Re-Imagining Transformative Leadership in Teacher Education

edited by

Ann E. Lopez | Elsie Lindy Olan

Re-Imagining Transformative Leadership in Teacher Education

A volume in
Transformative Pedagogies in Teacher Education
Ann E. Lopez and Elsie Lindy Olan, *Series Editors*

This page intentionally left blank.

Re-Imagining Transformative Leadership in Teacher Education

edited by

Ann E. Lopez
University of Toronto

Elsie Lindy Olan
University of Central Florida

Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS

ABOUT THE SERIES

Transformative Pedagogies for Teacher Education is a book series that features the work of teacher educators across the globe that are engaging in alternative pedagogies grounded in social justice to meet the needs of students. This series is about praxis—connecting theory to educational practices that practitioners, scholars, and activists can draw on as they seek to create meaningful and lasting change in the lives of students. The research, experiences, and practices highlighted in this series foreground the voices and experiences of teacher educators who are working with teacher candidates and in classrooms; all on a journey to create more equitable practices no matter their contexts. We live in a world where borders are shrinking and people are on the move. As teacher educators, we must vow to include the richness that this diversity brings to education. Each author is committed to the cause and to the goals of equity, guided by their own experiences and contexts. The teacher educators who contributed to this series are unique in their own way, each sharing narratives and experiences that inform their journey. Their research reflects new and different ways to prepare teacher candidates to enter classrooms and schools that have vastly changed over the last 20 years. It is our hope that this project will encourage not only teacher educators and teacher candidates, but also educational leaders and policy makers to seek out alternative approaches to education to address the needs of students who have traditionally been marginalized.

Transformative pedagogy empowers students to critically examine beliefs, values, and knowledge with the aim of developing new epistemologies, center multiple ways of knowing, and develop a sense of critical

consciousness and agency. Singer and Pezone urge teacher educators not to become pessimistic and overwhelmed by societal and educational challenges, but seek out ways to engage in transformative actions. Grounded in the work of Dewey and Freire, the works in this series take a critical approach to education. Freire's (1970) pedagogical aim was to ensure that the oppressed had educational experiences that allowed them to take control over their own lives. It is important for teacher candidates and teacher educators to keep this at the forefront of their work given the current complexities of schooling. Freire believed that education should be a vehicle for hope for society at large. In this endeavor both educators and students should explicitly challenge social injustice and oppression. According to Freire, knowledge emerges through invention and reinvention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other. The authors seek to enact teacher education in the traditions of Dewey (1923) who suggests the ideals of democratic education must translate into experiential learning and pragmatic actions combined with reflective thinking. If we are to advance education then theory must be connected to practice.

By examining our practices as teacher educators we engage in continuous learning that enables new knowledge to emerge in the hope of creating change in education and society. As Freire argues the role of the teacher is to ask questions by engaging in problem-posing methodologies, support students to discover new ideas, value their life experiences, and include prior experiences as the basis for new academic understanding and social action, a process he refers to as conscientization.

Different and alternative transformative pedagogical approaches weave through this series. Through the frame of liberatory pedagogy (Freire, 1970), that focuses on raising critical consciousness and recognizes that education is political; culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lucas & Villegas, 2008 which argues for the cultural references of students to be represented in all aspects of learning; participatory action research (Reason & Hillary, 2001) that captures the voices and experiences of urban youths and advances practical knowledge in pursuit of social action; case studies (Merseth, 1994; Shulman, 1992) that bridge theory to practice divide; the voices of teacher educators working on the border; and disruptive pedagogy (Lee, 2014) authors share narratives, co-laboring with the students sharing experiences in pursuit of teacher education to transform education and social change. Teacher educators share not only their aspirations for education, but also their vulnerabilities on the journey of liberatory education.

We hope that different approaches and pedagogies highlighted in this series will advance the work of educators committed to social justice and more equitable outcomes for students who are at the margins, a better

society, and a more democratic world. Indeed this is the aim of transformative education.

REFERENCES

Dewey, J. (1923). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education.* New York, NY: MacMillan.

Freire, P. (1970). Cultural action and conscientization. *Harvard Educational Review, 40*(3), 452–477.

Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106–116.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465–491.

Lucas, T., Villegas, A. M., & Freedson-Gonzalez, M. (2008). Linguistically responsive teacher education: Preparing classroom teachers to teach English language learners. *Journal of Teacher Education, 59*(4), 361–373.

Merseth, K. K. (1994). Cases and case method in teacher education. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of teacher education* (2nd ed.; pp. 722–744). New York, NY: MacMillan.

Reason, P., & Hilary, B. (2001). Introduction: Inquiry and participation in search of a world *research* (pp. 1–14). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Shulman, L. S. (1992). Toward a pedagogy of cases. In J. L. Shulman (Ed.), *Case method in teacher education* (pp. 1–32). New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

This page intentionally left blank.

SERIES FOREWORD

Christine Sleeter

Transformative Pedagogies for Teacher Education arrives at a time when such a book is not only welcomed, but also much needed. Currently teacher educators who are committed to social justice face numerous challenges.

For one thing, all over the world student populations continue to diversify as migrants seek economic opportunity and refugees flee violence. As a result, educators struggle to figure out how to teach their increasingly diverse students in countries ranging from Greece and Italy, to South Korea, from Australia and New Zealand, to India. For example, in the United States, by 2013, public school students were 50% of color; as this book went to print, there was no racial/ethnic student majority (NCES, 2016), and in the context of growing economic inequality, a majority of students came from families living in poverty (Layton, 2015).

The growing diversity of students, often enmeshed within growing economic inequality, presents urgent challenges that go beyond attempts to frame policy. In Greece, for example, the national law promoting cross-cultural education uses vague wording that allows for a wide range of interpretations, while normalizing segregation and obsessing on cultural differences (Mitakidou, 2011). Canada, which national policy frames as bilingual

xi

and multicultural, grapples with its foundation in settler colonialism, and its casting of differences in terms of language and culture but not race (Haque, 2014). European Union policies that purport to include Roma students often fail to impact how students are actually treated in schools and classrooms (Miskovic & Curcic, 2016).

For teachers and teacher educators, multiculturalism as lived out in schools and communities presents urgent challenges, particularly in contexts of backlash against immigration. For example, Eksner and Cheema (2017) report interviews with Muslim youth who grew up in Germany where currently about 5% of the population are members of ethnic communities that identify as majority Muslim. The authors write,

> Youths marked as Muslim experience intersectional "othering" as being marked as (first, second, third) immigrants, ethnocultural "others" and because of their assumed religious membership. "Othering" of youths marked as Muslim is based on certain visible markers (e.g., phenotype or name) and works via the ascription of both religious membership (i.e., being born into a Muslim family) and religious orientation (i.e., de facto beliefs), both of which are discursively connected to conservative and radical political and cultural beliefs and practices. (p. 161)

Their "othering" is underscored by media representations that stereotype and oversimplify the students' communities, and implicitly link Islam with terrorism.

For teacher educators, the question becomes: How do we prepare teachers to respond proactively and constructively to their students, given larger contexts of difference and power within which children and youth live? And how do we do this work in contexts where neoliberalism has increased the privatization of education, policies have de-professionalized teaching and shortened teacher education (e.g., Zeichner, 2008), and testing regimes narrowly constrain what students are to learn?

While this book arrived during a time of challenges and changes, it also arrives at a propitious time of growing knowledge about culturally responsive and social justice teaching, as well as work on behalf of schools as sites for liberation and justice. For example, in the United States, the research on the academic and social impact of ethnic studies on children and youth (Sleeter, 2011) has been instrumental in supporting grassroots mobilization in numerous school districts to institutionalize ethnic studies teaching in schools. Conferences are regularly held in which teachers and teacher educators share progressive and activist practices and learn from each other. Examples include the National Association for Multicultural Education and the Teacher Activist Groups in the United States, and the Korean Association for Multicultural Education's annual conference. Indigenous communities in many parts of the world are reconstituting education as

tribal-centered and aimed toward cultural reclamation, empowerment, and self-determination (e.g., McCarty & Lee, 2014).

