“Leadership is developed, not discovered.”
~ John C. Maxwell
Leadership Philosophy

Fall Retreat: The Dillard House
  - Module 1: Developing Personal and Classroom Direction &
  - Module 2: Identifying and Developing a Personal Leadership Style

Cisco Systems, Inc. (November Session)
  - Module 3: Building Culture, Climate, and Community &
  - Module 4: Designing and Leading Change

Grayson Technical (January Session)
  - Module 5: Facilitating Learning

Georgia Gwinnett College (February Session)
  - Module 6: Facilitating Learning II

Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce (March Session)
  - Module 7: Leading from the Classroom & Metro Superintendents’ Panel

Spring Retreat: Gwinnett Environmental Heritage Center
  - Module 8: Leading Up

Community Service Project - Atlanta Mission’s 5K

Professional Reading

Entrance Leadership Essay and Exit Leadership Essay

Group Picture of the 2012-2013 Teachers as Leaders
Leadership in my eyes through quotes from John Maxwell’s book *Developing the Leader Within You.*

- “Leadership is developed, not discovered.”- A leader must work towards developing their leadership skills; therefore, a leader is never fully developed.
- “People buy into the leader, before they buy into the vision.”- People must be able to trust their leader and know that he/she has their best interest in mind.
- “Leadership is influence.”- A great leader must be able to influence those around them to trust them.
- “All great leaders posses two things: one, they know where they are going, and two, they are able to persuade others to follow!” – A great leader must have a clear vision and get others on board to follow and support that vision.
- “The more you change, the more you become an instrument of change in the lives of others. If you want to become a change agent, you also must change.” – A great leader must be willing to change themselves to become more effective leaders and have a positive impact on their organization.
Fall Retreat
September 28-29, 2012
The Dillard House
Dillard, Georgia

FALL RETREAT:
THE DILLARD HOUSE

TeachAs Leaders, Inc.
2012 Fall Retreat

Retreat Objective: Teachers will...
- Gain an understanding of personal leadership capacity.
- Identify and examine leadership styles for enhancing student learning.
- Begin to break down isolation through the development of high-performance communication skills.
- Identify and develop leadership skills through team building.
- Affirm the role of teachers as classroom leaders.

Friday, September 28

8:15 - 9:00 Coffee/Continental Breakfast
9:00 - 9:15 Welcome/Retreat Overview
Anne Thompson & Elizabeth Alday, TAL Program Co-Chairs
Nancy Ward, Executive Director, Teachers As Leaders, Inc.
9:15 - 9:30 Ice Breaker
Becky Cheppeler and Heather Watkins
Fall Retreat Committee
9:30 - 11:00 Introductory Skills
11:00 - 11:15 Break
11:15 - 12:30 Leadership Vision
Dr. Craig Belslow
Principal, Riverside Elementary School
Covington County Public Schools
12:30 - 1:30 Lunch - Rock House
1:30 - 2:00 Team Building Activities
Elizabeth Alday, Becky Cheppeler, Anne Thompson, and Heather Watkins
3:45 - 5:45 Leadership Module 1
Developing Personal & Classroom Environment
Mike Rutherford, Leadership Consultant
President, Rutherford Learning Group, Inc.
5:45 - 7:00 Dinner - Dillard House Dining Room
7:00 - 8:30 The DISC Assessment
Mike Rutherford

Saturday, September 29

7:15 - 8:30 Breakfast - Dillard House Dining Room
8:30 - 10:00 Leadership Module 2
Identifying & Developing a Personal Leadership
Mike Rutherford
10:00 - 10:30 Break and Check Out
10:30 - 12:15 Leadership Module 2 (Continued)
Mike Rutherford
12:15 - 1:15 Lunch - Rock House
1:15 - 2:00 TAL Portfolio
Dr. Lydia Patrick & Kathy Williams, TAL Portfolio
2:00 - 2:45 Thoughts on Teacher Leadership
Dr. Pete Helmleiter
Retired Principal, CPS
President, TAL, Inc.
8 Leadership Themes of a Successful Leader:

1. Clear, Compelling Direction - has a clear mission, vision and core values
2. Change Agency - strives for a positive change
3. Culture, Climate, and Community - works to create a positive environment
4. Self-Knowledge - looks at one’s self and evaluate effectiveness
5. Shared Purpose/Coherent Effort - works effectively with others
6. Communication Skills - uses communication skills to influence/persuade others.
7. Time and Life Management - manages time and commitments well
8. Ethics/Morals - works ethically when making decisions
Three Essential Strands of Clear, Compelling Direction

“When the three strands of Mission, Vision, and Core Values are interwoven, the resulting organization benefits are multiplied.”

