

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Christine Stephenson for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education presented on October 16, 2007

Title: Educational Technology Associations as Change Agents: A Case Study

Abstract approved:

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This research addressed the role of educational technology associations as change agents within education with particular emphasis on issues of advocacy and leadership. Using a poststructural feminist lens and the metaphor of interview and analysis as storytelling, it explored the perspectives of nineteen individuals belonging to a national level educational technology association. This research addressed a single research question: How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?

Data for this research were collected over twelve months and were taken from four main sources: the researcher's journal, individual interviews, observations, and association publications (both internal and external). Data from the interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed over the course of the year-long data collection process using a modified constant comparative method. The trustworthiness of this research should be considered in light of poststructural epistemological concepts of substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, and expression of reality.

The results indicated that the participants have a complex relationship with their educational technology association and that ideas of change agency, advocacy, and leadership play an important role in how they perceive that organization and how they experience their own involvement with it. Regardless of the nature of their engagement, the association's staff, volunteers, and members perceive it as an instrument of and an ally for improving teaching and learning through the medium of educational technology. They also experience their connection to the association as both a support for and reflection of their professionalism. The participants believe that the association offers a number of benefits that make membership worthwhile and at the same time, provides important benefits to the discipline and to education as a whole. They also perceive their association as a leader and an advocate for educational technology, not just as a teaching tool, but as a medium for transforming teaching and learning.

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Educational Technology Associations as Change Agents: A Case Study

by
Christine Stephenson

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APPROVED:

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University Libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

Christine Stephenson, Author

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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATIONS AS CHANGE AGENTS:
A CASE STUDY

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

How I Began on This Path

The questions that drive this research have been evolving throughout my professional life and are both influenced by and reflective of my experiences as a teacher educator in the field of educational technology and as a member of various professional education associations for more than 25 years. During this time, I have seen the struggles of teachers as they try to keep current in a field in which change is the only constant and respond to the strivings of institutions (local, state, and national) to meet the needs of students and teachers in a time of increasing demands and decreasing resources.

I began my journey as a research associate in the computing and engineering department of a large Canadian university just as personal computers were becoming more available, affordable, and therefore more prevalent in universities and high schools. My assigned task was to assist the university with developing materials that would allow educators and students to use new programming language software to teach computer science. Over time, however, it became increasingly apparent that what the university really wanted me to do was to find out what was going on in K-12 computer science education and to fix it somehow. Finding out what was going on took the form of 16 years of research initiatives centrally situated within a quantitative methodology and a positivist perspective. “Fixing it” involved 16 years of working with teachers to design and deliver professional development opportunities that would enable them to keep up

with the evolving technology while developing new strategies to improve their pedagogy and thus more effectively engage students.

I rapidly discovered, however, that none of the institutions in which I was supposed to be working were actually conducive to the challenge. Because computer science teachers are isolated within their schools (it is common for the entire department to consist of one teacher who may additionally be expected to teach in other academic disciplines), school-based support was impossible. Budget constraints made it difficult for most school districts to provide comprehensive discipline-specific in-service support to a relatively small percentage of their teaching population. In addition, many university computer science faculty had absolutely no idea of the realities of teaching in the K-12 environment, and thus were prone to alienate the people they desired to help with a combination of unreasonable expectations and a patronizing attitude. I was determined that there had to be something better. Fortunately, there was.

In the late 1980s, I discovered the world of professional educational associations for teachers, organizations that Morony (1999) identified as “voluntary groupings of teachers which supply a range of supports that could be argued are now integral to supporting teachers in their work” (p. 3). Specifically, I found a local organization (the Educational Computing Organization of Ontario) and an international organization (the International Society for Technology in Education), both of which provided exactly the kind of focus I was looking for and a structure for the development and delivery of programs and resources for teachers. I found a mechanism that had been specifically created by and for educators to improve their professional development and a community of educators focused on common goals, sharing solutions and strategies, and

making grass roots-level changes to what was taught and how it was taught. These communities fit very well with my evolving understanding of authentic adult education, how it really happens, and approaches that embrace the self-determined knowledge needs of the learner within a supportive community (Morony).

My Evolving Perspective

When I first began my career as an educational researcher, I felt quite comfortable in the positivist paradigm. I asked questions that could be answered and analyzed using numbers. As the department's so-called high school expert, I thought I knew which questions needed to be asked, or at least what my colleagues wanted to know (how many computers, what kinds of operating systems, Macintoshes or PC compatibles) and my computer science and engineering colleagues felt very comfortable with my observations and conclusions because I supported them with numerical data. As more of my work began to focus on issues of gender equity, however, I found the need for a more nuanced approach. I began seeking a perspective that encompassed a richer understanding of the complexity of human life and the multitude of forces that act upon the individual. I also began looking for a way to ask these questions that resonated with my own experiences as a woman working in a predominantly male field. I began to experience what Lincoln and Cannella (2004) described as the unsuitability of the experimental quantitative model for examining the complex and dynamic contents of public education, especially as they related to ethnicity, gender, race, and class.

My early readings in critical feminist theory were instrumental in allowing me to make the shift away from positivistic quantitative research methods to qualitative research methods. In feminist scholarship I found what Lather (2003) described as “a

softness where interpretation is central and findings are always subject to debate and reinterpretation” (p. 11) that was significantly more representative of my experience of working with teachers and students than the hard certainty of my positivist research. Because feminist theory requires the researcher to question whether the institution truly encourages and enables human beings and then demands engagement in concrete projects for social change (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999a), adopting a feminist research perspective allowed me to move from what seemed to me a false or fainthearted position of inactive observation to active informed engagement.

Critical theory, meanwhile, provided me with what Giroux (2003) described as

a mode of analysis that stresses the breaks, discontinuities, and tensions in history, all of which become valuable in that they highlight the centrality of human agency and struggle while simultaneously revealing the gap between society as it presently exists and society as it might be. (p. 51)

It further expanded my conception of my role as an educational researcher from one who simply observes and reports, to one who, as McLaren (2003) noted, seeks to use knowledge in a way that, “aims at creating the conditions under which irrationality, domination, and oppression can be overcome and transformed through deliberative, collective action” (p. 73).

The combination of critical theory and feminist scholarship provided a theory with an action basis (Ropers-Huilman, 1998). It allowed me to inform my research on gender equity and technology with an understanding that class structure and capitalism have profound effects on schooling and that capitalism and the patriarchy are mutually reinforcing (Weiler, 2003). Critical theory and feminist scholarship also helped me to move beyond observations of what was and is, to considerations of the kinds of

interventions that could be undertaken to make the educational system more just and equitable.

I began to struggle, however, with what I perceived as the inability of critical feminist theory to provide a means of analysis that was sufficiently broad to encompass the rich variety of human experience. In particular, I began to notice what hooks (1994) identified as the propensity of even such liberatory movements to silence, marginalize, and deny.

Again and again black female activists, scholars, and writers found ourselves isolated within the feminist movement and often targets of misguided white women who were threatened by all attempts to deconstruct the category 'woman' or to bring a discourse on race into feminist scholarship. (p. 121)

I have also been struck by the writings of queer theorists such as Bryson (1993), who in their efforts to grapple with the conceptualizations about gender, lesbian, and difference and their relationship to actual lived practices and social relations, noted that

This is what *equity* in education seems to have meant for minority students: the right to try but inevitably to fail to become white, male, middle class. And this is what institutional *gender equity* policies seem to signify most often for girls and women: an impossibly contradictory injunction, on one hand, to enact a series of characteristics designated as *gender-appropriate* in educational feminism's project, and on the other hand, to embrace and participate more *equally* in the set of rules, roles, and relations established and maintained by a predominantly masculine power-elite. (p. 344)

In the midst of this uncertainty, I am now beginning to formulate and articulate the connections between who I am, what I believe, how I teach, and the research I conduct.

Connecting Constructivist Pedagogy to Research and to Social Justice

My teaching methodology is inextricably connected to my constructivism, my commitment to social justice, and to recognition of the power of multiple voices. My

constructivist pedagogy revolves around two principles: that learners construct knowledge rather than receive it passively from the environment and that learners come to know by constantly modifying their experience of the world (Jaworski, 2003). In constructivism, students are required to be active managers of their own learning in order to better prepare themselves to be autonomous thinkers and learners.

Constructivism confronts learners with situations that create inconsistencies in their models and challenges them to either construct better models or ponder the merits of alternative models provided by the teacher (Perkins, 1991b).

One of the key issues in constructivism is the extent of the teacher's role in shaping the students' learning experiences. In many ways, the differences of opinions in constructivist discourse today are echoes of the different approaches taken by Dewey and Vygotsky. For Dewey, the initiative in growth comes from the needs and abilities of the pupil. Dewey posited that when students encounter a problem beyond their immediate problem-solving ability, they experience a kind of doubt that forces them to reconstruct their thinking. Dewey stated that this experience should be unique to each student arising out of individual experience. The teacher's job is to simply create the conditions and provide the tools and the social environment in which the pupil can interact (Glassman, 2001).

Vygotsky, however, saw the teacher more as a mentor who leads the student toward mastery (Glassman, 2001). He defined the zone of proximal development as the distance between the child's development as determined by independent problem solving and what the child is capable of achieving with the assistance of the teacher or in collaboration with more expert peers. Teaching in the zone of proximal development

allows the teacher to build a scaffold upon which the student can construct his or her own understanding.

Perkins (1991a) summarized the differences between these points of view as a conflict between what he refers to as WIG (without the information given) constructivism and BIG (beyond the information given) constructivism. WIG constructivism is situated in Dewey's contention that concepts are not truly and meaningfully learned in ways that empower learners unless those concepts are primarily discovered by the learner. BIG constructivism, however, is a much more Vygotskian approach. It posits that the teacher can teach concepts, provide the overall instructional experience, and include ample occasion for students to test and extend their evolving concepts. In BIG constructivism, the teacher helps the student create a scaffold upon which they build new knowledge and skills. As Hein (1991) noted, "The more we know, the more we can learn. Therefore any effort to teach must ... provide a path into the subject for the learner based upon the learner's previous knowledge" (p. 3). The BIG constructivist teacher constructs problems, guides student inquiry and exploration, and promotes new patterns of thinking. She or he then challenges students to reach beyond the simple factual response and encourages them to connect concepts by analysis, prediction, justification, and defense of ideas (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2003a, 2003b).

