North Georgia College & State University
EDUCATION SPECIALIST in TEACHER LEADERSHIP
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP ADD-ON CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

"The effort to create a cadre of leaders within the teaching ranks is
rhetorically supported by nearly everyone and actually supported by a very few."
Harriet Tyson 1993

No single principle of school reform is more valid or durable than the maxim that "student learning depends first, last, and always on the quality of the teachers." We would like to add that the quality of school leadership is also a critical factor on impacting teachers' development and their ability to refine their practice in order to have a significant impact on teaching and learning for all students. According to the Institute for Educational Leadership's 2001 Task Force on Teacher Leadership, "the infinite potential the nation's teachers possess for sharing their hard-earned knowledge and wisdom with players in education's decision-making circles- or even for becoming part of these circles-remains largely unexploited. There are growing numbers of glittering exceptions, but they do not add up to much in American public education's universe of 46-plus million students, 15,000-odd school districts, and 100,000 plus schools. If they constitute a trend toward recognizing the teacher as leader, it is surely a slowly developing one" (p.2).

Throughout the discussions about teacher leadership in the professional literature, two themes are consistent: (I) the vital role of the teacher in providing instructional leadership, especially at a time of high stakes testing and accountability, is making school leaders much more conscious of what happens in classrooms; and (2) the constantly reiterated statement that well-prepared professional teachers are central to the long-term push for school reform and higher student achievement.

Teacher leadership has increasingly become a focal point of emerging trends in school reform and accountability. Classroom teachers at all levels are assuming greater roles of responsibility and leadership in this process of improving schools from within. However, although widely recognized as a critical factor in school reform, teacher leadership has been the subject of few attempts at analysis and development (McCay et al, 2001).

The purpose of this nomination portfolio is to describe the North Georgia College & State University's Education Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership, an advanced graduate program in current and future leadership roles for teachers. These are teachers who choose to remain in the classroom, but also seek to collaborate with peers and exchange expertise to help improve teaching and learning for those within their school communities. In addition, the program makes available the option to teachers to continue their development as school leaders through a second phase 12-semester hour certification program that leads to a recommendation for an educational leadership certificate. We contend that the NGCSU teacher leadership program, and programs like it, provides a dynamic resource for building leadership capacity in schools and initiating school reform. Based on current research this is a resource that is under utilized and values the experience, ideas and clout of the nation's school teachers to make a difference in the lives of students.

PROGRAM RATIONALE

Researchers investigating teacher leadership generally agree that teacher leadership and administrative leadership are not the same thing (Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997). One view advances the notion that administrative leadership is primarily managerial, while the emphasis in teacher leadership is more collegial. Attempts to shift the role of principals to focus more on instructional leadership still leave a gap between principals and teachers. This is the gap that teacher leaders can fill. The formative aspects of instructional coaching have always been a difficult role for most school leaders who are also involved in summative evaluations. This role, among others, is a best fit for teacher leaders.

Conley and Muncey (1999) found differences in the perceptions of leadership roles between teachers who were classroom-based and those who were not (i.e., in support service roles). Non-classroom-based teachers viewed their tasks as those of mentoring, modeling, and translating external programs into the schools. Emphasizing their roles as liaisons, they described the quasi-administrative aspects of their jobs. Classroom-based teachers saw their roles as team leaders primarily for handling paperwork for the team, making sure all member of the team participated in discussions, and keeping meetings focused and productive. Coyle (1997) asserts that teacher collaboration is a first step in teacher leadership while Wasley (1991) views the role of teacher leaders as inspiring colleagues to change, to do things they would not ordinarily do without the influence of formal leaders.

The practice of teacher leadership is complex. According to researchers, high levels of frustration from teachers engaging in new leadership roles are reported in the professional literature. The reported frustrations are directly related to the fact that teachers are expected to assume these leadership roles with little or no preparation (Sherrill, 1999). McCay et al. (2001) assert that very little attention has been paid to designing programs specifically to prepare teacher leaders. Bolman and Deal (1994) point out traditional pre-service and in-service programs do little to help teachers understand the complex nature of leadership and the educational context in which leadership is exercised. According to Sherrill (1999), universities and states are quickly adopting changes and altering requirements for teacher preparation, but they are not simultaneously developing and offering programs to prepare teacher leaders who are expected to implement these changes. Teachers are expected to assume leadership roles with no systematic preparation and graduate programs specifically designed to prepare teacher leaders are rare (Mc Cay et al, 2001).

PROGRAM DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

The Education Specialist Program was carefully designed through collaboration with faculty and P-16 partner schools from 1999-2000. While the faculty in the Department of Teacher Education had primary responsibility for the program development, the program followed the instructional planning process through the NGCSU's Strategic Planning Committee and ultimately was approved by the Board of Regents. A thorough needs assessment was conducted prior to development of the program proposal, which included a survey among the school systems in the geographical region served by NGCSU. Data revealed a significant need for teachers prepared at the ED.S level who might assume leadership roles among K-12 faculty at all levels. These data provided the basis for the nature of the program to be offered and the types of certifications to be included as outcomes for the program (*Artifact: BOR-ED.S New Program Proposal-November1999; Design Team Rosters*).