~ Mike Rutherford

**Mission:** Compass- Sets purpose and direction.
- What am I here to do?

**Vision:** Picture of a destination
- What do I want to create?

**Core Values:** Rules of the road.
- How will I go about reaching my mission and vision?
Gwinnett County Public Schools:

Mission: Why we exist, our core business…The mission of Gwinnett County Public Schools is to pursue excellence in academic knowledge, skills, and behavior for each student, resulting in measured improvement against local, national and world-class standards.

Vision: What we aspire to be…Gwinnett County Public Schools will become a system of world-class schools where students acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful as they continue their education at the postsecondary level and/or enter the workforce.
CRAIG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL’S MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENT

**Mission:** Our mission, in collaboration with students, parents, and the community, is to provide a safe, supportive environment where students achieve academic excellence, develop social responsibility, and are inspired to become lifelong learners and world class citizens…Every child…Every day.

**Value Statement:**
The parents, students, and staff at Craig Elementary have developed a set of core values that will be critical attributes of our school. These core values will permeate our school and help drive our decision-making efforts.

The students at Craig Elementary will …
- believe in themselves and be confident in their abilities
- develop communication skills through academic and social opportunities
- succeed at life’s daily challenges
- become independent learners who use resources wisely
- develop a love of learning that will last throughout a lifetime
- participate in a rigorous academic curriculum that provides a strong foundation for future education

We aspire to be Excellent…To be an Award-Winning School
MY PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

Child of God, daughter, sister, sister-in-law, aunt, friend, teacher

My purpose in life is to live my life in a way that is glorifying to God. This purpose will allow me…

-to serve God by serving others and by putting other’s needs before my own.
-to be a devoted and loving daughter/sister/sister-in-law/aunt who is loyal and respectful.
-to be a role model and inspiration for my nieces in order to show them the love of Christ through my actions.
-to foster positive, encouraging relationships with all those that I come in contact with throughout my life.
-to be a dedicated, positive teacher who inspires and motivates her students to achieve his/her greatest potential and whose students become life-long learners who continue to have a positive impact on society.
-to be a teacher leader who encourages and supports colleagues’ professional growth to become the best teachers.
-to encourage all of those that I come in contact with to continually pursue personal and professional growth
Ms. Van Sant’s class will strive to be a community of learners who do their best to reach individual goals, encourage one another daily, celebrate our successes, and always come to school each and every day ready to learn new things.
Reflection-As a result of this module, I realized that I not only needed to have a mission/vision for my classroom, but that I also needed a clear and compelling mission/vision statement for my own personal life. Creating a personal mission statement has allowed me to focus my attention now on tasks that will help me to fulfill my mission/vision for my life.

Action- I worked on developing a personal mission statement that would help give me a clear and focused purpose. I, also, went back to my classroom and worked with my students to create a classroom mission statement. We discussed the need for a classroom mission and why it was important to have one. The students were very excited to be able to have a voice in creating it. Each student signed our mission statement poster and we placed it outside of our classroom as a way for others to see what we were working towards in our classroom.
Reflection-As Mike Rutherford said, “Mission enables us to recognize and focus upon the important...and to say ‘no’ to other attentions”. As a result of this understanding that my attention needs to be focused on things that support my mission, I am learning that it is okay to say no to doing something if it does not align with my mission, vision and core values. As John C. Maxwell stated in Developing the Leader Within You, “All true leaders have learned to say no to the good in order to say yes to the best” (p.32).

Action-I went back to work and sat down with my principal to discuss the various leadership opportunities for which I am involved. I then discussed my mission/vision with her, and we worked together to reassign some of my leadership responsibilities to other people so that I could focus my attention on leadership roles that align with my mission statement.
Dr. Barlow discussed the idea of “renting” versus “owning” everything that we do. Are we, as educators, “owning” what we do everyday in the classroom and taking pride in our work, or are we just “renting” what we do everyday and not taking much pride in our work? He went on to discuss whether or not teacher are “renters” or “owners” in regards to participating in leadership efforts, participating in staff development, and involving students in leadership opportunities.