In my own teaching, I am inclined to be a BIG constructivist, intent on finding a balance between what I believe I need to teach my students explicitly and what I have found over time that they learn best through hands-on experience with the technology. My sense of the importance of providing students with real-world activities is embedded

in my concern for the ways in which our changing society is pushing the boundaries of our current modes of education and my growing interest in constructivism and its potential to teach students to be life-long learners.

Like Furman and Shields (2003), I see social justice as “a deliberate intervention that challenges fundamental inequities that arise, in large part, due to the inappropriate use of power by one group over another” (p. 12). But while some tend to see these inequities only in relation to the experiences of students, I believe that any true commitment to social justice must also be extended to practitioners. My experience working with teachers has crystallized my sense that there is something terribly wrong in our education system when so many educators feel isolated and discouraged. Like Barth (2001), I believe schools should provide a culture that promotes and supports the learning of both students and teachers, and that schools themselves should be welcoming and caring democratic communities. The discussion of the importance of democracy in schooling has continually evolved from Dewey’s (1916) early work. Dewey saw the ultimate goal of thinking as allowing the student to live a better individual life (Glassman, 2001). Doing so, Dewey argued, requires an unwavering commitment to social justice and to democratic ideals.

It behooves the school to make ceaseless and intelligently organized effort to develop above all else the will for co-operation and the spirit which sees in every other individual one who has an equal right to share in the cultural and material fruits of collective human invention, industry, skill and knowledge. (p. 298).

Maxcy (1995) extended Dewey’s discussion of democracy through consideration of what he called deep democracy, which he envisaged as being built on three democratic values: “(a) the belief in the worth and dignity of individuals and the value of

their expressions and participation; (b) the reverence for freedom, intelligence and enquiry; and (c) the responsibility of individuals in concert to explore and choose collaborative and communal courses of practical action” (p. 58). Beyer (1993) argued that in a school environment committed to social justice and deep democracy, teachers and students would be compassionate and active participants in learning and inquiry. Their choices would matter and democratic social relations would be taken seriously.

I believe that both research and teaching leadership requires a commitment to and internalization of the moral purposes of social justice and the ethics of deep democracy. At the personal level, this demands rigorous and constant examination of one’s beliefs and practices. Such examination requires educators to examine not only what and how we teach, but what we do not teach, or our null curriculum (Eisner, 1985). It requires no less of us as researchers. I will always have some way to go in this pilgrim’s progress of learning to be a better researcher and educator, and I must confess, that throughout this research into the role of professional associations as change agents, my epistemology will continue to evolve. I take comfort, however in Lather’s (1991) argument that the “courage to act within an uncertain framework, then, emerges as the hallmark of libratory praxis in a time marked by the dissolution of the authoritative foundations of knowledge” (p. 13).

Refining My Research Question within a Theoretical Framework

My participation as a community member, volunteer, and leader of various professional volunteer associations for educational technology teachers has given me a broad insider’s understanding of how these organizations operate. My various roles in these organizations convinced me that, despite the considerable challenges they face

(reliance on volunteers, chronic under-funding and understaffing, and competing demands from all levels of education as well as from their own volunteers), professional associations can have a profoundly positive impact on teachers. Until I became part of the doctoral cohort in Oregon State University's Teaching Leadership program, however, I had never considered the role of these organizations within education in any systemic way. Once I began to see them in this light, though, it became almost impossible to look at them in any other way. And I began to realize how much I did not know about these communities despite my own long-time participation in them. Why did some organizations succeed while others failed? How important was it to have a visionary leader? Were there things that these organizations could do that would make them more effective? And what did *effective* actually mean?

While these questions were all rolling around in my head, I was fortunate to discover a study by Strudler (1987) that provided me with a clue as to how I might begin exploring these questions in a more scholarly manner. Strudler examined the role of the school-based technology coordinator in the implementation of educational technology in elementary schools. What was unique about this study, however, was that Strudler posited that these coordinators served as change agents, professionals whose major function was to advocate for change and to put innovative practices in place within the organization (Carlson, 1965). As I began to read more deeply in the area of educational technology and leadership, I also realized that not only was there no existing research looking at the possible role of professional educational associations as change agents, there was almost no research on professional educational associations at all, despite a growing body of anecdotes and commentary on their increasing role in education. I

became convinced that looking at professional associations as change agents could provide a useful lens for investigating these educational communities.

No longer able to believe the certainties that my former positivist perspective seemed to provide, I now find myself grappling with the question of whether it is necessary or even possible to learn and share something both valuable and somehow true. My theoretical explorations have given me a profound suspicion of any kind of research that promised to provide “the answer” about anything as complex as educational leadership and change. They have also shown me the importance of acknowledging the deep connection between my educational and research praxis and of finding meaningful ways to incorporate my research participants into my research. I want their concerns to be addressed and their voices to be heard. I want to know what they need to know, so that I can continue to contribute not just to the body of knowledge but to the exploration and development of solutions. I decided that, for me, the best way to do this is to work within the interpretive frameworks provided by feminist poststructuralism because they allow researchers to engage thoughtfully with and transform the world (Weedon, 1987).

In light of this commitment to a feminist poststructuralist framework, I began refining my research questions by starting with the big questions I know from personal experience that professional associations would like answered. I then explored these questions with staff and volunteers from several levels of a number of educational technology organizations with which I was familiar (chief executive officers, presidents, volunteers, and members) to try to determine if my questions were consistent with theirs. These discussions allowed me to develop my primary research question, “How do the

various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?" But as is often the case with this kind of research, other questions evolved as the research progressed. For example, I began to wonder about the role of leadership in these associations and whether there was a perceived connection between leadership and change agency.

It is important to say that I was not attempting to answer questions about the association's actual impact on education and whether it promotes educational change or simply supports the status quo. I believe, rather, that allowing association staff, volunteers, and members to tell their association stories is a valuable research endeavor because it has the potential to reveal the variety and complexity of stakeholder perceptions as to whether and how these associations contribute to the professional lives of teachers and their students. My hope is that in sharing the stories of this one organization, I might also provide other educational associations with a deeper understanding of issues of change agency and leadership in education and the ways in which stakeholder perceptions may adhere to or differ significantly from the story the leaders of the organization believe they are telling.

Research Parameters

This research consists of a case study of a large, well-established educational technology association. My definition of case study is taken from Cresswell (1998) who defined it as "an exploration of a bounded system (or case) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (p. 61) and Merriam (1998) who described it as an "an intensive, holistic description and

analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 27). My interactions with this organization consisted of interviews with paid management and staff; members of the volunteer Board of Directors including the current president, a past-president, volunteer committee chairs (both current and past); and association members (both long-time and new). It also included reviews of documents such as by-laws and policy manuals, examination of publications, and attendance at major events taking place over the period of a year.

As Ropers-Huilman (1998) noted, the purpose of research within the poststructuralist framework is not to find objective answers, but rather, to come to an understanding of “differing knowledges and situations that are already assumed to be tentative, partial, and relational” (p. 17). As I investigated my research question, my goal was therefore not to determine the “truth” of the stories participants in the educational technology association told about themselves and the organization, but to investigate the discourses they constructed around its potential role as a change agent in education.

As Noddings (1996) noted, sharing our stories as educators allows us to affirm the validity of our experience. As we find the things that tie us together and separate us, we become more aware of who and what we are. Because my own teacher discourse is inextricably bound with my relationship to, and experiences of, educational technology associations, I am also part of the story that I am telling. Any effort to pretend otherwise would be both inconsistent with my theoretical beliefs and disingenuous. The storyteller is already and always part of the story, just as the story is always and already part of the teller. Our duty as researchers is to acknowledge that this and only this is true.

Like any story, this one also has its beginnings in the stories of others and like any worthwhile research project, it must be set in the context of the preceding research. The following chapter examines research literature in four broad areas relating educational associations and educational change. These include factors affecting educational change, leadership in education in general, leadership in educational technology, and how professional associations are redefining their roles within the broader educational environment.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This research seeks to investigate how the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent. Although this question appears simple on the surface, it is actually exceedingly complex because it requires an engagement with multiple issues relating to educational and organizational change. This chapter provides a general discussion of a number of germinal writings in the four areas that relate most directly to this topic. They include factors affecting educational change, leadership in education in general, leadership in educational technology, and how professional associations are redefining their roles within the broader educational environment.

Factors Affecting Educational Change

In their extensive quantitative study of teacher work content and parent involvement in urban high schools, Bauch and Goldring (2000) provide considerable support for the view of education as a highly complex and multifaceted environment within which an almost unimaginable number of policies, methodologies, strategies, ideologies, and bureaucracies interact. A similar study conducted by the Center for Research on the Context of Secondary Education (McLaughlin, 1992) involving 16 public and independent secondary schools in eight districts in two states also demonstrated that, although at its most basic level the transition of knowledge might appear as a simple process, effective teaching depends significantly upon the contexts within which teachers work—department and social organization and culture,

professional associations and networks, community educational values and norms, and secondary and higher education policies. These contexts determine not only what is taught and how it is taught, but also the value placed upon a given academic discipline's place within the larger school curriculum and the resources that are made available to instructors.