The Educational Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership is composed of two phases. The first phase is a teacher leadership program that leads to the specialist degree, but not leadership certification. This phase is designed to prepare teacher leaders, staff development teachers, and instructional lead teachers rather than administrators. Upon completion of the first phase, candidates have the option to enter a second phase composed of 12 semester hours leading to an educational leadership certificate. The leadership certification phase of the program is designed for two semesters with planned internship experiences linked to specific standards throughout the academic year. Candidates must complete both phases in order to meet leadership certification requirements because each phase contributes to the total competencies that must be mastered. (*Artifact: ED.S and EDL Plans of Study*)

Following a unique curriculum, the Educational Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership (including the Educational Leadership Add-On) is clearly differentiated from, and extends upon, NGCSU's teacher education programs at the undergraduate and master's levels. The program reflects and expands on the unit's conceptual framework of the Teacher as Facilitator, Decision-maker and Educational Leader. No coursework is shared with other programs. The Educational Specialist Program is anchored on three sets of standards: (1) the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), (2) the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and (3) the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The design teams used these standards to develop a seamless, intertwined combination of courses, internships and capstone portfolio development experiences targeted to facilitate candidate acquisition of advanced levels of professional teaching, curricula development and both informal and formal leadership skills. The Instructional Supervision and Teacher Support Specialist Endorsements are embedded in the specialist degree portion of the program. Both individual and collective faculty efforts are utilized to improve teaching and student learning in K- 12 schools. The following activities are highlighted:

- Ongoing and continuous reflection on course outcomes and instructional approaches among Ed.S program faculty, visiting practitioners, and candidates through focus groups and written feedback.
- Ongoing and continuous collaboration between NBPTS course instructors and candidates regarding their assessment and reflection on their current teaching and learning practices as guided by NBPTS standards.
- Ongoing and continuous site-based collaboration among the program coordinator, site-based mentors, and candidates as they develop and implement school based action plans and products targeted to increase school achievement and teacher effectiveness. (*Artifacts: Cohort Program Evaluations, NBPTS Pre-Candidacy Entries, Internship/Endorsement Capstone Portfolios*

PROGRAM CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

The North Georgia College & State University Education Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership is centered on three curricular strands, which build upon one another in a purposeful curricular mapping format: Strand #1: Coaching and mentoring professional relationships, Strand #2: Curriculum decision-making and instructional improvement; and Strand #3: Involvement in school improvement/change processes and policy- making. Thirty-semester hours of coursework are required; twenty-four hours in course-related work and seminars; 3 hours of Internship documenting a minimum of 110 hours of field work; and 3 hours of Portfolio Development resulting in at least two completed drafts required in the NBPTS process. *(Artifact: ED.S Plan of Study)*

Several instructional approaches suitable for experienced, practicing teachers and adult learners are used to promote and support their development as expert teachers and their service to students in K-12 schools. Although what follows is a description of the program curriculum sequence, we would want to emphasize that *the program impact is summed up as greater than its individual parts.* The program is dynamic in that the interactions among and between cohort members, program faculty, field-based mentors and supervisors, and the program content and methodology are *highly interactive, individualized for each learner, and constructivist in form and substance.* We present a brief overview of the course descriptions to *demonstrate the driving focus of the program content and delivery on increased student achievement through expert teacher thinking and collaborative action.* Here are the guiding principles used to shape the program curriculum and delivery:

Learning is a search for meaning. Learning in this program begins with current issues around which candidates are actively trying to construct meaning within their classrooms, schools and communities. Constructivism calls for the elimination of a standardized curriculum and promotes using curricula customized by the candidates' prior knowledge and experiences. It espouses real world situations and advanced problem solving. Curriculum alignment with both state and national standards form the guide for curriculum development, instructional delivery, and assessment in all courses, internships, and program artifacts. The initial design team developed a matrix of the intended program outcomes for all courses, aligned them to the standards, and targeted them for specific courses. Program faculty review the specific standards and outcomes for their assigned courses, teach and assess to these outcomes, revise as needed and provide feedback to program coordinator to strengthen curriculum delivery. (*Artifacts: Program Matrix and Course Syllabi; ED.S Faculty Program Assessment & Feedback*)

Meaning requires understanding the whole as well as parts. Learning in this program focuses on primary concepts, not isolated facts, and fosters new knowledge, skills, and dispositions in candidates. Program faculty tailor teaching strategies to promote and model the standards targeted for the program through high candidate engagement approaches that support critical thinking skills linked to professional inquiry-(i.e. problem analysis, data collection, analysis, prediction, interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation). *Program faculty rely heavily on hands-on experiences, modeling, team teaching with practitioners, case study, action research, school improvement plans, learning opportunities within school staff development programs and professional organizations, questioning and group dialogue, cooperative learning, feedback loops, and peer coaching* in which candidates debate, learn and practice new concepts and skills within the instructional setting and then apply this knowledge and skills in the field internships.

Assessment becomes an integral part of the learning process. Candidates play a significant role in planning, monitoring, and judging their own progress in meeting the program standards. In this program, ongoing and constructive feedback is solicited from all stakeholders-candidates, peers, program faculty, site-based mentors and supervisors. Candidates are provided multiple opportunities and data sources to reflect on their practice and articulate the degree to which they have met the program standards and set growth targets. (*Artifacts: Course Syllabi, Capstone Folios, Cohort Program Evaluations*)

Semester One-Summer
Candidates begin the program with two courses designed to challenge teachers to assess their readiness for teacher leadership and promote a personal and professional perspective about school leadership. In the first course, *Applying Systematic Learning Frameworks to Increase Student Achievement,* candidates examine research and implement within their professional setting national, state, local, and professional

standards that inform curriculum content, teaching, and effective school leadership. During this course aspiring teacher leaders begin the process of measuring their teaching practice and leadership potential against the rigorous standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching (NBPTS) in their content discipline and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure consortium (ISLLC). It is also during this course candidates are given instruction on developing and using instructional technology to advance teaching, learning, and home-school communications. *(Artifact: Standards Based Self-Assessment, Candidate web pages, Web CT Courses)*

The second course, *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools and Communities,* is designed to help school practitioners explore the key issues, barriers, and characteristics of teacher leadership. Competence in the classroom is critically important. Equally important is developing teachers who desire to (1) care for all children, schools and communities; develop productive learning communities; (3) take charge of their professional development: and (4) make a difference within their profession. Candidates in this course assess their school communities, identify strengths and potential growth areas, and develop school improvement action plans based on collected data. This course is team taught with a guest practitioner. *(Artifact: Teacher Leadership Action Research Project, School Improvement Plans).*

In tandem to these courses, the candidates are assigned to NBPTS certified teachers who work with them through seminars and self- directed study to begin the process of crafting two entries required in the board certification process. The first course begins with an overview of the NBPTS process and each entry and gradually moves into modeling and coaching the types of narrative writing required to draft the entries. *(Artifact: Initial drafts of NBPTS writing exercises)*