Dr. Barlow also had us create a stain glass window to represent a leadership vision. My group chose to create an image that depicted a classroom that utilizes creativity. Once we determined our vision, we set out together to create our stain glass window to represent that vision. However, when we projected our image over the projector, our image’s color was altered and was seen/interpreted differently by others.
-Reflection-I took the time to reflect on times/areas at work where I may be “renting” the idea/concept/etcetera and how I could work towards having an “owning” it mentality in those areas. I even shared the “owning it” versus “renting it” analogy with my co-workers.

-Action-I have begun to take more initiative to make sure that I am constantly having an “owning it” mentality. I now plan in advance how I will act/react/participate/deliver/etcetera to ensure I am constantly “owning it” so I can improve student learning and build a sense of community within the school and within the classroom.

-Reflection-As a result of the stain glass window activity, I am more aware about other’s perspectives to ideas I may present. While I may have great ideas and have a well planned out delivery of my vision, my ideas may be viewed differently by others due to their unique perspectives.

-Action-I will approach how I deliver information differently to various groups of individuals. I will make sure to take into account other’s temperaments and how they work best so that I can capitalize on their strengths and gain their efforts towards my vision.
MODULE 2: IDENTIFYING & DEVELOPING A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE
HOW SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS BUILD A RESONANT, COMPELLING NATURE
(MIKE RUTHERFORD)
What is the DiSC assessment?
-The DiSC assessment is an assessment of one’s temperament (how one approaches the world).

Why take the DiSC assessment?
-This assessment allows me to ultimately become a more effective leader.
DiSC Assessment Results:

**Graph III**

- **Interpretation**
  A. Circle the peak(s) of the four plotting points in Graph III. See Example 4. If two plotting points are equally high, circle both points.
  B. Identify the behavioral reason for each plotting point.

**Graphs**

- **Disc Classic**
  - Home
  - Work

**Tally Box**

- **GRAPH I**
  - Intensity:
    - D: 2
    - I: 1
  - Segment:
    - 7
- **GRAPH II**
  - Intensity:
    - S: 5
  - Segment:
    - 6
- **GRAPH III**
  - Intensity:
    - C: 0
  - Segment:
    - 1
DiSC Assessment Results:
(Areas I scored the highest in:)

**Influence**
- Goal Oriented
- Articulate
- Motivating
- Enthusiastic
- Too trusting
- Influential
- Sociable
- Generous
- Poised
- Vision
- Optimistic
- Team player
- Difficulty finishing things

**Conscientiousness**
- Detail oriented
- Analytical
- Diplomatic
- Careful
- Restrainted
- High standards
- Sensitive
- Mature
- List driven
- Take on other’s work
- May see themselves as better
- Proper
- Professional
- Not good at making a quick decision
- Fear of change
- Afraid of rejection

**Practitioner Pattern:**
- Professional growth (goal)
- Confident
- Sensitive to criticism
- Self-disciplined
- Problem-Solver
- Predictable
- Organized
- Proficient
- High-expectations (self & others)
The results from my DiSC assessment were not surprising. All of the characteristics I listed describe me to some degree. I even took Mike Rutherford’s advice about calling a friend/family member to ask them about my “blind spots”, and I was surprised to hear from them that most of the characteristics do describe me (action step). It was very insightful to hear, and now that I know that is how I present myself and how I am portrayed I can work towards approaching various situations differently.

This assessment allowed me to see my strengths as well as my areas of weaknesses. By learning more about my temperament, I am able to capitalize on my strengths and work on some of my areas of weakness. Knowing my areas of weakness will help me in leadership roles as I will have to look for others to step into areas where I am not as proficient. By analyzing my temperament and recognizing how I interact with others, I now have a new perspective on working with others whose temperament is different than my own; thus, ultimately allowing me to become a more effective leader.

- From my DiSC assessment, I realized that I tend to start tasks and then not finish them or not finish them with as much enthusiasm as I had started them. So, I have been working more diligently at finishing tasks that I start with as much momentum and enthusiasm as I had when I started them (action step).
PICTURES FROM THE FALL RETREAT

Discussing “owning” versus “renting” what we do.