Ballantyne, McLean, and Macpherson (2003) conducted an extensive qualitative study of high school principals, curriculum experts, administrative staff members, and teachers in Queensland, Australia. The purpose of their study was to determine the nature and qualities of knowledge and skills that teachers require to develop the creative and innovative capacity of students. Although their sample was small (the specific number of respondents is not specified) and homogenous (principals from innovative schools and other key educational personnel known to support innovation), their analysis of data (in the form of open-ended responses to a series of interview questions) supported their conclusions that many of the changes that occur within education are the result of small-scale, bottom-up innovation at the individual school level, and that such change is structural and superficial and rarely translates into large-scale innovation at system or national levels. In effect, such changes tinker with, but do not transform, the teaching culture. These conclusions are further supported by Fullan (2002), who concluded that small-scale, school-based, bottom-up changes, in and of themselves, do not lead to lasting change because they do not change what people in the organization value and how they work to accomplish their goals and objectives.

Ballantyne, McLean, and Macpherson's (2003) conclusions are further supported by the work of Sherry and Gibson (2002) and Fullan (2002). Sherry and Gibson found in

their study of teacher pathways to educational technology leadership, that in order for system change to take place and be sustained, three critical processes must be in place. These include a convergence of resources that provides a starting point for change; mutual benefits to those who are affected by the changes; and continuous, extensive, free flow of resources and expertise throughout the system to fuel its sustainability. Without these processes in place, they concluded, change initiatives would have only a mild, diffuse impact.

In their extensive review of 30 years of research on the effect of leadership on student achievement, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) also provided an insightful analysis of the process of educational change. Based upon a quantitative analysis of more than 5,000 studies, an extensive review of the theoretical literature on leadership, and their personal (team) leadership activities, they demonstrated convincing support for their assertion that systemic educational change demands a profound understanding of, and engagement with, the culture in which the change must take place. They also concluded that effective system-wide change agents must

understand how to balance pushing for change while at the same time, protecting aspects of culture, values, and norms worth preserving...know how and when to create learning environments that support people, connect them with one-another, and provide knowledge, skills, and resources they need to succeed. (p. 2)

Educational Leadership

The importance of leadership in education is evidenced by the exceedingly broad and varied body of research situated in a multitude of research perspectives. Gunter (2001), for example, identified four main positions in educational leadership studies: critical, humanistic, instrumental, and scientific. The critical position “draws on the

social sciences to map and analyze the interplay between the agency of the role incumbent and the structures that enhance or limit that agency” (p. 96). It provides practitioners with opportunities to reflect on what they do, are told to do, and would like to do, and in this way enables them to link their work to the bigger picture. The humanistic approach is based upon narrative biographical epistemology through which educators can tell their own stories about exercising leadership in particular settings over time. The instrumental position provides models of effective systems and cultures designed to enable site-based management. The scientific position involves measurement of the causal effects of administrators on the behavior and emotions of staff and on student learning outcomes. It purports to provide statistical evidence of the link between policy and practice.

While many studies and articles contribute to the on-going engagement of researchers and educators with questions of effective change, some provide particularly helpful insights. In an effort to define a vision of ideals-based leadership, Sergiovanni (1996) identified nine specific tasks that leaders must undertake. These tasks include purposing, maintaining harmony, institutionalizing values, motivating, managing, exploring, enabling, modeling, and supervising. In their extensive work on personal qualities of leadership, Kouzes and Posner (1989) also contributed to the discussion of leadership skills through their definition of seven relationship skills that leaders require, which they identified as setting clear standards, expecting the best, paying attention, personalizing recognition, telling the story, celebrating together, and setting the example. Finally, in a brief but useful practitioner-directed article, Cherniss (1998) provided a similar list of required social and emotional skills that educational leaders require to

forge working relationships with many people. These skills included self-confidence, self-knowledge, an ability to modulate emotions, seeing diversity of opinions as vital for change, the ability to identify potential opportunities and act without hesitation, adeptness at building consensus and coordinating team efforts, and the ability to avoid unproductive conflicts.

Fullan (Fullan, 1998, 2002, 2005) has added considerably to the body of knowledge on leadership and educational change. Most specifically, Fullan articulated the need for education leaders to create, not just a structure for, but a culture of, change wherein new ideas and practices are critically assessed and selectively incorporated on a continual basis. Fullan also acknowledged, however, the damaging effect successive demands and programs for change have had on education. As Fullan (2001) noted, schools “are suffering the additional burden of having a torrent of unwanted, uncoordinated policies and innovations raining down on them from hierarchical bureaucracies. Many superintendents (of the pacesetter style) compound the problem with relentless projectitis” (p. 109). Fullan’s warnings about the possible negative impact of change are echoed by Heifetz and Linsky (2004) who posited that even good organizational changes driven by a sincere desire for improvement can have unanticipated or unpleasant consequences and that real change also leads inevitably to resistance.

To lead is to live dangerously because when leadership counts, when you lead people through difficult change, you challenge what people hold dear—their daily habits, tools, loyalties, and ways of thinking...People push back when you disturb the personal and institutional equilibrium they know. People resist in all kinds of creative and unexpected ways that can get you taken out of the game: pushed aside, undermined, or eliminated.
(p. 2)

Adaptive change that benefits the organization as a whole, they argued, can also tangibly hurt some of those who thrived under the status quo, and those who cannot or will not go along with these changes will become casualties.

Like Kouzes and Posner (1989) and Cherniss (1998), Fullan (2001) also focused on the centrality of relationship skills, noting that leaders, “must be consummate relationship builders with diverse people and groups—especially with people different than themselves. Effective leaders constantly foster purposeful interaction and problem solving, and are wary of easy consensus” (p. 5). Fullan highlighted the role that leaders must play, not just in helping individuals and organizations to solve acknowledged problems, but to confront problems that have never been successfully addressed. He also made a powerful argument for the importance of consensus-building, noting that people “will not voluntarily share knowledge unless they feel some moral commitment to do so; second, people will not share unless the dynamics of change favor exchange; and third, that data without relationships merely cause more information glut” (p. 6). He further noted that people feel anxious, confused, overwhelmed, and deskilled when called upon to achieve something when they are not clear about what to do and do not understand the knowledge base and belief systems underlying the requested change.

While they also supported the close connection between personal values and educational leadership, Furman and Shields (2003) extended the definition of personal values to include a commitment to the tenets of social justice.

Leadership requires commitment to and internalization of the moral purposes of social justice and the ethics of deep democracy...it challenges policies, practices, and structures that impede community participation and create injustices; it focuses on communal activity and problem-solving on socially-just pedagogy and learning as the common good of schools. (pp. 28-29)

This perspective is supported by Kleiner (2003), who argued:

In organizations, honor has come to mean a sense of purpose that transcends merely “winning,” “fulfilling the assignment,” “making money,” or “pleasing the core group.” A truly honorable sense of purpose is one in which the organization seeks to leave the world a much better place, in some way closely related to the organization's own integrated learning base. (p. 217)

In a qualitative research study involving interviews with principals and teachers at 15 schools to determine how some schools attempt to develop high leadership capacity, Lambert (2005) also provided support for the connection between education leadership and the commitment to social justice. Lambert concluded that principals in schools that demonstrated high leadership capacity shared a common set of characteristics regardless of their management strengths and weaknesses. These characteristics included an understanding of self and clarity of values and a strong belief in equity and the democratic process.

Lambert's (2005) conclusions regarding the importance of self-knowledge and vulnerability are further supported by Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2004) who found that strong leaders must acknowledge all sides of themselves, including their vulnerability, and that responsible leadership requires a deep understanding of self.

Developing emotional intelligence and interpersonal relatedness means coming to terms with one's own modes of relating. The challenge of genuine leadership is to be fully present, passionate, and committed with all of one's fears and desires in tow. The essential work always lies in self-discovery and awareness. (p. 5)

As Hargreaves and Fink (2004) noted, however, systems that desire sustainable growth must do more than acknowledge the necessary vulnerability of leaders: “Unless reformers and policy-makers care for leaders' personal and professional selves, they will

engineer short-term gains only by mortgaging the entire future of leadership” (p. 4).

They must also recognize that leadership is only one piece of the complex educational puzzle. As Hoachlander, Alt, and Beltranena (2001) noted:

Clarifying what educational leaders need to know and be able to do is a worthy endeavor. Designing strategies to ensure that leadership training and ongoing professional development produce and strengthen these skills also is valuable. But effective leadership development is only one piece of a complicated school improvement puzzle. If leadership development is to produce notable gains in student learning, it is essential to understand where effective leadership fits into the larger process of reform and how it relates to—and perhaps depends upon—other major changes in the practice of schooling. (p. 40)

Leadership in Educational Technology

Although the body of research on leadership in educational technology is not as extensive as one might expect, it has likewise tended to focus on exploring the leadership capacities and skill requirements of individuals at various levels of the education hierarchy. Strudler’s (1987) exploration of the role of the school-based technology coordinator in the implementation of educational technology in elementary schools was one of the first studies to frame the discussion of educational technology leadership in terms of change agency. The term *change agent* was originally used to describe the role of a professional whose major function was “the advocacy and introduction of innovations into practice” (Carlson, 1965).

In recent years, this term has come to embody a wide range of roles, skills, and interactions, all of which center around the importance of advocacy in the fulfillment of social and political goals. In his work on innovation diffusion, Rogers (2003) argued that the change agent’s task lies primarily in overcoming the social and technical chasms between the change agency and the client system. Overcoming these chasms, he argued,

is a seven-step process in which the change agent must perform a series of tasks that include: (a) developing a need for change—helping the client understand why change is needed, (b) establishing an information exchange relationship—developing rapport with client, (c) diagnosing problems—determining why existing alternatives do not meet the client’s needs, (d) creating an intent to change—motivating interest in innovation, (e) translating intent into action—seeking to influence behavior change in accordance with recommendations, (f) stabilizing—reinforcing and confirming the new behavior, and (g) terminating—developing self-renewing behavior in client that makes the change agent role obsolete.