Semester Two-Fall
In the second semester, candidates begin the formal training to be a mentor and instructional coach. *Coaching and Mentoring Professional Relationships* is intended to the meet the state's Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) Endorsement Standards for developing teacher mentors for student interns, first-year teachers, alternate certification teachers, and experienced teachers new to a school system. Teacher leaders in this course develop the knowledge and skills to: (1) help colleagues self-assess teaching behaviors using classroom-based standards, set performance goals, collect and analyze data, monitor progress, and design professional development plans; (2) develop and apply the skills/standards linked to successful mentoring; (3) learn and apply the key features of adult learning and development; and (4) promote/assess teacher mentoring within their school communities. (*Artifacts: TSS Capstone Portfolio, TSS Endorsement Recommendations for Certification, ED.S Follow-Up Survey*)

Also during this semester, students take *Developing Productive Work Groups for School Improvement and Innovation.* This course is targeted to provide teacher leaders with the knowledge and skills for understanding themselves as leaders in context roles and responsibilities outside of their classroom environments. This course focuses on the implementation of action plans developed during the previous semester and the development of group processing skills essential for leadership. Particular emphasis is placed on initiating action toward innovative change and motivating and drawing others into the action for school improvement. This course is team taught with visiting practitioners.

Concurrently, to these courses, the candidates begin their first Internship and Capstone Portfolio and continue working on NBPTS entries. Teacher leaders in the Teacher Mentoring Internship mentor a colleague at the school site for one semester to fulfill the requirements of the Teacher Support Specialist

(TSS) Endorsement and to demonstrate the knowledge, skill, and dispositions of effective mentoring and instructional supervision. Demonstration of the TSS Standards is documented in the Internship Portfolio through performance artifacts, site based assessments, and written commentaries. Through seminars and Internet communication, candidates continue to work with their NBPTS coaches on their pre-candidacy entries. *(Artifact: TSS Capstone Portfolio, NBPTS Web Based Communication Logs*)

Semester Three-Spring

Building on the groundwork established in the first two semesters, candidates begin the semester with *Generating and Using Assessment and Research Data for Increasing Student Achievement.* This course is geared to learning and applying study techniques for establishing reliable and valid data sources for student, classroom, and school improvement decisions. In particular, practitioners increase their skill in analyzing and interpreting current data sources at their schools in order to identify trends in student achievement by various diversity factors. Teacher leaders in this course also learn how to utilize technology tools for educational management.

Partnered with this course is *Using Inquiry Based Methods for Curriculum Development.* Candidates in this course research and apply major curriculum theories and best practices/educational innovations used in today's public schools in order to connect teaching and learning to highest priorities impacting student achievement. Emphasis is placed on identifying, discovering, and interpreting information/evidence that are used to inform decisions and teaching practices. In particular, teacher leaders develop a curriculum guide designed to (1) develop understanding of the curriculum development process, (2) broaden the students' content area knowledge and (3) prepare them for the NBPTS Assessment Center Exams and Entries 1-3.

Simultaneously, candidates are involved with their *Instructional Supervision Internship.* Teacher leaders in this internship self-assess current knowledge and skill on the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's standards targeted for the Instructional Supervision Endorsement, develop an action plan to increase knowledge and skill in specific areas and have this plan approved by the site supervisor and ED.S Program Coordinator. Demonstration of the targeted Instructional Standards is documented in the IS Internship Capstone Portfolio and verified by the site-based supervisors who hold certification in the endorsement area. (*Artifacts: IS Capstone Portfolio*)

Semester Four-Summer

The final two courses and internship bring the program to a close. Expanding on their emerging knowledge and skills, students now take *Planning Strategically for Systematic Program Development and Evaluation.* This course focuses on the study of major theories and practices in the development and evaluation of school-based programs, including curricular, co-curricular, and staff development initiatives for the improvement of student learning. The purpose of this course is to assist teacher leaders in developing the knowledge and skills of program planning and evaluation essential for meeting program and school improvement goals. Students study model program evaluations and research and complete an evaluation plan for their school-based improvement projects. *(Artifact: Program Evaluation Study and School Improvement Plans)*

Matched with this course, students also complete the course, *Expanding Professional Roles in Education: Ethical and Legal Implications.* Teacher leaders in this course acquire the knowledge necessary to be better-informed ethical decision-makers and leaders in their particular learning community. In addition,

through this course practitioners become better equipped to facilitate positive changes within the school, which may produce a more legally literate and ethically sound environment in which to work.

During this semester candidates complete their final *Curriculum Internship and NBPTS Capstone Portfolio*. Teacher leaders in this internship experience demonstrate knowledge and skill in curriculum decision-making through the use of systematic data analysis and interpretation. Through self-assessment and school improvement action plans, candidates document performance related to curriculum standards in the CD Internship Portfolio. *(Artifacts: Course syllabi, Cohort Program Evaluations. CI Capstone Portfolios)*

PHASE TWO-EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATION
SEMESTERS FIVE & SIX

Upon successful completion of the Education Specialist Degree in Teacher Leadership, candidates may apply for the certification program. This phase is extensively team-taught with program faculty and local school practitioners from all levels (K-12 principals, central office staff, and local superintendents). The knowledge, skills, and dispositions targeted for these courses and yearlong internship are seamless and interwoven throughout the two semesters. The program format and delivery embraces outside learning sources, as candidates are required to participate in fifteen hours of professional staff development each semester in areas they need to strengthen related to targeted leadership standards. These outside learning sources must be linked to the ISLLC Standards and verified through performance artifacts that result from these experiences. *(Artifacts: Action Plans, EDL Course Syllabus, EDL Capstone Portfolio)*. The leadership certification program is interdisciplinary in format and involves the following courses and internships:

Managing Human Resources to Increase School Productivity. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by making management decisions to enhance learning and teaching. This course assists candidates by: (1) increasing their knowledge base of human resources management and development; (2) providing examples of teacher performance and student performance systems that include high-quality standards, expectations, and performances; (3) modeling and promoting programs for staff growth that emphasize new knowledge and skills necessary for achievement of school goals; and (4) reviewing and designing quality control systems to support continuous school improvement.