The weekend was full of get to know you games! (Trying to remember everyone’s name. I was Magnificent Melissa.)

My partner, Nancy McLellen, and I introducing ourselves through a skit.

2012-2013 Teachers as Leaders
NOVEMBER SESSION: CISCO

Leading From the Classroom

Cisco
Lawrenceville, Georgia
November 9, 2012

MELISSA VAN SANT

November 09, 2012
LAWRENCEVILLE 3
“If you put too much into evaluating people, you don’t spend time developing people.” ~Mike Rutherford
Culture, Climate and Community: The “invisible forces” that shape the performance and success of an organization.

Culture: (The invisible force field that most profoundly effects peoples’ lives.)

“Strong cultures alter and align the behavior of individuals.” Mike Rutherford.

– Elements: Heroes (how are these people shaping our culture?), events / rituals / ceremonies (What are we communicating as important?).

– “Dead Bush” Phenomenon- “To improve a school, you must be an insider with the eyes of an outsider.” ~Mike Rutherford. We must make the invisible visible in order to create change.

~Cast of characters that influence the organization (priests, storytellers, whisperers, gossips, spies, cabals, saboteurs, and members). How are they developing the behavior of others?

“In order to change the substance….change its elements”
~Mike Rutherford
Reflection/Action Steps:

Reflection-We must look at the culture, climate, and community of our school and our own classroom to evaluate how these components are shaping the performance and success of our school/classroom.

- I need to assess the physical setting of classroom/school- How have I altered the setting to be inviting or what does the physical environment say about us as a school/classroom?
- I need to ask open ended questions- What do outsiders/students say about the culture of our school/classroom? How are strangers/students greeted?
- I need to evaluate how my/our heroes, events, and rituals communicating what I/we value? Are there ceremonies that we do that may not communicate our core mission and vision? Are we doing these events/rituals just because we always have?

Action Steps:
- I will have someone walk through my room on a regular basis and look for “Dead Bushes”. I will also look for “Dead Bushes” throughout the school.
- I will ask parents and other individuals who enter the school to provide feedback as to the climate/culture our school portrays. I will even ask my students about how they feel within the classroom?
- I reviewed some of our classroom rituals/ceremonies and got rid of a few and incorporated others that I felt would help to better create a sense of community within my classroom.
- I will encourage others in the school to look at their rituals/ceremonies/events and determine if they are really communicating what they value.
We must become CHANGE AGENTS within our school!

**“Leadership is taking a vessel where it would not drift on its own.”**

~Mike Rutherford

To help aid in the change efforts, we, as teacher leaders, need to:

1. Manage everyone’s energy for change

2. Change peoples’ beliefs, attitudes, and values

   - In order to change people’s attitudes/believes, we, as leaders, sometimes need to provide epiphanies

3. Create new habits

   - “Sow a thought, reap an act. Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny.”

   ~Anonymous

   - Individuals may hit a “valley of despair”, but with an accountability system, the change will become a habit and performance will enhance.
Reflection:
-I need to look at effective ways to become a change agent in my school.
-I need to provide experiences for my students and colleagues to change their beliefs and attitudes, which will then ultimately improve our school's culture, climate and sense of community.
-EVERYONE’S actions (verbal and nonverbal) affect the culture, climate and community within a school. We all need to work together to create a positive change.

Action:
-I asked my students how they think we can better create a sense of community within our classroom in order to change the climate of my classroom.
-I have begun to greet my students at the door daily and let them know I am glad they are in my classroom.
-I am more mindful of the role I play in my school and how that can affect the climate of the school.
-I am working towards providing epiphanies for others.
JANUARY SESSION: GRAYSON TECHNICAL
Our core is Teaching and Learning! There are two approaches to developing one’s technical core:

**Needs Assessment Approach**- focuses on our weakness and making us better at them. This approach tries to make individual’s become “well rounded”.

**Talent Based Approach**- focuses on one’s strengths, skills, and talents.

Why the talent based approach is best:

- **Talent** = 50% --- 50%  
  (50% developed) (50% room for improvement)  
- **Non-Talent** = 85% --- 15%  
  (85% developed) --- (15% room for improvement)  

We must capitalize on one’s natural talents and then learn to manage around one’s non-talents. Taking the needs assessment approach to developing one’s technical core uses up a lot of energy and resources for only a 15% improvement; therefore, more resources need to be placed on the talent based approach where there is a possibility for a 50% improvement.
Based on extensive teacher observations, there were 23 themes that were seen in the most successful classroom.