Strudler’s (1987) investigation of the role of the technology coordinator as change agent took the form of a case study. The goal of the study was to identify potentially effective strategies and skills used by computer coordinators. The study was conducted in a medium-sized district with a significant history of school computer use. Strudler employed a purposeful sampling method, focusing on a homogeneous sample—in this case, three school-based computer coordinators from schools identified as having a high degree of implementation of instructional computing. Data were gathered from multiple sources, including semi-structured interviews and two questionnaires. The first questionnaire served as a checklist to create a profile of typical strategies, skills, and outcomes for each coordinator, and the second almost identical survey collected the same data about the coordinator from his or her supervisor. Each coordinator was interviewed twice, and teachers, supervisors, and parents were interviewed once. The first coordinator interview focused on outcomes and future directions associated with the coordinator role, and the second focused on strategies and skills they used in their work.

The coordinators' responses to particular questions were checked against responses to similar questions by other informants (principals and district computer coordinators).

The researcher also directly observed representative activities and examined relevant documents to provide an additional validity check. Analysis of these data led Strudler to conclude that school-based computer coordinators use a combination of products and client-centered strategies to encourage and facilitate the use of educational technology. He identified a number of leadership strategies (including provision of teacher training, technical assistance, organizational support, and motivation) all of which he identified as central to fulfilling the change agent role of advocating for and supporting innovation.

Kearsley and Lynch's (1992) analysis of the concept of educational technology leadership also centered on the critical role leadership plays in the success of educational technology initiatives. Kearsley and Lynch argue that successful educational technology leaders must demonstrate two distinct sets of skills. First, they must have sufficient technical ability to understand the strengths and limitations of various technologies and the conceptual issues underlying any application of instructional technology. They must also know how to implement technology successfully and be familiar with the type of changes that adoption of technology will entail. They also must be able to conduct and interpret evaluations of technology in terms of cost-benefits and educational impact. Second, they must possess the leadership skills required to create a vision that allows educators to believe that educational technology is the best possible solution to an identifiable education problem, to identify potential key supporters, and to influence them through the articulation of vision. This idea of the educational technology leader as visionary is shared by both Cory (1990) and Costello (1997), who noted that a shared

vision enables organizations to set priorities, determine directions, and measure success or failure.

Schmeltzer (2001) also noted that administrators must demonstrate an understanding of how technology can improve instructional practices and provide a set of strategies for supporting teachers' efforts to integrate technology into the curriculum. More importantly, however, Schmeltzer also argued that educational technology leaders require not just a vision, but a plan of how that vision is to be achieved.

Anderson and Dexter (2000) contributed to the discussion of educational technology leadership through their proposed taxonomy of educational technology leadership decisions. This taxonomy defines six key functions that form a basis for evaluations of technology leadership. These key functions include: strategic planning, goal setting, vision and vision-sharing, budgeting and spending, designing organizational structures and processes, creating curriculum, program evaluation and impact assessment, external relations, and dealing with ethical issues.

In a 20-year retrospective of educational technology policy, Culp, Honey, and Mandinach (2003) reiterated a number of earlier research results and observations in their argument that:

Educational technology experts, who have largely been responsible for guiding and informing policymakers' understandings of the potential role of technology in education over the past twenty years, have provided energizing, exciting visions of how technology could potentially "change everything." Recently, however, educational technologists have begun to understand with more nuance that technology needs to work in concert with other factors like effective leadership, instructional priorities, and the day-to-day demands of classroom practice. (p. 22)

From this argument, they developed a number of recommendations, including a call for the provision of sustained high-quality professional development and overall support for

teachers seeking to innovate and grow in this area and an increased involvement of multiple stakeholders from the public and private sectors.

Professional Communities as Change Agents

To date, much of the work on educational leadership and change, particularly in the area of educational technology, has centered on the role of various individuals within the school system. Unlike research involving other social and political organizations (Hartley et al., 1997), educational research has only recently begun to point to the potential for entire communities to fill the change agent role.

In her groundbreaking study on the social organization of schools, Rosenholtz (1989) noted that teachers who felt supported in their own on-going learning and classroom practices were more likely to adopt new classroom behaviors and were more effective practitioners than those who did not. In particular, Rosenholtz identified cooperation among colleagues and support through teacher networks as a primary factor in teacher success. Subsequent research by McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) confirmed Rosenholtz's finding and further suggested that opportunities for collaborative inquiry and learning enable teachers to develop and share experience-based wisdom. The National Staff Development Council and National Institute for Community Innovations (2001) also noted the essential link between collaborative learning communities and teacher professionalism in their report on e-learning and staff development standards, which stated:

If educators are expected to introduce new practices into their work and to deepen their understanding of their content, their students and teaching, the environment in which they work must support their learning—through adequate resources, strong supportive leadership, and a community that encourages collaboration and application of new learning. (p. 4)

A growing body of research indicates professional associations for teachers increasingly fill this role of collaborative community. As Olson (1971) pointed out, professional associations are formed and maintained as a result of demand or interest and as such, they exist only because their members perceive that there is a benefit to association.

[A]ny group, large or small, works for some collective benefit that by its nature will benefit all of the members of the group in question...all of the members of the group therefore have a common interest in obtaining this collective benefit. (p. 21)

This focus on member benefits is so central to the long-term survival of a professional association that the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and the Center for Association Leadership (2006) contended that associations “must build their structures, processes, and interactions—their entire culture around assessing and meeting members’ needs and expectations” (pp. 25-26). Achieving an understanding of member needs requires constantly listening to members and sharing information from these conversations across the organization. It also demands a close-knit and consistent culture where all staff receive information and have the opportunity to contribute to important projects.

According to Brockett (1989), professional associations typically possess a temporary leadership structure with annual election of officers. They can be small and haphazardly organized, or as May (1998) noted, they can be large and complex, employing professional staff who carry out the day-to-day work of the association, assist the elected and volunteer leadership, continue the organizational and cultural norms of

the group, and serve as the association's organizational memory (Marion, 2002). In their efforts to determine the organizational characteristics of *remarkable* associations, ASAE and the Center for Leadership (2006) concluded that successful associations tend to have a classless structure where there are few distinctions between executives and staff and a culture focused on shared values and a unified purpose. In such associations, the role of the Chief Executive Officer is primarily a stewardship role and there is a shared understanding that the association, "belongs to the members, so its vision must emanate from them, not from the CEO's corner office or from a small group of leaders" (p 70). Successful associations avoid fragmentation by department or responsibility to the extent that all employees are consistent about signature products no matter what department they personally work for. In addition, "staff and volunteers openly analyze failures to extract lessons learned and identify possible ways to repurpose the information or the concept" (p. 33).

In their study of professional associations in Great Britain, Watkins, Drury, and Bray (1996) found that professional associations make a number of adjustments as they move from start-up to mature organizations. Typically they transition from a bureaucratic organization to a professionally run and managed organization and begin to focus less on administration and more on strategic planning. They also tend to move from providing an ad hoc range of services to offering more focused service. According to Friedman (2004), professional associations also face a number of unique challenges as they mature that require developing internal mechanisms in order to continue to contribute to the aims of their major stakeholders. These challenges include the need to adapt to changing environmental conditions and to "steer their way through potentially

inconsistent pressures to maintain control over their potentially disparate internal parts and actors, while both manipulating and adapting to their external environment” (p. 3).

For this reason, Friedman argued that professional associations,

should be politically astute, balancing the interests of their various membership constituencies, having regard to stakeholders beyond the membership. In this way, they must balance the needs of current members, potential future members, and the interests and expectation of the wider public. (p. 4)

In his case studies of exemplary mathematics programs, Driscoll (1987) noted that the sense of collegiality provided by professional associations helps teachers focus on the goals they have established for their program and increases their consistency and commitment. In their synthesis of research on educational change, Inos and Quigley (1995) further argued that teachers participating in professional communities gain important knowledge and psychological support. They also concluded that participation in professional associations helps teachers resolve ambivalence about how much change is needed and what can be accomplished. Adajian (1996) also argued that when teachers’ efforts are guided by a professional community, reform is more widespread and long lasting.

A more recent study of the use of online support communities for principals undertaken by Thomas, Grigsby, Miller, and Scully (2003) offered further support for the contention that professional networking mechanisms can support professional educators as they cope with the demands of leadership. Professional networking, they concluded, provides opportunities for continuous professional growth and meaningful self-evaluation in an environment that builds trust and provides support. More recently, McCann, Johannessen, and Rica (2005) also found that for new teachers, joining a

professional association is an indication that the educator sees her or himself as a professional committed to growth and that professional associations also provide expanded opportunities for broader communication with and mentoring by more experienced colleagues.

Unfortunately, there is a considerable dearth of comprehensive and rigorous research on the specific functions of educational associations within the education system or the extent to which they serve as change agents. Myers and Ward (1988) conducted a quantitative study of New Mexico home economics teachers to determine practitioner perspectives on the costs and benefits of membership in professional associations. The researchers conducted a state-wide survey to which 70% of the total New Mexico home economics teacher population of 295 responded. Using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree), they calculated a mean level of agreement for all respondents on a series of 10 questions. The study report does not indicate whether the instrument was pilot tested for reliability. This relatively simple analysis of the data revealed that 80% of the respondents were in fact members of at least one of the 15 different home economics or vocational education professional associations in the state (the study includes the breakdown of response rates based upon level of university degree completed and years since graduation). From their analysis, Myers and Ward concluded that most of the teachers agreed that associations provide valuable opportunities for networking and professional development. They also reported, however, that teachers see money and time limitations as an important restriction on the number of organizations they can join and that teachers therefore feel compelled to choose judiciously among various organizations to find those that will be most helpful.

