staff, they will introduce other parents to the activities expected of parents assisting in the classroom. Thus, a cadre of parent leaders will be developed who organize and perpetuate the parent involvement program at each school.

During the first semester, the parent coordinator will participate in the activities sponsored for all parent volunteers. Eventually, the parent coordinator will take
on responsibility for recruiting other parents and organizing activities for parents, with the assistance of the site coordinator at each school.

Meeting the Goals of the Annenberg Challenge Grant

The following section of this proposal relates the activities described above to the goals of the Annenberg Challenge Grant and describes how this project meets those goals.

Breaking the Isolation

Breaking the Isolation Within Schools: Teacher Teams Within Schools

Systemic change requires consistent input, and teacher teams will form the backbone of school restructuring. In a cooperative learning stratagem sometimes referred to as "jigsaw," teachers will meet in two different types of teams: Teams organized by subject area (single subject or interdisciplinary) or by topic will focus on individual areas of improvement, and teachers will choose a team of interest. These teams will be coordinated by mentor teachers, and will differ by teacher interest and student need between participating schools. Teams will also change over time. These groups have been referred to as "study groups." Teachers will also meet in grade-level teams, either for single grades or for combinations of adjacent grades determined by each school. A mentor teacher will coordinate grade level meetings. Thus, teachers participating in different study groups will work together in grade level teams and disseminate information learned in study-groups.

Study groups will primarily meet after school hours. A few study groups may be organized in cooperation with a university and provide graduate credit. Whenever possible, study groups will involve a clinical component. Teachers will work with students in the after-school program. This may involve working with remedial students in basic skills areas such as reading and mathematics, or working with students on special projects such as science fair, young authors' writing, the Math Counts competition, spelling bee, depending on the priority area chosen by the school. A mentor teacher will coordinate each study group with after-school student activities.

Grade-level meetings will take place during school hours; the schedule has been restructured at each school to provide time for grade level teachers to meet together, and substitutes may be used to facilitate additional meetings.

In addition to time provided for team meetings, time will be provided for teachers to visit other classrooms: Teachers will visit mentor teachers to observe model
classes: mentor teachers will visit teachers on their teams when requested to provide input; and teachers may request to visit each others' classrooms. Both restructuring of inservice time and substitutes will be used to provide the release time required.

Breaking the Isolation Between Schools

The four Network schools currently have restructured the school week to allow occasional half-day inservice time for teachers. These half-days will be scheduled in such a way that teachers from one school will be able to visit other schools. Teachers at the school that is closed for inservice will be able to visit classrooms of mentor teachers at the other three schools. Mentor teachers from the inservice school will be able to collaborate with teachers from the other schools and provide supportive input. In addition, substitutes will be used to allow teacher-exchanges between schools. Scheduling of classes, inservice time and paid after-school time will also be utilized to allow regular grade-level team meetings between schools.

In particular, some joint events will be sponsored that serve the purpose of a professional convention: a Project TEAM kick-off event will be sponsored in the fall, and a Best-Practices Fair will be held in the spring. Both events will provide workshops held by teachers, as well as some outside experts. Both will feature, as much as possible, successful practices within the Neighborhood Network of schools.

Schools that focus on common subject matter areas (all subjects except science are shared by at least two schools) will coordinate their improvement efforts by having joint meetings of grade-level teams and other groups of teachers.

Breaking the Isolation between Schools and Neighborhood Organizations

The Near Northwest Neighborhood Network will take the initiative to increase ties between Project TEAM schools and neighborhood businesses and corporations. Both personal involvement in the schools through tutoring or presentations and financial contributions are to be increased by this effort. NNNN will organize quarterly breakfasts for representatives of neighborhood organizations for this purpose.

Breaking the Isolation between Practitioners and University Faculty

Although this program relies on teachers to lead school restructuring and provide professional development and mentoring for other teachers, it is important to recognize that teaching is a full-time endeavor. University professors can provide support for teachers engaged in developing inservice sessions and
mentoring for other teachers. They can paint out existing resources and assist in
the preparation of materials. In addition, universities may assist in structuring
workshops to allow for graduate credit, thus providing another incentive for
teachers to participate in after-school programs. Continuous involvement with
schools and knowledge of the strengths of each of the four NNNN partners will
be a priority in selecting faculty to support this effort.