Transformative Pedagogies for Teacher Education resonates well with Milner's (2008) extrapolation of several core principles from social movements to the work of transforming teacher education. First, Milner writes that activists must establish a common agenda and vision. Social justice minded teacher educators and their collaborators must develop enough conceptual convergence that despite differences, they can work as a unified collective. *Transformative Pedagogies for Teacher Education* represents an important part of that process of developing a common collective vision. Even though the chapters speak to various innovations within different teacher education programs, they are similarly anchored in a vision that values differences, dialog across those differences, critical analysis of unequal power relations, and the potential of teachers learning to work in collaboration with their students.

Second, Milner argues that social movement work takes account of contexts, realities, and resources. There is no one formula; local work is necessary. This principle is beautifully embodied in this book, in which authors speak from their own work with programs in specific contexts, while sharing insights that others may draw on, learn from, and perhaps adapt.

Third, Milner (2008) points out that movements connect "pro-action, re-action, and prediction" (p. 340) using evidence of impacts of past practices and trends to make a case for changes for the future. Many of the chapters in this book not only describe innovative practices, but also report data on the transformative impact of their work, data that can guide future developments.

Finally, movements involve persistent long-term work. In that sense, the series in which *Transformative Pedagogies for Teacher Education* appears represents numerous teacher educators coming together to dialogue, share strategies, and draw strength and inspiration from each other for the long haul of transforming teacher education. I commend this book to readers, who, by engaging with it, become part of the dialogue and ongoing collective transformational work.

REFERENCES

Eksner, H. J., & Cheema, S. N. (2017). "Who here is a real German?" German Muslim youths, othering, and education. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *Citizenship education and global migration* (pp. 161–183). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Haque, E. (2014). Multiculturalism within a bilingual framework: A retrospective. *Canadian Ethnic Studies, 46*(2), 119–125.

Layton, L. (2015, January). Majority of U.S. public schools students are in poverty. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/majority-of-us-public-school-students-are-in-poverty/

McCarty, T. L., & Lee, T. S. (2014). Critically culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and Indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*(1), 101–124.

Milner, H. R., IV. (2008). Critical race theory and interest convergence as analytic tools in teacher education policies and practices. *Journal of Teacher Education, 59*(4), 332–346.

Miskovic, M., & Curcic, S. (2016). Beyond inclusion: Reconsidering policies, curriculum, and pedagogy for Roma students. *International Journal of Multicultural Education, 18*(2), 1–14.

Mitakidou, S. (2011). Cross-cultural education in Greece: History and prospects. In C. A. Grant & A. Portera (Eds.), *Intercultural and multicultural education* (pp. 83–97). New York, NY: Routledge.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2016, May). Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools. *The Condition of Education.* Retrieved from nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cge.asp

Sleeter, C. E. (2011). *The academic and social value of ethnic studies.* Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Zeichner, K. M. (2008). *Teacher education and the struggle for social justice.* New York, NY: Routledge.

PREFACE

Ann E. Lopez
Elsie Lindy Olan

We are living in challenging times. Events in 2020 have brought issues of social justice and equity to the forefront of educational, social, and political discourse locally and globally. The killing of George Floyd an unarmed Black man in the United States sparked worldwide condemnation and the Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare systemic inequities in health care, education, and all aspects of society. People all across the globe are rising up in protest to call for greater justice for oppressed people, the naming and challenging of anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, and redirecting of resources from policing to community services. This book focuses on transformative leadership in teacher education. As Shields (2018) suggests transformative leadership is an approach to leadership that is engaged, active, and courageous. Leadership at all levels of society including schools and classrooms has never been more important than the current moment in which we are living.

Educators play an important role in challenging the rhetoric of division and hate, while offering action and possibilities for change. This is what transformative leadership is all about. Teachers have had to rethink

teaching and learning during the pandemic in response to new realities where students are engaged in education in a multiplicity of ways. As new arrangements are made to control an unknown virus, teachers have been called on to do more while at the same time responding to the demands of an increasingly diverse student population. The role of teachers in addressing inequities in schools and advancing teaching and learning undergirded by critical frameworks and practices is crucial in meeting the educational outcomes of an increasingly diverse student population. Inequities in schooling and education that impact the learning outcomes of students persist globally. All stakeholders in education are implicated in this effort and none more so than teachers who play an important role not only in teaching and learning, but leadership as well.