Goal-Based Budget Planning and Resource Management. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. This course is designed to assist candidates in (1) developing knowledge and skills in using quantitative information to manage schools and school programs; (2) learning to use the basic principles and issues related to fiscal operations of school management; and (3) developing realistic budgets for personnel, instruction, student activities, capital outlay, and routine maintenance services.

Organizational Oversight: Planning and Scheduling for School Effectiveness. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring the efficient management of the school facility and effective use of space. This course is designed to help candidates (1) learn about the school plant, equipment, and support systems that are required to operate safely and efficiently in order to create the conditions for successful teaching and learning; (2) develop time management skills to manage

the entire school community; (3) design and maintain a safe, clean, and aesthetically attractive school environment; (4) and learn about the principles and issues relating to school safely and security.

School Leadership Internship. This internship is a year-long field-based learning experience in which the aspiring school leader who is employed full time participates in planned, collaborated activities with the site-supervisor. The internship will allow the candidate to practice and reflect on the skills and techniques required of full-time administrators. The purpose of this internship is help candidates:

- Acquire/practice certain technical skills before taking a leadership position
- Learn more about a particular administrative job so they can test personal commitment to a career change
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills to successfully meet the Educational Leadership certification requirements
- Reflect on current practices and use that information to shape future behavior
- Develop and execute action plans that are directly linked and facilitate improvement goals of the school

ASSESSMENT

As part of the NGCSU School of Education's Comprehensive Assessment Plan, the Ed.S Program has a detailed assessment plan. In this plan there are (1) clearly defined purposes for the Ed.S Program based on the mission of the University, the School of Education's conceptual framework, and professional standards; (2) procedures for collecting multiple data sets at various decision points to document candidate achievement; and (3) an evaluation system that outlines the use of assessment results for program improvements. The program faculty has developed multiple methods and data sources for the assessment of educational effectiveness and these encompass the entire program. The education unit uses multiple assessments at admissions, during the program and at completion of programs. The Ed.S assessment plan addresses not only candidate performance but also the systematic evaluation of the program including faculty, curriculum, field-experiences, and program impact. The evaluation plan is thorough, well documented, and comprehensive, including both formative and summative assessment tools. Performance-based assessment strategies are used throughout the program. *(Artifacts: SOE Comprehensive Assessment Plan, Ed.S Assessment Plan; PSC Ed.S Program Report* 2001; *Southern Association of College & Schools (SACS) Report* 2001; *Ed.S Annual Program Evaluations and Use of Results 2001,2002)*

EXTERNAL PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

An on-site Substantive Change Committee Review Team for Southern Association of College and Schools Accreditation in 2001 cited the NGCSU Education Specialist Program the following *commendations:*

1. **The committee commends the faculty for the excellent design of the program**, melding both national state standards in a coherent curriculum to prepare teacher leaders.
2. **The committee commends the faculty for excellence in instruction**. There is ample evidence of careful planning of instructional activities and assignments, design and use of rubrics for evaluation of student performances, mentoring and supervision of internships and portfolio development, and substantive, timely and continuous feedback to students on their performance.

3. **The faculty is commended for being flexible enough to utilize student informal feedback** to adjust expectations, assignments and teaching activities appropriately, while consistently maintaining high quality expectations and standards. Faculty and program administrators work closely together to ensure continuity and communication from course to course, semester to semester to appropriately involve adjunct faculty and other human resources from the public school systems in meaningful ways that benefit candidates learning.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Advisement System

As with any new program, the program faculty is continually analyzing and discussing ways to increase program effectiveness. The cohort approach facilitates an-ongoing system for candidate advisement, which we feel is enhanced by having the program coordinator serve as both the cohort and internship advisor. Program advisement begins with a detailed orientation to both the Ed.S and Educational Leadership Certification Programs in the first semester and continues at the end of each semester to help candidates with registration procedures and to prepare them for the next semester. It is here the faculty cohort advisor presents the key issues regarding the program format and delivery, especially as they relate to coordinating a full-time job, collaborating with site-based mentors, coursework and required internships. *Part of our advisement process is to prepare and support our candidates for the intensive workload and time commitment involved in the program.* Depending on students' career phase and adult life-span, the cohort advisor works individually with candidates to adjust program timelines and requirements to best meet the needs of the adult learner. When either professional or personal demands (i.e. maternity leave, family crisis, deaths) need to take precedent for a short time, candidates are encouraged to contact the cohort advisor so alternatives can be explored and they can complete the program and still meet all requirements. (i.e. "There was a time that I wanted to quit and walk away from the program. However, I was encouraged by the faculty to stay on and finish my degree. I thank them for their support and understanding during a difficult time in my professional and personal life!" *Artifact: Ed.S Follow-Up Survey*)

Professional Coaching and Mentoring

The Education Specialist Program promotes and supports peer mentoring both among the cohort members, faculty, visiting practitioners, and among the candidates' professional work groups. This strand is a key component in the program and is supported through a comprehensive teacher mentoring training program that currently exceeds the state standards. As a result teacher leaders take a more active role in both mentoring their students and their colleagues. Many Ed.S candidates have initiated more formal teacher mentoring programs at their schools and even volunteered to serve as program coordinators. (i.e. "I am a teacher mentor and a lead teacher in my area of expertise. Mentoring others has helped me to mentor my own students." *Artifacts: TSS Portfolios, Ed.S Follow–Up Survey*)