The College of Education of University has committed its support for
this program (see letter of commitment in Appendix). In addition, one of the roles
of the university partner will be to involve faculty from other universities with
strengths needed in this program.

Restructuring Time

Expandina the School Day for Teachers, Students and Parents

Currently existing after-school programs will be expanded to include not only
remedial assistance to students, but also to provide enrichment. These
programs will be used as professional development programs for teachers, with
mentor teachers assigned to provide guidance. After-school programs will be
used to improve teachers' diagnostic skills, to try new instructional approaches,
and to allow teachers to work together in a clinical setting for the improvement of
teaching.

Each school will select the after-school program most appropriate for its own
setting and students, as well as tailored to its own resources. However, all
schools have indicated a need to use after-school programs to enhance English
skills of their bilingual students. Thus, these programs will provide an opportunity
for immersion of students who, during the school day, attend bilingual classes.

After-school programs will enhance learning not just for students, but also for
teachers. While the benefits to teachers of a more deliberate, reflective and
cooperative approach to teaching in this setting are clear, students also will
benefit from the additional time provided for learning in this environment.

Coordinating Teacher Preparation Periods

As the acronym of this proposal implies, teaming is an important component of
this project. One reason for lack of cooperation between teachers is the
constraint the rigid structure of the teaching day imposes. As much as possible,
the teaching day at each of the schools will be restructured to allow teachers,
within the confines of the regular instructional day, time for collegial planning in grade-level and study teams. Principals have planned this restructured teaching time in anticipation of implementing Project TEAM in the fall of 1997.

**Summer School as a Professional Development School**

Summer school will continue the process of teacher teaming and mentoring, and will be restructured to provide opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching skills while working with students. For participating teachers, summer school will be combined with inservice programs in which teachers can share successes and failures. Mentor teachers will be assigned to each building, and both grade-level groups and study groups will continue during summer school.

The use of summer school as a professional development school will be an especially important component of this program. Summer school is ideal for such a clinical setting. Classes are smaller; the school day is shorter; and teachers are less pressured by the many demands on their time of the regular school year. It is hoped that this program develops the clinical summer school as a model that can be disseminated to other schools in the Chicago Public School system.

**Reducing Size**

**Decreasing Classroom Size: Decreasing the Student/Adult Ratio Through Parent Involvement**

**Parent Involvement as Partners in Education:** Parent volunteers will be recruited to assist teachers; they will be assisted in recruiting other parents, forming a coherent parent organization, and in teaching other parents academic skills that enhance student learning. The presence of parents in the classroom, both during the day and in the after-school program, will decrease the student/adult ratio and increase student learning. To the extent that parents will acquire skills useful in tutoring their own children as well, student learning will be extended to the home, where there is a one-to-one student/adult ratio.

**Community Involvement:** Each of the NNNN Schools currently has community partners, and the NNNN organization itself has strong ties to the community. These connections will be utilized to bring adults into the school for after-school tutoring, for presentations in the classroom (e.g. on careers), and to assist teachers wherever possible. A first breakfast meeting with potential community partners has been held in June, and response to the program was very positive. Emphasis in recruiting community partners will be the donation of manpower and time, so as to further reduce the size of instructional groups.
After-School Program

The after-school program will allow the formation of small student groups, with the ability of teachers to work closely with individual students, diagnosing their academic needs and providing instruction to meet those needs. Thus, the after-school program extends the effort towards reducing student/teacher ratios. The goal is to improve every student’s chances to receive individual attention from teachers, and to increase every teacher’s chances to become familiar with individual students.

Teacher Teams

The School, the largest of the four schools, has already reduced its overall school size by dividing the school into three grade-level sub-schools. At the School, the upper grades also form a separate unit. Although this issue has not received the same attention at the other schools, it is hoped that the teaming of teachers on a consistent basis within the primary, intermediate and upper grades will lead to the formation of more cohesive grade level units within all four schools. It is hoped that small interdisciplinary teams will form among teachers at each level, allowing real team-teaching efforts. This may lead to some softening of grade level barriers within each of the three broad levels, primary, intermediate and upper grades.