Gallemore and Li (1997) conducted a much more rigorous study of physical education teachers in Georgia focusing on this issue of impediments to participation in professional associations. The participants were randomly selected from public elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the state. Two sample frames were used to ensure that both members and non-members of the existing professional association (the Georgia Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance—GAPHERD) would be represented. The first frame was derived from the GAPHERD membership directory and the second from a database including all public school, non-member physical education teachers in the state. Following a pilot study that supported the need for further investigation and contributed to the refinement of the questionnaire, the researchers constructed an 11-question survey using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) and a single open-ended question. The survey was distributed to 500 potential participants. Demographic information was obtained for participants relative to gender, age, years of teaching, level of education, professional memberships, and school districts. Frequency and percentages and a one-way ANOVA were used to analyze the demographic information. A factor analysis was also used to summarize the perceived barriers to professional involvement into several factors. Although the response rate of 45% was not ideal, the internal consistency estimate (Cronbach's alpha) of .8126 supported the internal reliability of the instrument.

As the result of their data analysis, Gallemore and Li (1997) identified school atmosphere and the encouragement and appreciation of peers as strong motivators for participation in, and service with, a professional association. The perceived barriers to teacher participation included lack of support for attendance at professional conferences

(in terms of funding and teacher absence) and lack of time for active involvement. The researchers additionally posited that teachers might not be aware that professional membership provides them with opportunities to exchange knowledge, skills, and ideas with colleagues and that many professional associations provide resources and publications that can help improve professional effectiveness. Gallemore and Li also pointed to the role that professional publications, conventions, and workshops play in motivating teachers to explore new ideas or methodologies.

Petersen (2006) conducted a quantitative study of three national educational associations and one state-level educational association to explore membership trends and leadership responses to membership changes over a 14-year period. Grady used a qualitative case study approach involving interviews with association leadership, a focus group, and a review of association documents including member records and demographic information. Data analysis consisted of a line-by-line transcript microanalysis and a cross case analysis to compare information gathered from different association representatives. Petersen's finding revealed that professional associations provide not only leadership for their professional group, but also professional standards and quality control roles that serve the larger society as well. Petersen also reported that association memberships are affected by a number of external factors, including national events and crises, demographic changes, and any legislation that affects the membership.

Within the association, however, association leaders were responsible for clarifying the association's role within the profession, determining its educational niche, and continually monitoring member needs. Petersen noted that in each of the associations she studied, the association's leadership had successfully determined what the association

did particularly well and built upon that strength. She also found that there was an essential connection between association leadership and association success. Successful associations, she concluded, were focused on building leadership skills and on finding ways to allow more members to participate in leadership roles.

Petersen's (2006) study also revealed that members were attracted to educational associations by a combination of self-interest and altruism. Petersen found that the most valued member benefits (by members themselves) were liability insurance and legal aid, advocacy publications, and resources. The member benefit mixes provided by the associations changed in response to member demand, but the associations constantly sought a balance between member benefits and costs. At the same time, however, the association leaders related that there was an essential connection between educational association membership and the desire to make a difference. Members in general were motivated by their care and concern about children's education and the well being of schools, and educational association leaders especially believed that they were responding to a call for action and service.

Gallemore and Li's (1997) and Petersen's (2006) conclusions about the characteristics of participation in professional volunteer organizations have been validated by several associations. Writing in a professional journal for business education teachers, Bell (1983) argued that professional associations provide exposure to new ideas, either through organized events such as conferences and workshops or through professional publications. In a similar publication for vocational teachers, Harris (1987) noted that participation in professional associations has several direct benefits for teachers. Participation: (a) provides new expertise through professional development

workshops, (b) establishes networking relationships that provide opportunities to share curricula, (c) develops stronger personal commitment to students and the academic discipline, and (d) increases the realization of the importance of connections with business and industry.

In their description of the formation of collaborative work groups for mathematics education reform, Romberg and Middleton (1995) further argued that “without programs that foster collaboration, teachers would not be able to discover new teaching methods and ways of dealing with students and administration that their colleagues can and do provide” (p. 175). Laden (1996) also noted that professional associations have stepped in to address the growing demand for leadership development through the provision of training opportunities at annual association meetings that allow teachers to: (a) gain practical and conceptual orientations, (b) improve interpersonal skills, (c) learn about management and technological skills, (d) develop network alliances, and (e) keep abreast of changes.

A 1996 international virtual conference hosted in Australia provided additional evidence that the leaders of professional teacher associations were beginning to perceive their role as educational change agents in a much broader and more political light. In her examination of teacher librarian organizations, Jeffrey (1996) argued that professional educational associations provide essential support for specific academic disciplines and develop leadership within those disciplines by: (a) encouraging the testing of new initiatives, (b) sharing expertise, (c) satisfying an almost insatiable need for discipline-based professional development, (d) identifying key research needs, (e) communicating the perspective of those in a particular discipline to the wider educational community, (f)

recognizing trends in discipline content, and (g) putting strategies in place to ensure that equitable standards are maintained.

At the same event, Dotten and Kerr (1996) noted that through active leadership, advocacy, and marketing, professional teacher associations defend and protect their membership and strengthen and unify their voices on issues of common importance. This contention is echoed by Reeve (1999) who noted that state-level technology education associations provide members with an opportunity to participate in and make decisions on issues that directly affect their careers or programs. Dotten and Kerr also identified several key activities of professional teacher associations relating to advocacy and partnership-building with other key players in the educational arena. These included: (a) responding to documents produced by state and federal educational authorities; (b) reviewing teacher qualification and certification requirements; (c) participating in the development of provincial curriculum guidelines; (d) recommending staffing allocation guidelines; (e) establishing task forces to study issues of importance to the profession; (f) inviting target groups to meetings, programs, and conferences; (g) building partnerships with organizations with common interests; (h) advocating on behalf of the discipline with key legislators and policy makers; and (i) collecting and summarizing membership reaction to important issues and surveying membership for data on key issues such as staffing and budgets. In conclusion, they argued that “professional associations have a major responsibility through active leadership, strong advocacy and marketing, and timely professional development to enhance and expand the learning environment for their members” (p. 126).

In an editorial in a major publication for science teachers, Long (2000) also identified a number of similar benefits of teacher participation in professional associations, including: (a) interaction with educators outside one's building, district, and state that reduce the teacher's sense of isolation; (b) legislative information and the opportunity to lobby for one's discipline; and (c) access to information on teaching issues such as effective class size.

In his examination of the link between professional associations and the effectiveness of teacher's work, Morony (1999) argued that these organizations exist along side formal teacher education and classroom experience, as the third side of the triangle that supports teachers' work. Unlike unions or federations, these organizations are democratic and empowering because they give teachers a voice and contribute to their overall professional standing. As the Task Force on Teacher Leadership (2001) noted, this sense of voice is particularly critical in a working environment in which many educators are disenfranchised and disempowered. "Except through teacher organizations, most of the profession's members normally have little or no effective representation in the key organizational, political, and pedagogical decisions that affect their jobs, their profession, and by extension, their personal lives" (p. 1).

In his study of the influence of professional associations for science teachers in Australia, Ferguson (2003) further argued that professional associations should play a more active role in formulating educational policy precisely because they are the most democratic of educational institutions. They come into existence because of a pre-existing common identity of a subculture of teachers and other members of the

profession. Because membership in a professional association is voluntary, those who join are bound, not by ideology, but by professional identity.

According to the American Society of Association Executives (2001), professional associations provide a social context in which people can find others who share a common purpose. Within this shared content they can develop relationships and make professional contributions. While associations can evolve their purpose over time or even outgrow their original purpose and still remain successful, the key to sustained success is allowing members to find meaning together and to keep the organization's sense of purpose vital and relevant. What keeps an association vital, they argue, are the stories the association tells itself about itself:

The most powerful stories, themes, and images, are not only captivating. They are also the carriers of your association's shared history and values. They communicate what your association is like and what it aspires to create. Your leaders are your most important storytellers. They tell stories every time they interpret the actions of the association, whether in a board or staff meeting or at your annual meeting. (p. 8)

The Need for Additional Research

Although there is a considerable body of research on educational leadership and educational change and a growing body of conjecture and opinion about the role of professional associations within education, this literature review suggests that there is very little actual research regarding how various stakeholders view their associations' abilities to support and advocate for change. The purpose of my research is to determine how staff, volunteers, and members of one educational technology association describe their association's role within the educational system and its potential to effect change within it.

Strudler's (1987) early work on technology coordinators as change agents provides a particularly interesting lens through which to view, not only individuals, but also organizations operating within a complex system of interlocking, complimenting, and conflicting spheres of influence and advocacy. And while this is just one small piece of the enormous puzzle that is educational change, it is an interesting piece, and one that might hold important clues about better ways to support teachers and teaching. This study attempts to use the same lens of change agency but to broaden the perspective from individuals (technical coordinators) to organizations (educational technology associations). In specific, it attempts to answer one key question: How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Setting the Research Context

My goal for this research project was to learn and share something new about the ways in which stakeholders in an educational technology association perceive their organization's contribution to education and its role as a possible change agent within education. Before I describe how I collected and analyzed the data upon which my interpretations were based, it is important to set this research in its methodological and theoretical contexts.

This qualitative research project employed what Denzin and Lincoln (2000) described as a process of studying “things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). Qualitative researchers see themselves as living in a much more fluid world, where questions of what we know, how we know it, and how we interpret and communicate that knowing, must be acknowledged and grappled with on an on-going basis. Qualitative researchers, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) noted, “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situation constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 10). For this reason, qualitative researchers undergo a constant process of exploration and evaluation by which they interrogate their own (and others’) epistemologies, methods, relationships with research participants, and the ways in which they tell the stories with which they have been entrusted.

The complexity of these tasks is most clearly evidenced in the body of scholarly work dedicated to exploring how researchers’ conceptions of reality, knowledge, and

truth must be acknowledged and negotiated. For many scholars, these negotiations involve explorations of how to ensure the validity/trustworthiness of the research process (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Lather, 1986; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For others, the focus has been on subjectivity; that is, how researchers separate their personal beliefs and experiences from those of their research participants (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999b; Ropers-Huilman, 1998; Scheurich & Young, 1997; Smithmier, 1997). Understanding and acknowledging these foundational issues, however complex and daunting, is central to the qualitative researcher's engagement in this field.