Schools have always played an important role in the social and political discourse and the times in which we are living are no different. Teachers, students, teacher educators, along with communities all have an important role to play in the pursuit of equity and justice in society. This volume is about teaching and learning that critically examines education and offers different perspectives on ways that teacher educators can engage with teacher candidates and have meaningful impact on the educational outcomes of students. The volume is grounded in critical approaches drawing on the work of Freire and other critical thinkers who argue for the critiquing of power in schooling and the development of practice that empowers educators to transform how they teach.

Transformative pedagogies call for the development of students as critical thinkers, participatory and active thinkers, and creators of alternative possibilities of social reality (Nagda, Gurin, & Lopez, 2003). As societies become more diverse, it is imperative that teachers are prepared to engage with students from different communities in ways that enhance their learning and value their experiences which requires leadership. Authors expand on ways to connect theory to practice, drawing on research as well as their own experiences. They wrestle with challenging issues in teacher education, posit new epistemologies and examples from practice that others can learn from. As many emerging economies seek to disrupt colonial legacies particularly in education, practical pedagogical examples that disrupt power in education and respond to sociocultural and political realities, teacher educators in those contexts will also find this volume useful.

The goals of this volume and approach are worth reaffirming. The main goals are to

- highlight possibilities for action in the preparation of teachers in increasingly diverse and changing contexts;
- see schooling as a conduit in support of global diversity and competence;

- support teacher educators on their journey to engage in teacher education that is socially just, culturally responsive, and respond critically to the growing and diverse needs of students and communities; and
- provide a platform where teacher educators' empirical research, as well as their lived experiences in teaching and learning contexts can inform education systems, policies, and practices.

The approach of this volume is to provide space where teacher educators and others who work directly with children can share their stories of success and learn from the challenges on their journey. We all recognize the need to move beyond theorizing and offer practical suggestions to teachers that will inform teaching, learning, and leading in meaningful ways. Teachers and teacher educators must also do their part by engaging in critical self-reflection about what they need to learn, unlearn, relearn, and reframe in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. In each chapter authors from varying contexts draw on research and experience to examine and conceptualize ways that teacher educators and teacher leaders can engage in critical work. They present frameworks of transformative pedagogies in all aspects of schooling and education that others can learn from and in doing so re-imagine leadership in transformative ways in teacher education. Educators are calling for change in schooling as we know it; curriculum, pedagogy, resources used in the classroom, teacher education, and school leadership (Lopez, 2020). These implementations, collaborations, discussions, and practices inform transformative leadership in their educational and school settings and beyond. This book about praxis will be of benefit for all those involved in education.

REFERENCES

Lopez, A. E. (2020). Reflection: Harnessing energy of social movement for lasting change. *Multicultural Perspectives, 22*(3), 115–117.

Nagda, B. A., Gurin, P., & Lopez, G. (2003). Transformative pedagogy for democracy and social justice. *Race and Ethnicity in Education, 2*(3), 165–191.

Shields, C. M. (2018). *Transformative leadership in education: Equitable and socially just change in an uncertain and complex world.* New York, NY: Routledge.

This page intentionally left blank.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This series represents a vision realized. As we complete Book 3, it has been an honor and a privilege to collaborate with so many amazing educators across the globe. This series is dedicated to educators, teacher educators and all teachers across the globe. The books in this series would not have been possible without the contributions of dedicated teacher educators, for which we, Elsie and I, are grateful. Their contributions have made this journey a rich learning experience. It is our hope that educators will find all the books in the series useful as they seek to engage in transformative teaching, learning and leading to improve learning outcomes for students.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Natalia Ortiz for her artistic vision and design of the book covers which we hope captures the imagination of educators everywhere. We thank George Johnson and the entire team at Information Age Publishing for their feedback, patience, and guidance throughout this project. Your support has been invaluable. Thanks also to Desiree Sylvestre, doctoral candidate and graduate assistant at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto for her assistance with Book 3. Thanks to our families for their support throughout this process. Ann would like to acknowledge her grandmother who is her inspiration, who taught her to challenge injustice everywhere, and to find joy in learning.