Graduation and Retention

The program has a 96% retention rate in the phase one-Educational Specialist Degree-part of the program. Out of 82 enrolled candidates, only thee have left and the reasons for departure were personal and not related to any reasons linked to the program content or delivery. The phase two part of the program-Educational Leadership Certification- is particularly noteworthy. Most of the teachers who enter the program in phase one clearly do not intend to pursue future roles as school administrators; however, by the time they complete their specialist degree, we have seen a consistent trend for teachers to view school

leadership in a far more positive way. For example, we have documented a 48% or better return rate after Ed.S graduation to pursue the Leadership Add-On and the certification completion rate to date is 100%. We view this as clear evidence of the overall program impact on developing confidence and competence as teacher leaders. (i.e." Through this program I have become involved as a teacher leader in my school. I have become more aware of opportunities to act as a teacher leader and have gained confidence in my abilities to lead others and help schools improve. " *Artifacts: Cohort-Evaluations. ED.S Follow-Up Survey)*

Program/Student Successes
The overall assessment and response to the program so far has been overwhelmingly positive; however, the degree to which these teachers provide ongoing leadership in their school communities will be the ultimate measure of program success. Through follow-up graduate surveys and longitudinal studies, the School of Education will be able to study the career paths of program graduates as current and future leaders. Here are the trends that we are beginning to see in our assessment data:

Program Assessment
Based on candidate self-assessment of perceived acquisition of knowledge, skills and dispositions related to program standards, *candidates believe they have made significant increases* in knowledge and skills in all ISLLC and NBPTS standards. Exit cohort program evaluations in 2001 and 2002 consistently rank the program expectations and instructional delivery as <u>Professionally Challenging and Rewarding</u> a 5 on a 5-point scale. The following exit comments (2002) show these trends:

- The leadership program has made me more aware of my role as a professional. I am more focused on my strengths and weaknesses and the career options I would like to pursue in the future. I may never choose to be an administrator but I know that the skills I gained through the leadership program will make me a more active leader in any educational setting. As a teacher, I am more reflective about my practice and more driven by results than ever before. Whatever endeavor I choose to engage in the future, I feel I have gained the skills and confidence to be an incredibly insightful and effective leader.
- I've gained so much confidence. I can now discuss standards, data analysis, program evaluation… and I know what I am talking about...I have gained a level of confidence in my school and system that sometimes seems surreal.
- It has made me more aware of my responsibility as a member of the school community and as a mentor...I have become a collaborator not a controller.
- I have advanced my professional growth and this has impacted my teaching methods and assessment of my students and my work. Through this program I have gained respect in my school. I enjoy being part of the professional development program in my school and would like to be more involved in the future.
- This is a very valuable program. It has helped me to grow personally and professionally.
- The coursework and internships were professionally rewarding in that I had the opportunity to be actually involved in leadership activities that made a difference in my school.

Leadership Role Changes
An unexpected but exciting trend is the change in teacher roles and career paths candidates have encountered during the program and soon after graduation. In each cohort group several Ed.S candidates were asked to seek or to take teacher leadership roles within their schools. A significant

trend is the initiative for candidates and graduates to organize their schools for better teacher mentoring of new teachers and teachers new to their buildings. (i.e. "As a result of my TSS Training, I volunteered to serve as the Teacher Mentor/Mentee Coordinator in my school. I feel I now have the confidence and the training to do this as result of my Ed.S experiences…" (*Artifact: Ed.S Follow-Up Survey 2002*). The Student Success Fact Sheet in the documentation summarizes student perceived successes and role changes by cohort group.

Links Between Good Teaching and Various Rewards
The Education Specialist Program coordinator receives compensation for administrative responsibilities associated with the program and was awarded promotion and tenure as full professor in the spring of 2001. A significant component of Dr. Podsen's promotion and tenure application was documentation of her development, implementation, and advisement for the Ed.S program. Her contributions to the Ed.S program were supported and cited by the Teacher Education Department Head and the Dean of the School of Education as critical evidence of the merit of Dr. Podsen's work and program development.

Dr. Podsen authored the text-*Coaching & Mentoring First-Year and Student Teachers* during the first cohort and strengthened and improved the mentoring component to reflect the latest research and craft knowledge related to induction, mentoring, and cognitive coaching. This text is used in the Education Specialist Program as part of the coaching and mentoring course and internship. During the second cohort, Dr. Podsen developed the accompanying *Teacher Mentor Training Guide* to help school systems train teacher mentor facilitators using the textbook. She has co-taught this course with Education Specialist graduates in their school systems and trained mentor facilitators in three other districts. The coaching and mentoring book has been rated a best-seller by the publisher.

As the Ed.S Program expanded to include the Leadership Add-On component, the institution funded the addition of another full-time faculty with expertise in school leadership. The Teacher Education Department supports the Ed.S program faculty efforts to increase teaching performance through faculty development awards, travel support to both attend and present at professional meetings and conferences, and technology equipment such as lap tops and LCD players to enhance instructional delivery.

#1— Nomination Letter from Chief Academic Officer

#2—PROGRAM STATEMENT
Education Specialist Program: Teachers as Leaders

Philosophy

North Georgia College & State University prepares teachers for tomorrow's classrooms--teachers who can deliver knowledge and skills in an effective manner, make informed decisions and choices, and assume leadership--first in the classroom and then within the professional community. The process which integrates these roles of *Facilitator, Decision-Maker*, and *Leader* is a metacognitive one, in that teachers must be conscious of their thinking and problem-solving processes in order to integrate and monitor the interaction of these roles. Metacognition is that ability which enables teachers to (1) plan a course of action prior to beginning a task, (2) monitor themselves while executing a plan, (3) alter or adjust a plan consciously, and finally (4) evaluate the results after action has been taken. This process, which begins with the undergraduate program, continues and expands into the graduate programs.