Creating Systemic Change

Development of the Program: Project Team was developed with input from all stakeholders over a period of several years. It was designed to produce change from within each of the four schools, rather than change imposed from outside. This has been the major thrust of this program from its beginning, because this approach is most likely to produce systemic and sustained change.

Promoting Teacher Professionalism: The program relies heavily on developing the sense of professionalism of teachers. Teachers are encouraged to continue their professional development and to share their expertise with others through team meetings, study groups, and mentoring activities. Sustained systemic change is most likely when teachers are empowered to direct that change.

Raising Expectations: A major focus of Project TEAM is the raising of expectations, both expectations for teaching excellence and for student achievement. The program does this by systematically disseminating best teaching practices within the four schools in the Network, and by demonstrating that students are capable of high academic achievement. A major finding of educational research has been the association between high academic expectations and school success.
Reliance on Regularly Funded Program Components: Project TEAM has been designed to rely heavily on program components that are regularly funded, so that the resources of the school can be utilized to supplement the Annenberg funding. Once fully adopted, the program can continue without major external funding. The program relies in part on a restructured school schedule to enable team meetings; it uses an extended after-school program and summer-school program as the basis for the clinical component and it integrates currently scheduled inservice days. Thus, this program is designed to be an integral part of school operation, and not simply an add-on.

Changing School Climate: The overall goal of this program, is a change in school climate within the four schools. This change is enabled by the increased respect accorded to teachers, the cooperation between teachers within schools and between schools, the focus on clinical improvement of teaching, an increase in academic expectations, and the increased involvement of parents and the community in the schools.

Allocation of Responsibilities

Role of the Near Northwest Neighborhood Network (NNNN)

The NNNN will serve as the fiscal agent for Project TEAM. It will provide the staff support necessary to coordinate the joint efforts of the program and insure implementation of both program and evaluation activities.

Network Coordinator

The network coordinator will serve as the academic coordinator for Project TEAM. She will be chosen jointly by the principals of the four schools. The network coordinator will be involved in determining the criteria for teacher-selection, in obtaining outside support for Project TEAM, and in elaborating the criteria for evaluating the project in conjunction with other participants. She will coordinate those activities of the project that require joint action by all schools, such as joint inservice programs and teacher exchanges. (See job description in Appendix).

Site Coordinator

The site coordinator will coordinate the activities within each of the local schools. The site coordinator will work closely with the principal in developing schedules for team meetings, assigning teachers to participate in TEAM activities, and otherwise coordinating the resources and activities of Project TEAM within each school. (See job description in Appendix).
**Parent Coordinator**

The parent coordinator will assist the site coordinator at each school. The responsibilities of the parent coordinator include recruitment of parents; assisting in developing after-school activities for parents; and facilitating the process of assigning parents to help teachers in and after school.

**Program Evaluation**

Program assessment was one of the areas of discussion during the planning grant period. Participants in the planning process agreed that one of the criteria of program success should be an increase in student achievement as measured by standardized tests. The Iowa and I GAP scores in the curricular areas targeted by each school will be utilized for this purpose. Thus, increases in mathematics, reading, writing and science will be analyzed, depending on the priority for each of the schools.

In addition to improvements in standardized test scores, teachers will also develop alternative assessment methods to document changes in student performance in classrooms. Project TEAM will be used to encourage teachers to collect alternative assessment information on students in the form of portfolios, videotapes, and other holistic assessments. Thus, this program will provide an impetus to increase authentic assessment throughout all classrooms in the four schools. It should be noted that the issue of authentic assessment is currently being discussed at each of the participating schools. This program will provide additional guidelines for the selection of assessment tools within each of the subject matter areas selected for improvement.

In addition to student achievement, the success of the TEAM program will be measured in terms of teacher participation. Because of the nature of the program, all teachers will, by definition, be participants. However, the goal is to make all teachers active participants by becoming mentors and group leaders and sharing their expertise with other teachers in one form or another during the course of the project. This program is not designed to single out a group of master teachers, but to draw on the strengths of all teachers in the four buildings. It is expected that, during the first year, at least 20% of teachers will participate in Project TEAM as active mentors. By the end of the funding period, after three years, it is expected that at least 80% of teachers have participated in the program as mentors at least once.
Formative Evaluation

The formative evaluation of the program will insure that the program is running smoothly and is being implemented as planned. It will focus on assessing participation levels among teachers, students, parents and community members in the programs of Project TEAM. The timelines (laid out in the attached schedule) will be monitored and met.