Our hope is that researchers and practitioners will find the books in the series useful as they seek to connect theory to practice through meaningful and transformative actions. We have co-labored on this project with a sense

of common purpose and conviction as educators seeking to create radical change undergirded by a Freirean philosophy that is learner-centered and liberatory. We hope the books in this series will inspire and enrich the educational process and journey of educators across the globe.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVISM

A Conceptual Critical Re-Imagining

Ann E. Lopez

It takes leadership and courage to engage in activism. Leadership though a contested term everyone agrees is relevant in almost all aspects of life. Institutions and countries need leaders to guide them and when things go wrong or are not going well, many point to the lack of leadership. Few proponents appear to agree on what leadership is, yet many insist that it is inherently good and urgently needed (Liu, 2020). Leadership over the years has been described and theorized in many ways, with varying approaches. Leadership has been promoted by scholars and practitioners and elevated in status (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000). Different forms of Leadership have evolved over the years and have led to a plethora of leadership theories. Some of these leadership theories have been popular in education. For example, distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2009), instructional leadership (Blase & Blase, 2004; Hallinger, 2003), and more recently social justice leadership (Jean-Marie, Brooks, & Normore, 2009; Theoharis, 2007), culturally responsive leadership (Beacham, 2011; Lopez, 2016), and

1

decolonizing leadership (Battiste, 2013; Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2013; Lopez, 2019, 2021; Lopez & Barnett 2020). Liu (2020) argues that leadership in society is constructed. In other words, people characterize leadership, negotiate and enact how and what they call leadership. Liu suggests further that the "social constructionist view of leadership is compelling because despite the preceding eight decades of research, we do not appear to be any closer to clarifying what leadership is" (p. 8). This definitional "vacuity" of leadership as Liu calls it means that it allows those with power to decide which interpretation of leadership matters most.

From the moment education was thought of as important in society, teachers have been an integral part of public education. Teachers' roles have traditionally been theorized and discussed within teaching and learning contexts focused on pedagogy and curriculum. While teachers have taken on leadership roles in their classrooms, schools, and communities; research on teacher leadership has been criticized for being atheoretical and not given enough attention within leadership discourse (Murphy, 2005; Wenner & Campbell, 2017; York-Barr & Dyke, 2004). Teachers have been at the forefront of the fight for justice, challenging inequities and advocating for social change. Teachers through their advocacy engage in school leadership through teaching and leading for social justice (Bradley-Levine, 2018).

The possibility and potential of teacher leadership remains central to educational change (Harris & Jones, 2018; Harris & Murjs, 2005). The importance of teachers to students' well-being and educational achievement cannot be overstated. Teachers are in contact with students more than any other group involved in schooling through pedagogy and delivery of curriculum. Critical scholars argue that teachers should be involved in the creation of policies that impact their daily work and their leadership role foregrounded in education and schooling. Teachers are one of the most important resources in achieving improved educational outcomes for students (Barber, Chijioke, & Mourshed, 2010). The notion of the teacher leader as the driver of change at the school and system level has been the focus of contemporary analysis and discourse (Lieberman, Campbell, & Yashkina 2017; Bradley-Levine, 2018). Transformative teachers embrace beliefs and behaviors that lead to changes in the educational environment, their own professional and personal development and improved student achievement (Tillman, 2005).

Teachers have a long history of political, social, and educational activism and in recent years have been joining social movements seeking change and challenging inequities in education. Teachers are central to fight to create lasting and sustainable change in the lives of students who have traditionally been marginalized by the education system. While leadership remains an elusive and contested concept, teachers have taken on leadership roles through their activism and advocacy on behalf of students (Bradley-Levine

& Zainulabdin, 2020). They are well positioned to address inequities within their classrooms and schools because they work closely with students and interact with key stakeholders, such as parents and administrators. When teachers develop an identity as change agents and activists, this can have powerful implications for how they frame their work and, ultimately creating more equitable schooling experiences for students.