An artisan is part scientist, part artist, and part skilled laborer.

Four Artisan themes that need to be focused on due to being most effective for accelerating recall and transfer are:

- **Connections**-establishing mental link between current and past learning.
- **Personal Relevance**-embed curriculum into contexts that are relevant to students’ immediate need and survival.
- **Locale Memory**- organizing information around student’s “locale”
- **Mental Models**-creating structure for student learning by using models, sensory experiences, images, and etcetera.
My group and I created an acrostic poem using the word Artisan to reflect on our learning as a result of this module!
-As a result of this module, I learned that I need to focus on enhancing my strengths and then learn to manage my weaknesses. I think a lot of times we place too much focus on our weaknesses and trying to become better at things we are not skilled at doing; however, after learning that we can only improve by 15% on a weakness proves it is not a good use of time/resources. I think that we, as educators, should look at helping each other perfect our strengths. I believe that I would be more effective if I leaned more on my strengths throughout the day.

- Out of the 23 themes found in successful classrooms, I was able to identify connections, personal relevance, enriched environments and congruency as areas of strengths within my classroom.

-I need to specifically work at incorporating the locale memory and mental models more into my classroom as they are considered “optimizers” that will help me to enhance speed, recall, and transfer of information.
- Focus on strengths and manage weaknesses!

- Look for professional development opportunities in my areas of strength so that I can further develop those areas.

- Ask others to help me manage my weaknesses. I will find a partner whose talents compliment mine.

- Specifically plan before a lesson how I am going to incorporate the four optimizer themes (connections, mental images, personal relevance, and locale memory).

- Make sure to think through misconceptions that students may have when learning new information and plan in advance how to help students avoid these misconceptions.
FEBRUARY SESSION:
GEORGIA GWINNETT COLLEGE

Leading From the Classroom
Georgs Gwinnett College
Lawrenceville, Georgia
February 21, 2013

Teachers As Leaders
February 21, 2013
“What should drive us is student success (what our students know), not data. Teachers need to be data informed, not data driven.” ~Mike Rutherford

“The most important things in life are not measureable by data/numbers. For example, love, friendship, and motivation.” ~Mike Rutherford

-numbers ≠ information ≠ wisdom

-In this module, I was encouraged to not rely solely on data to determine student understanding as it is more important to understand what causes learning to happen for my individual students. As a teacher, I must be asking individual students about their learning so that I can understand individual misunderstandings/misconceptions (this will not come from raw data). I must realize that data can never truly convey the whole story about the child; therefore, I must be aware of its limitations and be cautious when using it.
INFORMATION PROCESSING MODEL

Sensory Register - The human brain receives 40,000 chunks of information per second (subconscious level).

Working Memory - Limited capacity - Students (2nd grade) only handle about 2 chunks of information per second (conscious level).

Long-Term Memory - Information moves into long-term memory and hopefully makes connections with previous learning.

“Intelligence is not linked to how many ‘chunks’ one has, but the size of the ‘chunks’ and the number of connections between ‘chunks.” ~Mike Rutherford
3 LEVELS OF LEARNING

1. Exposure Learning - Students are in the classroom, but not engaged. The information is in sensory register mode, and has not made it to the working memory. If it does make it to the working memory, the information goes straight to the decay valve.

2. Engaged Learning - Students are participating and actively engaged. The student has moved the information to the working memory. The information may move into the long-term memory but it will not make strong connections to other learning that is in the long-term memory. This stage will require a lot of repetition and review of learning.

3. Connected Learning - Students are beyond level 2 and are now processing information into their long-term memory and making strong relevant connections with other chunks of information.
Reflection

• WOW! Second graders’ working memory can only process 2 (plus or minus 2) chunks of information per second. Therefore, I really need to slow down and purposefully chunk information in meaningful ways in order for my students to make connections between new learning and previously learned information. I also need to purposefully plan for ways to focus students’ attention on the learning activity so they will be more receptive to information they are receiving.

• Students need to be exposed to more level 3 learning opportunities so they will not need to spend as much time reviewing previous learned concepts and so that they can more readily transfer new learning to previous learning.