Traditionally, the role of the teacher has included the facilitation of learning. The facilitator (teacher) is responsible for structuring the learning environment in such a way as to enable effective and efficient learning to occur. As a *Facilitator* in the teacher education program students will increase their competencies in these four areas: Subject Matter Knowledge, Individual Differences of Students, Communications, including technology, and Classroom Management. In addition, the teacher must have a knowledge base related to curriculum, methods, trends, issues, and assessment as well as a repertoire of workable principles by which appropriate curricular and classroom management decisions can be made. As a *Decision-Maker* in the teacher education program, students will increase their competence in these four areas: Assessment, Planning, Problem-Solving, and Instructional Methods, Materials, and Resources. Finally, in an educational setting where opportunities for "teacher empowerment" are increasing, the teacher must be prepared to assume a variety of leadership roles during his or her career. This concept of leadership is multifaceted and part of the mission statement for the University, in that North Georgia graduates are expected to be prepared to undertake leadership roles in their profession and within their community. As a *Leader* students will increase their competence in these four areas: Ethical Perspectives, Metacognition, Professional Leadership, and Research and Evaluation.

The program leading to the Ed.S in Teacher Leadership is designed to strengthen and upgrade classroom teachers' knowledge and skills in their content area acquired at the master's level and through teaching experience. The model upon which this advanced degree program is based is a metacognitive one that emphasizes the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning, instructional decision-maker, and leader in the classroom and community. While the emphasis at the undergraduate level is on the facilitator and decision-maker role, the emphasis at the graduate level is on the educational leader role. The curriculum for the education specialist degree includes the study of the theoretical base, research, and exemplary practices as described by the National Board for Professional Teaching as well as expanding the knowledge and skill base to include standards for school leaders—Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC).

Intended Program Outcomes

Students completing the specialist program in a teacher education program in Teacher Leadership will be able to:

1. Deliver/facilitate the learning of content knowledge, skills, and dispositions to provide citizens to function and contribute to a free society.
2. Demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions necessary to impact on education as knowledgeable and responsible educators.
3. Demonstrate skills and dispositions that will enable them to continue learning throughout their lifetimes/professional careers.
4. Apply critical, analytical, research and technological skills by successfully planning and facilitating instructional or administrative courses of action.
5. Demonstrate instructional, administrative, and professional leadership within educational communities.
6. Incorporate use of technology to enhance instructional effectiveness in the classroom.

Goals and Objectives

The Education Specialist degree program in Teacher Leadership at North Georgia College & State University is based on the following objectives, which reflect the needs of the region, the individuals, and the program.

1. Develop and maintain a program to provide leadership personnel for north Georgia schools that is consistent with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and PSC/ISLLC Standards.
2. Develop teacher leaders who can remain in the classroom or expand their professional lives to assume a variety of educational leadership positions.
3. Provide a curriculum, which contains an appropriate balance between didactic and experiential learning, containing both formal classroom experiences and hands-on internships.
4. Provide a curriculum that reflects faculty expertise and competencies, students' needs for credentialing, and the community's need for well-trained teacher leaders.
5. Mentor teachers through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification process, increasing and validating their competencies in their content field.
6. Provide students with the opportunity to validate, continue to develop, and assess their leadership skills in supervised internship experiences.
7. Provide a program that not only addresses the community and regional needs but also meets or exceeds the national accreditation standards.
8. Provide a program that increases the ability of teacher as leaders to positively impact teaching and learning for both peers and K-12 students in the public schools.

Program Strategies

The graduate program leading to the Education Specialist Degree in Teacher Leadership continues to emphasize the belief that educational leaders must first demonstrate that they are effective teachers at the highest level (NBPTS eligible) and that they can mentor teachers (TSS Endorsement) and provide curriculum leadership (IS Endorsement). In addition to the NBPTS standards, graduate students seeking the Education Specialist Degree will also measure their leadership knowledge and skills against the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for school leaders, which have also been adopted by Georgia's Professional Standards Commission. These standards serve as the organizing framework for the leadership outcomes in the specialist program.

It is the intent of the Department of Teacher Education to create a climate that will begin to prepare and encourage graduates to seek National Board Certification and to support the conditions that will sustain their efforts as they prepare for this certificate of accomplishment and professional achievement. Furthermore, it is the intent of the teacher education program to prepare graduates for leadership proficiency and career role expansion within their school communities.

Distinguishing Program Strategies to Ensure Candidate Academic Success

- Keys all coursework, performance artifacts, and internships to National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), Professional Standards Commission (PSC), and the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC).
- Values and provides team taught courses with practicing school administrators and national board certified teachers who co-teach classes with full-time faculty.
- Builds teacher leadership and expands career roles with the Educational Leadership Certification Program Add-On.
- Determines candidate competency through demonstrations, results-based assessments, real-life task performances, problem-based learning, site-based assessment from field mentors, and the production of a variety of job-related products that are directly linked to the schools in which they serve.
- Utilizes both face to face and web based technologies for program delivery.
- Plans collaboratively all field experiences with university, candidates and school district personnel to ensure applicability to current employment and school improvement goals and link preparation program to site based professional development.
- Offers flexible course scheduling at convenient times during the week and on Saturday to meet the needs of adult learners.
- Promotes professional collaboration and reflection about best practices at the school site with current school leadership teams.
- Alternates program location at North Georgia College & State University, Gainesville College, and Forsyth County Staff Development Center.
- Prepares a partial pre-candidacy NBPTS portfolio with direct instruction/coaching from certified NBPTS trained facilitators.
- Utilizes sound adult learning development practices and brings teachers in as equal partners in the learning process.
- Values and recognizes out-of-class learning and staff development needs that can best be met in other professional development contexts.
- Advises, coaches, and seeks feedback from candidates to ensure program responsiveness to diverse adult learners.