Teachers have a long history of activism pursuing alternative ways of teaching and learning that address systemic inequities which have led to Black, indigenous, and racialized people (BIRP) students not achieving their full potential and being pushed out of school. This has led to new pedagogical approaches such as culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995), anti-racist education (Dei, 1996; Kendi, 2019), abolitionist pedagogy (Love, 2019), decolonizing education (Battiste, 2013; Tuck & Yang, 2012), and other critical approaches. For a long time in education only those in administration and formal roles were seen as engaging in leadership. As teachers have taken on varying roles in addition to direct teaching within the schools, such as work within the community and the school at large, teacher leadership has taken on greater significance. In the struggle for greater justice, teachers have been active in their classrooms, schools, and communities challenging White supremacy, racism, and other forms of oppression. This kind of activism takes courage and leadership. This chapter emanated from my research and work with teachers and school leaders in public education in Southern Ontario as well as the extant literature on teacher leadership. The teachers and school leaders in the research who saw themselves as advocates and activists undergirded their work with a critical educational philosophy that involved advocating for students, in particular those marginalized in the education system, engaged in critical self-reflection, challenged the scripted and Eurocentric curricula, and created space for agency and action. In this chapter, I examine teacher leadership and activism and the interplay between these two concepts within current contemporary social and political contexts and movements for social and political change. I explore this relationship and how it informs teachers' work, and in particular those engaging in critical education agendas that disrupt White supremacy, anti-Black racism and all forms of oppression, marginalization, and exclusion in education and schooling. To achieve this, I first present an overview of teacher leadership and its conceptual origins and where the field stands today. Next, I examine notions of teacher activism, and lastly, I present a framework that seeks to capture the interplay between teacher leadership and activism as a possible way for teachers to engage in critical education praxis. This framework situates activism within teacher leadership discourse and practice.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Leadership is second only to teaching in impact on the educational outcome of students (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Most teachers who take on leadership roles have not traditionally seen themselves as leaders in the traditional sense, where leadership was seen to describe those in formal and administrative roles. Hunzicker (2017) examined how teachers emerge as teacher leaders and found that the progression from teacher to teacher leader is a gradual, recursive process through which teachers expand their influence over time. The defined position of "teacher leader" is, increasingly, serving as a cornerstone of a well-functioning school system, especially given the ever-evolving demands of the education profession (Fennell, 2014; Silva et al., 2000). Teacher leadership is a broad concept that has been and continues to be studied and practiced in many different ways, remains relatively under researched, and conceptualizations remain varied. York-Barr and Duke (2004) conducted an extensive review of the teacher leadership literature review and found among other things the literature "largely atheoretical" (p. 291). Wenner and Campbell (2017) built on the work of York-Barr and Duke and examined the teacher leadership literature within contemporary contexts. They found that the need for literature on teacher leadership is still great, particularly in light of the increased interest in teacher leadership as a key component of school reform. There was also a lack of attention given to the critical issues of equity and diversity within the teacher leadership literature which has implications for future research. The role that teacher leaders play in shaping issues of equity and diversity in classrooms, schools, and communities continues to be an important question in teacher leadership research and discourse (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). While some researchers restrict teacher leadership to the adoption of official roles such as instructional coaches, department heads, or committee chairs, others examine a range of informal leadership tasks (Mangin & Stoelinger, 2008).

As York-Barr and Duke (2005) suggest more research needs to be done in fully understanding the scope and influence of teacher leadership. Within the literature, the concept of teacher leadership is defined in various ways (Harris & Muijs, 2005) and Harris (2005) suggests that there are conflicting and competing definitions of teacher leadership. In the school leadership literature, conceptions of teacher leadership vary from support for principals, mentors, to other teachers (Moir & Bloom, 2003), taking on middle management positions (Gronn, 2000) and instructional leaders focusing on pedagogy (Blase & Blase, 2004), curriculum development (Ogawa, Sandholtz, Martinez-Flores, & Scribner, 2003). In an analysis of 54 empirical studies of teacher leadership conducted between 2004 and 2013, Wenner and Campbell (2017) defined teacher leaders as "teachers who

maintain K–12 classroom-based teaching responsibilities, while also taking on leadership responsibilities outside of the classroom" (p. 7). Angelle and DeHart (2011) offer a definition of teacher leadership that includes sharing knowledge of pedagogy and classroom management with colleagues, willingness to accept leadership opportunities when asked, and routinely stepping beyond required teaching duties to serve students and the school.