Like Denzin and Lincoln (2000), I believe that “There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of—and between—the observer and the observed” (p. 19). And so this is a subjective story. It is also a multi-layered and thrice-told story. The first level involves the story I wanted to hear, framed in the questions I asked and the things I observed along the way. Then there is the story each person I interviewed chose to tell me of his/her education technology association. And finally, there is the story I am telling you about what this research has taught me.

My role as storyteller does not mean that as a qualitative researcher I am somehow held to a lesser standard. Qualitative researchers, like quantitative researchers, use empirical observations to address research questions and incorporate safeguards in order to minimize the confirmation bias and other sources of invalidity that can exist in any study (Johnson & Onwuebuze, 2004). For qualitative researchers, however, these safeguards take the form of situating ourselves within our research so that the reader may discern our potential biases and judge our interpretations accordingly. We must also adopt a defined set of strategies for ensuring the trustworthiness of our research.

The Situated Researcher

As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argued, the researcher and the research (or the story-teller and the story) must be considered together precisely because the “gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that he or she then examines in specific ways (methodology, analysis)” (p. 18). During the year in which I was an observer in the world of educational technology associations, the research tools (interviews, observations, document analyses, and research journal notes) and the analysis methods that I used helped me create a representation of that world. This representation, however, is single and partial, limited by what I am capable of observing and understanding, and changed by the very fact of my observations. Because my research and its representation are inextricably shaped by my personal history, nationality, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, it is important to share these as well.

Who I See Myself to Be in This Moment

I am a White woman from a working class background. As is common in my country (Canada), my ethnic heritage encompasses Scottish, English, Irish, and possibly Native North American ancestry, and I see each of these as contributing essential elements to my character and my values. I believe in hard work, harmony, and kinship. I retain my commitment to fairness, especially as it is expressed in the socio-political movements, such as social democracy, that provide the foundation for the Canadian political system. Like most Canadians, I would rather be perceived as stupid than rude and would be more embarrassed to be rich than poor.

My sense of family encompasses multiple generations of my maternal clan. I am the youngest woman of my generation but was the first to attain a post-secondary degree. I am the only one to work in academia. With the exception of myself, my family still lives within 100 miles of the original homestead established five generations ago in a small Ontario town. I am the only one to have left the enveloping nest of my family and friends. For those closest to me, I am a source of great pride, some confusion, and considerable sadness. For those remaining from my parents' generation, the place where I now live (Oregon) is too far away and "a place we don't know."

In 2003 I became a foreign student in the United States, and so I became an invisible minority, experiencing my 'otherness' in a new and entirely unexpected way. I look like a typical resident of the white middle-class community in which I now live. But inside, I am not the same. My myths, dreams, and fears are different and none-the-less potent. And so I struggle to hang on to my sense of who I am, and I find myself needing to assert my difference just so I will not disappear.

For the first time I also know, although in a way clearly mitigated by White privilege, how it feels to have my freedom curtailed. As a foreign student, I must carry papers from the university confirming my right to return from my Canadian home to my American home. If I move my place of residence, the authorities must be notified, or I will be deported. In every interaction with the U.S. government (Customs and Immigration, the IRS, the DMV), I am subject to interrogation. I would guess that it is the color of my skin that ensures that it is almost always understated and civil.

My personal and my professional experiences have given me a profound sense of the importance of community. As a member of various educational professional associations, I have learned and shared new teaching strategies, been mentored by more experienced peers, and offered guidance and support to others. I have also made many friends. Participation in these organizations has also affirmed my belief that teachers and the teaching profession are in serious trouble. As schools across the United States struggle to meet ever-increasing demands with ever-diminishing budgets, teachers have become the frequent target of public dissatisfaction and parental despair. Accorded far less respect than their profession should entail, and far less power than their responsibilities require, they feel increasingly isolated, exhausted, and discouraged.

My Insider/Outsider Status

Spradley (1980) observed that it is possible for researchers who are members of the community they are studying to be both insiders and outsiders simultaneously and to alternate between those positions as they negotiate their relationship with the research participants and their data. In her discussion of the relationship between researchers and research participants, Wolf (1996) also noted that feminist researchers who can be seen to hold insider/outsider status find themselves in something of an ethical predicament. This dual identity requires them to acknowledge important issues of power extending beyond concerns with the authority to ask the questions and shape the representations of individuals and communities. As an insider/outsider studying the educational technology association community, I found myself in exactly this situation, and my awareness of its potential pitfalls had profound effects on my research.

The research literature points to insider status as providing advantages relating to entrance into the field and access to participants (Wolf, 1996). As a volunteer leader with the Educational Computing Organization of Ontario, the Association for Computer Studies Educators, the International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) Special Interest Group for Computer Science, the Association for Computing Machinery's K-12 Task Force, and the National Center for Women and Information Technology's K-12 Alliance, I had become a familiar figure to many in the educational technology association community. The perception of me as a knowledgeable insider increased the willingness of community leaders to talk with me and to seriously consider my request for access to their organization and leadership. My long-time participation in this community also afforded me a cultural sensitivity to the issues and concerns of my participants (Zavella, 1996). In addition, as Fontana and Frey noted (2000), my ability to use and understand the discourse of professional associations facilitated the development of a "sharedness of meanings" between myself and my research participants.

From the beginning of the research project, however, I was also acutely aware of the drawbacks of my insider/outsider position. Not only was I required to negotiate the tensions between my own subjectivity and how I defined my authentic self in relationship with my research participants, I needed to provide them with the opportunity to become comfortable within their shifting perceptions of themselves as colleagues and research participants and of me as community member and researcher. I became acutely conscious, for example, of the fact that my research participants were aware of my idiosyncrasies, past missteps, and foibles (Wolf, 1996).

Because I planned to remain within this community after my research was concluded, I was also especially aware of the harm I could do to the community and to myself. I worried that my insider status might result in pressure to represent my community in a positive light (Wolf, 1996; Zavella, 1996). I also felt a discontinuity between my desire to make my results broadly available and easy to understand, and the expectation that my work would be situated within a specific theoretical framework and sufficiently scholarly to meet the expectations of my academic community.

Seeing my research within the framework of a feminist poststructuralist perspective, however, provided me with precisely the tools I needed to acknowledge, navigate, and mitigate my insider/outsider status. It allowed me to understand that my research participants had chosen to enter into this relationship with me already understanding that I am both flawed and subjective; both insider and outsider. This perspective also gave me the flexibility of identity and subjectivity to work both with and against my insider/outsider status by acknowledging that how I define my community is at once always and already problematic because my subjectivity is constantly shifting. As Zavella (1996) argued, the very nature of the research process itself ensures that we are “almost always simultaneously insiders and outsiders” (p. 140). Narayan (1993) also pointed out that every researcher exhibits multiplex subjectivities that are assumed as the situation dictates. For example, whether we are at home or conducting research, we belong to two distinct worlds simultaneously, our professional world and our personal world. Recognizing and celebrating these multiple and shifting subjectivities allowed me to see that this story I am telling is only one possible

understanding and interpretation, enriched and diminished by what I bring to the story in the moment.

Participants and Time Line

A search of data on educational technology organizations compiled by ISTE revealed that there were approximately 46 such organizations operating in the United States at the time I began my study. A review of the web presence of each of these associations showed that they varied significantly in numbers of members, organizational complexity, and activity level. Despite this surface diversity, however, it was possible to distinguish three distinct types of educational technology associations on the basis of a few general characteristics. Table 3.1 identifies each organization type and its associated characteristics.

Of the organizations I consulted, ISTE proved the most helpful. Since its inception more than 30 years ago, ISTE has built up affiliate relationships with almost all of the active educational technology associations in the United States and Canada. As a result, ISTE has become a valuable repository of knowledge about the operations and history of many of these organizations. Several of ISTE's staff and long-time volunteers provided assistance in identifying associations that fell into each of the association types described above. Ultimately, I chose one stable national association as the subject of my in-depth case study. My hope was that choosing a stable and successful organization would provide a greater depth of information on leadership strategies that had generated, if not successful change agency, at least long-term sustainability.

My original contact with my target association was an email briefly describing the project and requesting a meeting with an executive staff member with the authority to

approve the association's participation in the research and provide access to staff, volunteers, and members. I then met with the Deputy Chief Executive Officer. During that meeting I described the goals and procedures for the research study and outlined my expectations concerning the amount of input from and access to association leadership, staff, volunteers, and members that it would require.

Table 3.1: Organization Types and Characteristics

Organization Type	Characteristics
Stable National Organizations	National scope and focus
	Large number of members (greater than 10,000)
	Long history of teacher support and engagement
	Stable multi-level leadership structure
	Diverse revenue stream that supports sustainability
Stable State Organizations	State-level scope and focus
	Significant number of members (greater than 3,000)
	Long history of teacher support and engagement
	Stable multi-level leadership structure
	Diverse revenue stream that supports sustainability
Chaotic Organizations	State or local level scope and focus
	Small number of members (less than 1,000)
	Intermittent teacher support and engagement
	Volunteer-only leadership structure
	Little or no consistent revenue stream

I also created a project description document for review by the association's Board of Directors (Appendix A). I offered assurances that participants would have an opportunity to review and revise their interview transcripts. I also offered to share my results in an information and discussion session with the participating association's staff and volunteer leadership should they believe this to be helpful in their efforts to improve their organization's ability to act as an effective change agent in education.

I selected the participants for this study (eight staff members, seven volunteers, and four members) in a variety of ways. I used the association's organization chart and staff list to identify individuals filling a variety of organizational roles at different seniority levels. I also attempted to ensure that I interviewed both long-time and relatively new staff members. I used the association's website to identify its volunteer leaders, and again attempted to choose volunteers with differing levels of responsibility and experience. Staff from the association's membership services department helped me identify and contact new members. Once I began conducting interviews, I also received suggestions about other possible participants who I then contacted to request their participation. In this way I was attempting to use what Patton (1990) described as a purposeful sampling that could lead to information-rich cases for in-depth study.