ARTIFACTS & EVIDENCE	

#4—**PROGRAM FACT PROFILE**
EDUCATION SPECIALIST PROGRAM IN TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Program Start Date	• **Summer 2000**			
Credit Hours Required	• **Education Specialist Degree =30 Hours** • **Educational Leadership Certification Add-On=15 Hours**			
Candidates Enrolled & Started Program-(82) **Phase I: ED.S Degree**	**Cohort 1-Students Enrolled**	**Cohort 2 Students Enrolled**	**Cohort 3 Students Enrolled**	**Cohort 4 Students Enrolled**
	20	**17**	**24**	**21**
Phase II: **Educational Leadership Certification Add-on**	**EDL-Cohort 1** **2001-2002** **NGCSU** **Students Enrolled**		**EDL-Cohort 2** **2002-2003** **Gainesville** **Students Enrolled & In Progress**	
	12		**16**	

Phase I: Ed.S Program Completers (58) =96%	**Cohort-1** **19-** **Summer 2001**	**Cohort-2** **15** **Spring 2002-**	**Cohort-3** **24** **Fall 2002**	**Cohort-4** **21 Targeted** **Summer 2003**
Phase II: EDL Program Completers (100%)	**Cohort-1** **12-** **Spring 2002**	**Cohort-2** **16 Targeted** **Spring 2003**		

	NGCSU Full Time Faculty	**Adjunct Faculty**	**Visiting Practitioners K-12 Administrators**	**Design Team Members**
Primary Faculty Adjunct Faculty Visiting Practitioners Design Teams	Dr.Bob Michael Dr. Judith Monsaas	*NGCSU ED.S & NBPTS* Suzanne Jarrard Rebecca Wilkie Robin Gower	*Elementary:* Dr. Jo Ann Brown Ms. Carolyn Clarke Ms. Karen Ethridge (Charter School Principal	Paul Shaw-Supt Alan Zubay-Supt Lamar Porter-Supt Ann Short-RESA
	Dr.India Podsen Dr. Toni Bellon	*NBPTS* Willene Agnew Karen Weinmann	*Middle* Dr. Donna Lee *High School* Ms. Wanda Land	Jo Ann Brown Donna Lee *Principals* Joe Richardson (International Network of Principal Centers-Harvard)
	Dr.Larry Berneking	Dr. Joe Richardson	*Central Office* Paul Shaw Edie Beldon	Toni Bellon- India Podsen
				Susan Gannaway Bob Michael

Regents Teaching Excellence Awards
NGCSU-Education Specialist Program in Teacher Leadership

#4—STUDENT SUCCESSES FACT SHEETS

Criteria 58 Ed.S Follow-Up Surveys 33 Returned **57% Response Rate**	Cohort One 2001 Summer Graduation	Cohort Two -2002 Spring Graduation	Cohort Three 2002 Fall Graduation	Cohort Four 2003 Summer Graduation
Candidates Enrolled	**20**	**17**	**24**	**21**
Program Completers Ed.S in Teacher Leadership	**19 (95%)**	**15 (88%)**	**24 (100%)**	**100% Entering semester 3**
Candidates Enrolled in Educational Leadership Add-On	**12 (63%)**	**4 (27%)**	**12 (50%)**	
Program Completers in Educational Leadership Program	**12 (100%)**	**100% Entering 6th semester**	**100% Entering 6th semester**	
NBPTS Applications during the Ed.S Program	**4**	**4**	**1**	
NBPTS Applications after the Ed.S Program	**2**			
Candidates who plan to seek NBPTS certification within the next 3-5 years	**5**	**3**	**3**	
Total number of teachers seeking NBPTS certification	*11 (58%)*	*7 (46%)*	*4 (16%)*	
Role Changes during the Ed.S Program	**7**	**6**	**3**	
Role changes after the Ed.S Program	**8**	**7**	**1**	
Total number of teachers involved in teacher leadership role changes	*15 (78%%)*	*13(86%)*	*4 (17%)*	
Candidates who plan to pursue Doctorate Degrees	**3 (15%)**	**1 (6%)**	**3 (13%)**	

STUDENT SUCCESSES FACT SHEET- Continued

PROFESSIONAL PERSONAL SUCCESSES	Responses Comments are drawn from the Fall 2002 Ed.S Follow Up Survey on Teacher Leadership Activities
	What personal and/or professional successes would you link directly to your Ed.S in Teacher Leadership and /or Educational Leadership Certification (if applicable) as it relates to the following areas?
Mentoring Colleagues	• I am directing a system mentoring program and teach the TSS endorsement in my system • I am now serving as the coordinator of the teacher mentoring program at my high school. • I initiated a teacher mentoring program at my school using the materials in my Ed.S program. • Gained a better perspective of the true role of a good mentor, the importance of formative, rather than summative, evaluation, better insight into others' reactions to situations and the importance of a good mentoring program already in place. • Although I had mentored informally before, this opportunity to learn and apply specific mentoring techniques and activities provided a more valuable experience both for my mentee and me. The experience I had with my mentee was invaluable. Because of the success I had with my mentee, I was asked and given the opportunity to teach a staff development course for new teachers.
Classroom Teaching/ Student Achievement	• One of my responsibilities is to oversee testing. I have used the knowledge I gained from the leadership program to assist teachers in analyzing student achievement data and create plans of action for addressing areas of weakness. • Through the program work that we did in curriculum and data analysis, I am able to link all my lesson plans to state and national standards. I now take student data and analyze its impact on student achievement across student diversity categories. • I have had success identifying probable student failures on our end of the year course exams by using action research methods learned in the Ed.S program. • A more accurate perspective of true "inclusion" and "authentic assessment", rather than what is often being labeled as such within the system. Improved methodology for making classroom, home and community connections. • As a result of my leadership experiences in the various internships, my superintendent nominated me to become a CRCT administrator for my school. I have provided staff development training for all colleagues using web-based software to increase CRCT test scores • Facilitated a county-wide staff development for Reading Across the Curriculum • My students produced the best overall test scores in our school - even though it was my first year full time in that area. I attribute the success to my extensive use of the content test descriptors with which I became familiar at NGCSU. I am again teaching in a new field this year, voluntarily, and embraced that challenge due to my success last year. • The Ed.S experience renewed my enthusiasm for teaching. The insights gained from collaboration with colleagues encouraged me to try new techniques in the classroom. Professors, teaching about standards, data collection, assessment strategies, and curriculum issues, taught me to continuously examine what is being done in the classroom to ensure the best possible experience for all students. • I now use a variety of test scores and other tools to determine if various instructional approaches have an effect on student achievement. I conduct action research to inform my own teaching practices