In any program such as this, opinions of participants are important although high evaluations of the project are not by themselves a guarantee of success. Feedback from all participants will be collected at each event sponsored by Project TEAM. At the end of the first semester, in January, a survey of parents and teachers will also be distributed and the results evaluated.

In addition, the program coordinator and the individual site coordinators will continuously work with teacher and parent groups, and request feedback on the apparent success of the project.

Summative Evaluation

The summative evaluation will focus on student achievement, both "authentic" performance assessment and standardized test results. During the first semester, assessment procedures currently in place will be analyzed, and, if necessary, supplemented with additional forms of performance assessment such as student portfolios. Longitudinal data from the IGAP test will also be analyzed to substantiate the success of Project TEAM.

In line with the objectives of the proposal stated earlier, both IGAP and Iowa test achievements will be monitored for each school. Reading, writing, mathematics and science scores will be evaluated depending on the priority areas selected by each school.

In the priority areas selected by each school, it is expected that the percentage of students who do not meet expectations on the IGAP assessment (in the grades at which the particular subjects are tested) will decrease steadily during the three years of the grant, with an average annual decrease of five percent. A 15% decrease of students not meeting expectations would bring these schools much closer to the expected level of student achievement.

As IGAP achievement measures are not available for all grade levels, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) will also be used to assess reading comprehension, mathematics concepts and problem solving, and science. The percentage of students at each grade who score more than one grade level below expectations is expected to decrease each year of the grant, at all grade level.
A writing sample will be given to School students (where writing is targeted for improvement) at all grades and scored according to rubrics similar to those employed by the Illinois State Department of Education and the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Exact procedures for developing the writing assignment for each grade level and for scoring it will be developed by writing teachers at the four schools, with the assistance of B. J. Wagner (University, Illinois Writing Project). This writing sample will become a part of the student's portfolio in language arts.

Budget Narrative

A detailed budget for the 1997-1998 school year is attached to this proposal, with income and expenditures listed separately. This budget is self-explanatory, with detailed information on the computation of each line item.

For 1998-2000, the following assumptions have been made: An increasing percentage of teachers will participate in Project TEAM, thus requiring increased funding. The Annenberg contribution to the program is assumed to decrease slightly, with local resources increasing 20% each consecutive year. This increase will result from the greater allocation of regular school funds to the TEAM Program, particularly from such sources as State and Federal Ch. I funds. It is also expected that schools, under the leadership of NNNN, will use Project TEAM to raise increased private funding from neighborhood businesses and corporations.
VITA
Alicia Meno, Ed.D.

Education:

1998-2003 DePaul University, Chicago, IL.
Ed.D. in Curriculum Studies
Dissertation: Jack-of-All-Trades, Master of None: A Teacher Research Inquiry of Teachers’ Perspectives Surrounding the Context of Professional Development

1993-1997 Columbia College, Chicago, IL.
M.A. Multicultural Education

1989-1993 Michigan State University, E.Lansing, MI.
B.A. Elementary Education
Concentration: Spanish and Language Arts

Professional Certificates: 1993 Illinois Teaching Certificate
Type 03: Elementary K-8; Type 29: Transitional Bilingual: Spanish; Endorsements: Language Arts, ESL

Professional Award: Teacher of the Year Award, Chicago Public Schools, 1997

Professional Experience:

2000–2003 Colegio Nueva Granada, Bogota, Colombia
Elementary Teacher
Library instructor for grades K-5; Developed and implemented a literature based and skill based library curriculum; Created, organized, and executed the construction and collection of a primary level library

1995–2000 A.N. Pritzker Public School, Chicago, IL.
Elementary Teacher
Kindergarten instructor; Library instructor for grades K-8; Spanish Foreign Language instructor for grades 1-8; Creator and facilitator of the Gifted-Spanish curriculum

1993-1995 James Shields Public School, Chicago, IL.
Elementary Teacher
Bilingual Spanish resource instructor for grades 1-8; ESL instructor for grades K-8 and adult learners; Responsible for student evaluation and placement in the bilingual program