I addressed the participants' concerns by explaining that my research had been approved by Oregon State University and would be conducted within the ethical guidelines designed by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I noted that in undertaking this research project, I had agreed to adhere to a code of ethics that required me to attain informed consent from all of my research participants by providing them with consent forms, reading these forms, and answering any questions they might have. I

also agreed to keep all data they provided in a secure location with limited access (on my home computer to which no one but myself has password access) and as confidential as possible given the smallness of the community and the widespread familiarity among association leaders. I also informed my participants that while I would create pseudonyms for their association and disguise their location, the chance of their being identifiable was increased by certain unique characteristics of their organization. Upon discussion with this association's leadership, it was decided that the knowledge that would be provided by this study was sufficiently worthwhile to allow them to participate despite the risk of lost anonymity (see Appendix B for Informed Consent document).

The research study time line was determined primarily by the schedules of the participating association and individuals over the year of the study. The following table provides both the recruitment and data collection timeframes.

Table 3.2: Research Time Line

Timelines	Activity
10/24/06	Recruitment description sent to association Deputy CEO
10/24/06	Interview protocol sent to association leaders
10/27/06	Deputy CEO sends staff and volunteers permission to participate
11/21/06	Recruitment description sent to staff participants
11/29/06 – 02/01/07	Staff participant interviews take place
11/21/06	Recruitment description sent to volunteer leaders
12/04/06 – 02/13/07	Volunteer leader interviews take place
12/21/06	Member contact information provided by association
12/21/06	Recruitment description sent to member participants
01/10/07 – 01/30/07	Member interviews take place

Data Collection and Procedures

To allow for the complexity of the stories educational technology association stakeholders tell about themselves and their organizations (Fontana & Frey, 2000), multiple data collection tools were used. These tools included a research journal, individual interviews (in-person and by telephone with supplementary email follow-up where required), observation of organizational meetings (annual membership and special interest group meetings) and events (policy summits and conferences), and reviews of documents (meeting minutes, annual reports, and printed and online publications). These tools were used to investigate the following research question: How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?

Table 3.3 shows the alignment between the data tools and the research question.

Table 3.3: Alignment of Data Tools and Research Question

Question	Journal	Interviews	Observations	Documents
How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?	X	X	X	X

Each of these data tools provided a slightly different perspective on the discourses/stories that association stakeholders construct for and disseminate about themselves and their organization for different audiences. For example, the individual

interviews provided data on how individuals within each association viewed themselves as leaders, volunteers, and staff and their individual perceptions of the organization's capacity and function as a change agent. The observation of meetings offered insight into, not only what priorities or foci were evident from the discussion, but also how advocacy and leadership roles were played out in the meeting venue. Observation of events and investigation of the documents provided information about the stories that the association told about itself for its members and potential members about its public rather than private face.

Research Journal

I also kept a research journal throughout the study. The journal contained observational notes intended to capture events that I witnessed or conversations during which I was present, methodological notes consisting of instructions and reminders for myself and critiques of my strategies and methods, and theoretical notes that described my attempts to understand and derive meaning from my experiences and interactions (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). My journal also contained notes about my complex personal responses to the events in which I was participating. These notes served as a constant reminder of Lather's (1991) acknowledgement that "We live in both/and worlds full of paradox and uncertainties, where close inspection turns unities into multiplicities, clarities into ambiguities, univocal simplicities into polyvocal complexities" (p. xvi), and, at the same time, reflected my attempts to ensure that I was as aware as possible of the effect of my own presence on the phenomena I was perceiving (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

Individual Interviews

Because the research project was intended to elicit information about how staff, volunteers, and members of an educational technology association describe their organization's role within the educational system and evaluate its potential and effectiveness as a change agent, the individual interviews with staff, volunteer leaders (past and present), and members (longstanding and new) of the association provided the most significant body of data for the study. The interviews were 30 minutes to one hour in duration. They took place either in-person or by telephone, depending upon the location, schedule, and preference of the person being interviewed. All of the in-person and telephone interviews were recorded and then transcribed. To ensure accuracy, the participants were invited to review their own transcripts and to provide any corrections and clarifications. To ensure privacy, I replaced the names of all of the interviewees with a randomly assigned code number (e.g., 7100) and secured all recordings and transcripts in a locked cabinet to which I held the only key. I also used this numerical identifier to organize participant responses in the database and for attribution of quoted text.

Each participant was asked the same, predetermined set of questions (see Appendix C). Once these questions were asked, however, the participants were invited to add any additional information that they felt had some relevance to the issues we had discussed. In some instances, the additional information provided by the participants was so important and revealing that the original questionnaire was amended to include new questions. These actions were taken to ensure that pertinent information was not missed due to my own biases, preconceptions, or limited point of view. It was also my hope that allowing the participants to contribute this kind of spontaneous information to the

interview would allow them to participate more fully in the story this research was creating (Gubrium & Holstein, 1998). It is important to note, however, that by virtue of the interactive format of the interview itself, the final story that each person created about his or her association was inescapably shaped by my participation, not simply by virtue of the authority I exercised in the design and arrangements of the questions, but also in the fact of my role as audience. As Fontana and Frey (2000) noted, the story is always a mutual construction, shaped by the teller, the listener, and the context in which it is told.

Observations

Over the course of the case study, I observed membership and planning meetings and a selection of key events that were part of the association's annual conference. During these observations, I took note of the environment (private or public meeting, small or large gathering), speakers, topics, discussions, and verbatim quotes. As per the recommendations of Fontana and Frey (2000), I also attempted to observe the non-verbal features of the interaction during meetings.

Documents

I examined several documents from the association, including by-laws, policy documents, online and written periodicals and magazines, curriculum publications, websites, and event brochures and programs. To facilitate analysis of these documents, I constructed a searchable database containing all of the pertinent information for each entry (date, author, document type, etc.). Each document record also included my personal notes and observations and direct quotes from the document itself.

I also asked a senior staff member of the association to complete an organizational profile. The data provided by this profile document (Appendix D) included the year the organization was founded, place of origin, founding members (where known), mission statement, number of paid staff, number of members, annual revenues, primary revenue sources, and a brief description of its leadership/organizational structure.

Data Organization

This study was intended to improve the understanding of the current and potential role of educational technology associations within education by focusing on the following question: How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent?

I employed a number of data collection tools to gather data, and so used a number of data management strategies to organize the information collected using these tools to support the analysis phases of the study. Although I have some experience using computer software developed specifically for qualitative data analysis such as NVivo, I used the FileMaker Pro database software as the primary tool for storing, organizing, and analyzing the data I collected from the interviews, observations, and document investigations I had undertaken for this study. I chose this tool for a number of reasons. I have used FileMakerPro for many years and have found that its highly customizable templates make it possible to create multiple layouts. These multiple layouts (which I could move between with a single toggle) allowed me to create highly functional views of the data for specific tasks such as data entry, columnar display, and limited or complete contents views. FileMakerPro also allows the user to add new fields at any

time (in a single or in multiple layouts) and in this way supports a data analysis process that evolves and expands over time as new pathways and patterns become apparent. In addition to the almost unlimited number of columns available for data entry and organization, the software also has a powerful search capability that allows all of the fields and their contents to be searched using a single string. It also provides multi-level sorting. Finally, given the sheer volume of data that can be amassed in a qualitative research project and the likelihood that anything that can go wrong with computer technology will go wrong, I also believed it important to use software with a rebuild facility that I know from personal experience is capable of rebuilding a crashed database with more than 1,600 pages of text entries.

Although my research journal served as an important data collection tool, I felt compelled to keep it separately from the FileMakerPro database in which all of my participant-provided data were stored. I did this for many reasons. First, I found that my research participants were less likely to find my note-taking visually and aurally distracting when I was using a paper notebook and a mechanical pencil than when I was using my computer. Using paper and pencil also saved me from having to worry about finding an electrical outlet or having my battery run down mid-meeting. Second, I considered my journal as a separate text from the text that my research participants were providing. Full of reminders and even the occasional exhortation, it was my internal conversation about the process of creating the story or my reactions to the story, rather than the story itself. As much as I recognized that ultimately however much I relied on their words, the only true story I could tell was my own, I still felt an overwhelming urge

to keep my research participants' words and thoughts somehow uncontaminated by too much pixel proximity with my own.

Data Analysis

Data from the interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed over the course of the year-long data collection process using a modified constant comparative method (Strauss, 1987). The flexibility provided by this method allowed me to stay close to the data throughout the project and to engage in theorizing early in the analysis, thereby strengthening the validity of the analysis process by minimizing time between codification, analysis, and reflection. The triangulation of data from the review of the field notes, observations, and documents also served to support the trustworthiness of the interview data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) noted that the data analysis process is very much shaped by the researcher and the categories that emerge from the coding process are unique to that individual. This is certainly the case with the categories I developed because they were the result of the ways in which I conceived of and designed my research and identified, organized, and described the data I collected. I began the data analysis process by coding the transcripts from each interview using a framework drawn directly from my interview questions. This framework included the following themes: educational technology associations' roles and goals, association contributions, change agency, and leadership.

I constantly compared the similarities and differences in the ways in which the participants framed their answers, revising and expanding the framework as additional themes emerged from the interviews. Once the original transcripts had been reviewed

(and in many cases moderately revised) by the research participants, I transferred the complete contents of all of the transcripts into the database, creating a separate record for every questions answered by every participant (a total of 513 records). In addition to the text for each participant answer, the records also included the questions number, question text, participant identification number, gender, age, geographic location, and job/volunteer/or member status for each participant. To facilitate the coding process, I sorted the records by question number and participant identification number and printed full-text hard copies of each record. I then coded all of the participant answers for each question. This process allowed me to identify and describe the major themes and subthemes both within and across the questions. Once all of the records were coded, I created a new text document that listed all of the themes and subthemes for each question along with the participant identification numbers for each individual whose answers included those themes (see coding notes Appendix E). I attempted to preserve the voices of the staff, volunteers, and members by assigning a specific code (attached to the participant identification number) to all of the data that originated from each of the three groups. It is important to note that the process of assigning both major and subthemes was an ongoing one. As my data analysis process progressed toward the integrating stage of the constant comparative method, I began to see that certain major themes I had identified were in fact subcategories of other themes that I only became aware of over time.