Improving Schools	- I am now responsible for the school improvement process in 4 schools. I have been able to initiate professional learning activities directly related to the needs of teachers. - The training I received helped me to make changes in to the new high school. I wanted to teach in an environment that wanted teacher input and incorporated input in all areas. - I am a member of my school's School Improvement Team and was a key writer for the Georgia School of Excellence Award. - Formed the Continuous School Improvement team - Through my ED.S experience and increased collaboration with administration at my school (2000+ students), I became much more involved in a variety of school-wide activities. Based on what I learned about organizational behavior and the obstacles to change, I have attempted to be a positive factor in the progress of my school. - I write science curriculum for the country and serve on the system curriculum committee.
Your Own Professional Development & Expertise	- I have been recognized as knowledgeable in many areas due to the application of the information and skills acquired in the Ed.S program. I have been called by several school systems to deliver staff development programs. I am currently pursuing my doctorate and have confidence in my ability that did not exist before entering this program. - I am now a full–time Educational Technology Instructor at the university level. I feel the completion of my Ed.S was a major factor in my selection for this position. - I think my relationships with other leaders in my school system have grown professionally. Completion of the program has given me the confidence to branch out into other areas. - I became NBPTS certified during my Ed.S program and now serve as a facilitator through the Georgia Teacher Center. - The appointment to several state committees has given me a new lease on professionalism! - I enjoyed this Ed.S experience so much and learned so much that I have decided to pursue a doctorate degree in the next few years. This program has not only renewed my enthusiasm for teaching, but has also improved my expertise in the classroom, and the larger school setting.
Other Related Successes	- I have talked to many people who have an Ed.S degree or are seeking it from other area colleges. I have not heard one of the say that they feel they have benefited as a teacher (other than the pay raise) as a result of their training. That is not true from those of us who have graduated from the Ed.S program at North Georgia. The program was rigorous and comprehensive; I wouldn't change any of it! - Because of the in-depth and meaningful coursework, and because of the internships I was so actively engaged in over a two-year period, my colleagues and administrators alike view me as a leader and often come to me with questions, comments, and suggestions for school improvement. - My action plans and the program at NGSCU taught me about standards, benchmarks, and the role of teachers as leaders. The program gave me the confidence to believe that I could accomplish goals if I set them and worked toward them. - Professionally, I have grown more since beginning the Ed.S program than I ever imagined. I am far more knowledgeable than when I began, and I have been given far more leadership opportunities than I ever imagined having. I never imagined I would speak to a college faculty or present at a conference. I believe that professional development is not limited to workshops, seminars… I believe professional development occurs every minute of everyday.

REGENTS CRITERIA	VERIFICATION SOURCES/DOCUMENTS REVIEWED BY EXTERNAL PROGRAM EVALUATORS
Individual and collective faculty efforts to improve teaching and student learning Department/unit policies that encourage collaborative faculty efforts including team teaching, teaching inquiry groups, and interdisciplinary courses and mentoring	• Academic Affairs Committee Minutes-1999 • Ed.S Needs Assessment and Report 1999 • Board of Regents Proposal for Proposed Ed.S Program-1999 • Department of Teacher Education Faculty Meeting Minutes 1999-Present • Ed.S Design Team Program Matrix 1999 • EDL Design Team Program Retreat and Minutes-2000 • Ed.S PSC Program Report-2000 • Ed.S SAC's Comprehensive Compliance Program Report-2001 • PSC Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-FEB-2001 • SAC's Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-OCT 2001
Comprehensive assessment of student learning and use of results to inform teaching practices and curricular development and revision An ongoing process for reviewing and reshaping curriculum so that academic excellence and serving the needs of alls students remain top priorities	• School of Education Comprehensive Assessment Plan 2000-2004 • Ed.S Assessment Plan 2000-2004 • NGCSU Annual Academic Program Review-Ed.S Program Annual Report • Ed.S Midpoint and End of Program Cohort Evaluations • Ed.S Summary Report on Use of Results and Program Changes for Instruction Development/Revision • Ed.S Revised Course/Internship Syllabi • PSC Annual Report - Status of Weaknesses and Corrective Action-2002 • AACTE Annual Report-- Status of Weaknesses and Corrective Action-2002 • PSC Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-FEB-2001 • SAC's Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-OCT 2001
Efforts to enable faculty to use innovative and effective forms of pedagogy and technology Exemplary programs for advising mentoring, recruiting, and retaining students, co-curricular work with students, out of class learning Successes of the Ed.S Program students, i.e. graduation rates, job placement, awards etc.	• Ed.S PSC Program Folio-2000- for PSC Visit • Ed.S SAC's Program Report-2001- for SAC's Visit • Course Syllabi for Ed.S and L-6 Add-On • Web CT Courses and Use of Internet Technologies • Candidate Web Pages • Standards Based Self-Assessment and Customized School Improvement Plans-Student Artifacts • Capstone Portfolios (TSS, IS, CI) • Out of Class Learning Plans and Performance Artifacts • Team teaching with Visiting Practitioners and Collaboration with K-12 Teachers and Administrators • Ed.S Cohort Advisement Process each Semester • NGCSU Graduation Rates and GPA Reports • NBPTS Certification Reports • Ed.S Annual Cohort Evaluations, Ed.S Follow-Up Study 2002 • PSC Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-FEB-2001 • SAC's Visiting Team Final Report and Program Analysis-OCT 2001
Strong links between good teaching and various rewards i.e. compensation, promotions, tenure grants, leaves travel, department awards	• School of Education Budget Proposals FY 2000, 2001, 2002 • Compensation for Ed.S Coordinator • Technology Support & Travel allotment/awards to present and/or attend professional conferences • Budget Allocations for Visiting Practitioners, Adjunct Faculty, and NBPTS Instructors • Budget Allocation for Expanding Library Resources and Media to Support the Ed.S Program • Letters of Recognition for Faculty Work and Design of the Ed.S Program • Addition of a full time faculty member with primary responsibility in the Ed.S/EDL Programs