Despite widespread research, the meaning of teacher leadership continues to be revised and defined. Recent research has shifted the focus away from formal roles such as department heads and instructional coaches to their ongoing work (Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010). Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, and Hann (2002) took a holistic approach to teacher leadership and argued that teacher leadership facilitates principled action towards achieving whole-school success and that it applies distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth, and adults. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) defined teacher leadership as "teachers who are leaders and lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and influence others towards improved educational practice" (p. 5). Teacher leadership whether defined by positions within the school or the activities and social interactions in which they engage such as curriculum reform, instructional strategies, and pedagogical philosophies can be examined through any or all of these lenses, all of which imply particular ways teachers garner power and exert influence within the school organization (Scribner & Bradley-Levine, 2010).

Silva et al. (2000) suggest that the evolution of teacher leadership in the scholarly discourse highlights four waves. The first wave focused on the educational system itself and provided hierarchical roles for teachers to fulfill taking on responsibilities outside of the classroom, such as a department head, head teacher, master teacher, or union representative. In the second wave, instructional leadership was the dominant form of teacher leadership where teachers lead curriculum and staff development initiatives. This was a continuation of the hierarchical positioning of teachers in schools. The third wave of teacher leadership introduced the notion that teacher leadership is a process within the transformational realm of leadership (Pounder, 2006). Teachers became involved in mentoring and professional development (Frost & Harris, 2003; Silva et al, 2000). Pounder (2006) argues that there is a fourth wave of teacher leadership which he describes as "transformational classroom leadership," where students are involved with teachers in creating and maintaining a shared culture of responsibility for learning and leadership within the classroom. Teachers are at the forefront of the fight against neoliberal educational policies that are gutting public education all across the Western world and taking to the streets for greater justice. This fight to defend public education some might argue is a fifth wave.

Harris and Jones (2018) suggest three key dimensions to teacher leadership within the context of educational change. Firstly, the importance of teacher leadership as *influence* rather than a role or a formal responsibility. Secondly, the idea of teacher leadership as *action* going beyond their formally assigned classroom roles to share practice and initiate changes. Thirdly, *developing pedagogical excellence* within their classroom and beyond to influence the practice of others. While there still remains varying definitions of what teacher leadership is, it is clear that teachers are central to any long term systemic change in schools, and particularly to the educational experience of Black, indigenous, and racialized (BIR) students. Sledge and Morehead (2006) suggest that recognizing the potential that teacher leadership affords schools is the first step towards achieving improvement in student learning, and that this emerging role for teachers contributes to the well-being and achievement of all students. Studies indicate that effective teacher leadership involves a move away from top–down hierarchical modes of functioning and a move toward shared decision-making, teamwork, and community building (Brodsky, 2011; Harris & Jones, 2019; Sharratt, 2018; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Bottom–up teacher leadership involves a critical gaze on one's practice, teacher research that seeks answers to troubling questions of student engagement, dropout rates and an increasing diverse student population (Lopez, 2014). Teacher leadership is critical for really helping a school building build their capacity to increase student learning and student achievement and not only what that teacher does inside that school building but how that teacher leader works with the larger community to drive engagement and support for school goals and for increasing youth success (Tucker, 2014).

TEACHER ACTIVISM

In this chapter, I draw on Wuetherick's (2018) framing of activism which is defined as "the use of direct action to achieve a political, economic, cultural, or social goal" (p. 112). This definition of activism supports leadership goals aimed at seeking change. As many scholars have noted activism in education is rooted in the work of Freire (1970, 2000) and critical pedagogy. Freire conceptualized the term *conscientização* which translates to critical consciousness, consciousness-raising, or critical awareness. Critical consciousness allows people to understand the world from epistemological and critical perspectives using their own lived experiences as a source of knowledge. This critical knowledge also becomes a source of hope and action, provides space for oppressed people to challenge inequities in all aspects of society, where people become empowered to advocate for the kind of society they want. In education this critical knowledge is reflected