Application

• I plan to utilize the invitation to learn strategy that was shared, in which students are asked if they are going to pay attention or not to the upcoming lesson.

• I am also going to take more time to specifically plan for level three learning opportunities as well as plan ways to make connections to prior learning more purposeful and transparent for the students.

“A little bit of level 3 learning goes a long way!”

~Mike Rutherford
Reflection Activity-Dupo Blocks

I really enjoyed this reflection activity. It will be a great activity for me to utilize in order to get all my students actively involved in the reflection process. It will also allow me to expose students to new verb forms as well as academic vocabulary. I definitely plan to utilize it in my own classroom.
MARCH SESSION:
GWINNETT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
“Leaders must know how to connect with their people and capitalize on everyone’s strengths.”
~Dr. Elmore.
LEADING FROM THE CLASSROOM:

“We are having to teach the generation iY students...where life is pretty much about ‘I’.”
~Dr. Tim Elmore

Generation iY SCENE

Their world is full of:  They tend to assume:

- Speed  slow is bad
- Convenience  hard is bad
- Entertainment  boring is bad
- Nurture  risk is bad
- Entitlement  labor is bad

Society has created a generation of children who:
1. RISK too little
2. Are RESCUED too quickly
3. RAVED about too easily
1. Chess and Checkers - Mediocre teachers play checkers and see everyone as the same, while excellent teachers play chess and see the unique strengths and weaknesses of each of the individual students and tailor their “moves” (instruction) to meet each student’s needs.

There are three types of students:
1. Driver - strong willed; natural leaders
2. Diplomat - peace-makers; want harmony in the class, and seek cooperation
3. Dreamer - visionary; want to be provided with options
2. Windows and Mirrors- If we share our own personal stories and provide a window into our own lives, we are in essence placing a mirror in the hands of our students to reflect on their own learning, to process their learning and to apply their learning.

~“People do what they see.”
-With this new generation of students who are entering our classroom who have grown up with the mentality that it is all about them, we, as educators, are really going to have to change the way that we reach these students in order to provide them with the most optimal learning experiences.

-From the chess/checkers image, I was reminded that I must truly know my students’ strengths, triggers (what motivates them), personalities, and learning styles so that I can effectively provide each individual student with optimal learning experiences that will actively engage him/her in the learning experience.

    -Action-I would like to take more time one-on-one with my students throughout the year to really get to know them better. I plan to ask them more about what motivates them/engages them.

-From the windows and mirrors image, I realized that I need to be more transparent when I teach and focus on becoming an effective communicator whose main focus is on the students and putting them first. I need to continue to create a safe environment where students feel encouraged/safe to take risks. My main goal should be to complete the students, not the message.

    -Action-I have opened up more with my students in regards to my own struggles. I have let them know that it is okay to make mistakes and not be perfect at everything. I have discussed with them the importance of learning from their mistakes and always trying their hardest.
Superintendents in attendance: Dr. Robert Avossa (Fulton County Schools), Dr. L.C. Evans (Forsyth County Schools), Dr. Geye Hamby (Buford City Schools), Dr. Michael Hinojosa (Cobb County Schools), William Schofield (Hall County Schools), and J. Alvin Wilbanks (Gwinnet County Public Schools).

Reflection: This discussion was very insightful into the current issues and challenges that the Metro Atlanta Educational Community faces in regards to teacher evaluation, Common Core, budget, and assessment. We were given valuable insight into becoming successful teacher leaders. The most valuable piece of advice I took away from this discussion was that as a teacher leader I need to focus on the positives and become a change agent within my school.

“As leaders, we need to make a case for change.”~ Dr. Robert Avossa
APRIL SESSION:
GWINNETT ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE CENTER
MODULE 8: LEADING UP
(MIKE RUTHERFORD)
Atlanta Mission’s Mission Statement:

• Atlanta Mission transforms, through Christ, the lives of those facing homelessness.

Atlanta Mission is the city’s largest and longest-running provider of services to homeless men, women and children. Established in 1938, Atlanta Mission provides emergency shelter, temporary shelter, recovery programming, job attainment and transitional housing for more than 950 men, women and children daily.
Values:

Shine

_We recognize_ that the deepest need of anyone is a relationship with Christ, therefore we celebrate steps of courageous faith.

Serve

_We believe_ we are responsible for the time, talent and treasures that are entrusted to us by God. By becoming humble servants to those in need we believe God changes lives, including our own.

Pour

_We invest_ in the spiritual, personal and professional development of people, restoring and equipping them to intentional living. We believe that in empowering and coaching people towards excellence, we impact the quality of all we do.

Transform

_We believe_ sustainable life change starts with the redeeming power of Christ and is best accomplished through life on life relationships.

SERVICE PROJECT: THE ATLANTA MISSION 5K
On Saturday, January 26th, my group and I helped Atlanta Mission with their annual 5K that they do to help raise money to help end homelessness in Atlanta. We arrived in Atlanta at 5:30 am and immediately got to work helping to set-up for the 5K. Our team worked together to set-up tables, sign individuals up for the 5K, hand out runner’s bibs before the race, and then distribute shirts/bags at the end of the race.

It was truly a wonderful experience working together as a group to help support the efforts of Atlanta Mission. Even though we only worked for a few hours, I know our volunteering helped make an impact on the lives of many homeless individuals in Atlanta. Many of the individuals who actually stay at the Atlanta Mission participated in the 5K. It was very moving to see the smiles and the sense of hope in their lives due to the support they have received from the Atlanta Mission.
SERVICE PROJECT PICTURES:
These are two books that I read throughout the course of this program. Both books provided great insight into being an effective leader.
As teachers, we are at the forefront of ensuring student learning. It is our job to make decisions that will directly impact our students’ success. In order to do this, we must ensure that the curriculum we are teaching is accessible to all students, students are given opportunities to be engaged in optimal learning experiences, and students are provided with a safe environment to take risks. By encouraging and fostering teacher leaders, I believe we will be able to help ensure that these optimal learning experiences are continuing to occur in the classroom. I believe that teacher leaders are constantly looking for ways to improve their own teaching style in order to enhance student learning within their own classrooms. As a teacher leader, one not only strives to promote change within his/her own classroom, but also strives to promote change within the classrooms of his/her peers through sharing with other teachers what they have learned and through helping to support other teachers in promoting student learning within their own classrooms. Teacher leadership from effective and successful teachers will not only allow other teachers to learn and grow, but student success will be promoted throughout the school. If change only occurs in the classroom of a few, then student learning is not at the forefront of the school as a whole. Teacher leaders are also important to the classroom as they stay up to date on current issues that are affecting education and as they strive to help educate others about the issues. Through informing others, teacher leaders are able to help stakeholders in education take educated stances on ensuring that student success is a priority in the classroom. Therefore, teacher leadership is vital as it encourages others to take a proactive approach to teaching and helps ensure that positive change is occurring not only within the classroom of a teacher leader, but ultimately within all classrooms in a school as we, as teachers, strive to promote student learning.
EXIT LEADERSHIP ESSAY

I must begin by saying that this journey has been one I will never forget. From the excellent speakers, to the valuable friendships I have made, I have learned a lot about myself as a leader. So, how has my idea of teacher leadership changed as a result of Teachers as Leaders? As John Maxwell stated in *Developing the Leader Within You*, “leadership is developed, not discovered (p. IX).” I could not agree more with this quote. I have definitely developed as a leader throughout this course as a result of listening to key speakers and through engaging in professional readings on the topic of leadership. I would say that my idea of teacher leadership has only changed in the sense that I have enhanced my understanding of how one develops into an effective teacher leader. I, first and foremost, have learned that in order to be an effective leader, I must not only have a clear vision and mission, but I must also be able to effectively cast that vision in a way that inspires individuals that I work with to want to join in on my vision. I have also learned that leaders do not have to be good at everything and that they are going to have weakness; therefore, as a teacher leader I need to focus on my strengths and learn how to manage my weaknesses by enlisting others on my team to step into those areas of weakness. Teacher leaders also need to understand their role in being change agents not only within their own classrooms, but also in regards to their school. As a change agent, I can profoundly help to shape the culture, climate and community of my school in a way that will immensely enhance student achievement. Last of all, I was reminded of the importance of not only being a change agent, but also the importance of being willing to change myself. I believe that in order to be an effective leader, I must continue to be involved in various professional development opportunities that will enhance my effectiveness as a teacher leader.