Once I had finished coding the interviews, I then coded the pertinent notes from my research journal, observations, and document investigations using the coding framework I had drawn from the interviews. I entered all of the coded data from these

additional documents into the database and began to systematically analyze all of the data by searching for instances of the items from my coding framework. During this stage of the data analysis, I began to refine the themes, removing obvious redundancies and reclassifying a few of the data segments that I found, upon later viewing, to be improperly categorized. The end result of this process was three major themes (how associations contribute to the lives of teachers and their students, change agency and associations, leadership and associations) and several subthemes (association contributions to teachers, association contributions to educational technology, association contributions to education, leadership qualities, leadership changes over time, artifacts of association advocacy and leadership, and personal connections to the association).

After I completed the integration process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I began to identify specific quotes from the interviews that I believed were especially illustrative of a given major theme or subtheme. This is particularly important as it helped me to resist the temptation to select quotes that were pithy or well-worded. Instead, I tried to select the quotes that were most illustrative. I used the numerical identifier I had assigned to each participant to identify the source for each quotation used in Chapter 4. As per the suggestions of Lincoln and Guba, I also attempted to limit my selection of quotes to examples that demonstrated emerging patterns while providing maximum information. I terminated this process when the examples began to seem redundant. I then organized the data into theme-focused tables, listing the thematic responses in order of frequency for each group (staff, volunteers, members).

Writing as an Act of Interpretation

From the beginning of the research process I tried to be clear with myself and my participants that I was telling a story, or more accurately, that I was retelling the stories my participants told to me. This story is refracted through the multiple subjectivities, perspectives, and lenses that both they and I bring to our understandings, interpretations, and representations of the role of educational technology associations in education and more specifically their abilities to serve as change agents. What is harder to explain, however, is how much this story was actually telling me; that is, how much of this story was revealed to me only as I wrote it. Writing, for me, is what Davies (2006) described as a place where I am blind and do not know what I will discover.

Writing has always been a way of thinking for me, more than simply a way of organizing and sharing what I already know, it is how I actually come to that knowledge. Richardson (2006) noted that writing is a method of discovery, of finding new things that we have never known before, of opening ourselves up to new discourses. St. Pierre (2006) also described the moments of insight that occur during writing as being the result of *fugitive data*, that is, all of the data that the storyteller brings to the story. According to St. Pierre, the thought that happens during writing has a rhizomatic validity that is only possible when you abandon representation as the ideal from a singular or even multiple perspectives. You cannot come to this thought by thought alone. In this way, the act of representation, of retelling the stories, allows us to explore the data more completely. It is not just a case of reframing the data, but of writing inside of and through the data.

This perception of writing as enquiry is entirely consistent with a feminist poststructuralist epistemology, because it considers the power of interpretation and multiple subjectivities and acknowledges that all knowledge is situated knowledge. As Richardson (2000) noted:

Poststructuralism links language, subjectivity, social organization, and power. The centerpiece is language. Language does not “reflect” social reality, but produces meaning, creates social reality. Different languages and different discourses within a given language divide up the world and give it meaning in ways that are not reducible to one another. Language is how social organizations and power are defined and contested and the place where our sense of selves, our “subjectivity,” is constructed. (pp. 928-929)

In this way, poststructuralism requires us to understand and position ourselves as writers, and at the same time, frees us from the pretense that we can create a single all-knowing all-saying text.

The Trustworthiness of the Teller and the Tale

If I begin by admitting that I am telling you a story of the stories told to me, how then are you to evaluate the trustworthiness of the teller or the tale? There is no getting around this central question of qualitative research. After my long career as a positivist researcher, I can only tell you that my grandfather’s contention that “Figures never lie but liars can figure” is completely consistent with my experience. As Giroux (2003) noted, despite claims to the contrary, in both quantitative and qualitative research, “There are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of—and between—the observer and the observed” (p. 19). By situating myself within a feminist poststructuralist perspective, I have already surrendered the claim that I can interpret my data objectively and offer up a single truth. In its place, I have embraced Haraway’s (1988) contention that data interpretation itself is a process of “contestation,

deconstruction, passionate construction, webbed connections, and hope for transformation of systems of knowledge and ways of seeing” (pp. 584-585). How then, can my trustworthiness be measured?

In accordance with both Fontana and Frey (2000) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), my data collection and interpretation practices involved the analysis of multiple documents from participants as well as my research field notes and research journals, and the use of member-checking to ensure the veracity of the interview transcripts. My expectation was that these practices would help to ensure the accuracy of the interview data and enable that data to be triangulated to confirm its trustworthiness (validity). As Richardson (2000) noted, however, the problem with triangulation is that it still assumes that there is a fixed point or object that can be triangulated.

In an effort to define a richer, more contextualized form of trustworthiness that is more consistent with poststructuralist epistemology, Richardson (2000) suggested that qualitative research should embody/reflect a crystalline validity. Like a crystal prism that reflects externalities and refracts within itself to create patterns that shift depending upon the viewpoint, a crystalline validity would allow for multi-dimensionality based upon perspective. This reader-centered validity would allow the reader to evaluate the usefulness of the research based upon the following five criteria:

1. **Substantive Contribution:** Does this piece contribute to our understanding of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply-grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? How has his/her perspective informed the construction of the text?
2. **Aesthetic merit:** Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytic practices open up the text, invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?
3. **Reflexivity:** Is the author cognizant of the epistemology of postmodernism? How did the author come to write this text? How was the information gathered? Are there ethical issues? How has the author's subjectivity been both the producer and

product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view? Does the author hold him- or herself accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?

4. Impact: Does this affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions? Move me to write? Move me to try new research practices? Move me to action?
5. Expression of reality: Does this text embody a fleshed out, embodied sense of lived experience? Does it seem *true*—a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the *real*? (p. 937)

These are fair criteria for the evaluation of any story because they place the power to evaluate both relevance and quality clearly in the hands of the reader. I am telling you a story based on the stories told to me. My hope is that this story will be useful and interesting for you and that it will provide valuable insight into how the staff, volunteers, and members of the association I studied are grappling with questions of agency and change within the educational system. My wish is that it will change you the way the hearing and the telling has changed me.

CHAPTER 4: DATA INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

This research is about the ways in which various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent. It is also a story, constructed from the stories of many others, and filtered through my own experience with and understanding of educational technology associations for teachers. And, as is often the case with such case studies, this story extended beyond my original research question and grew to encompass a much richer sense of the benefits and drawbacks of being and belonging to such an organization than I was capable of conceiving before my research participants so generously shared their stories with me.

I begin this chapter with a brief overview of the data I used for this research and the methods I used to interpret that data. I then provide a profile of the organization that was the subject of my case study with the goal of providing the reader with a richer contextual understanding of the organization and its history. Finally, I examine the results of my research in light of both my original research question and primary and secondary themes that emerged during my data analysis.

Data Sources and Interpretation

Data for this research were taken from four main sources: individual interviews, observations, documents, and my research journal. The documents included association documents (minutes), publications (both print and online), an organizational profile created by association staff, the association web site, and notes and minutes of the two-day Board meetings (from September 2006 to September 2007). Additional documents

included emails, biographical information obtained from the research participants, and interview transcripts. My research journal contained observational notes intended to capture events or conversations; methodological notes consisting of instructions, reminders, and critiques of my strategies and methods; and theoretical notes connected to readings (particularly methodological readings).

Data from the interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed over the course of the data collection process using a constant comparative method. Data were read multiple times and were coded by question and by participant. The three broad themes that emerged were: stakeholder perceptions of the contributions of educational technology associations, perceptions of educational technology associations as change agents, and perceptions of leadership (both organizational and personal). Within each of these broad themes, several subthemes were also identified. These subthemes were identified through multiple readings, conversations with other researchers and with staff from other associations, and through my own attempts to write into and through the data.

Organizational Profile

This research is about a real educational technology association and the people who comprise its staff, volunteers, and members. Underlying the stories that each participant told me about his or her involvement with this association over the years, is the organization itself. This profile outlines the history of the organization and the current context in which it operates. It is yet another story, the story that this organization tells about itself. My hope is that the contextual information this profile provides will help you better understand the context in which these stories (including mine) take place.

The Educational Technology Association (TETA) (a pseudonym) was formed in late 1979 by a professor at a mid-sized northwestern university with the goal of supporting teachers in their efforts to more effectively integrate new computing technologies in the teaching and learning process. The university provided the original support for the association in the form of office space, university appointments for staff, and clerical services. Graduate students also provided an additional labor source. Over the years, the association went through numerous changes, including name changes, mergers with similar organizations, leadership changes, organizational changes, and location changes that eventually included the opening of an additional office on the east coast. It also enjoyed steady growth in its member numbers, its reputation as service and resource provider, and its credibility as a voice for computer-using educators.

Today, TETA has 14,382 members (with a 50% member retention rate) and a paid staff of between 60 and 70 full-time employees. The annual revenue for the association for fiscal year 2006 was \$12,267,626. TETA estimates its sources of revenue as follows.

Table 4.1: Association Revenues for Fiscal Year 2006

Revenue Source	Percentage
Annual conference	48%
Federal and private grants	15%
Membership	14%
Publications	7%
Workshops/training	7%
Contractual	5%
Other	4%

Individual members of the organization pay yearly dues of \$79 for a standard membership. Table 4.2 contains the member benefits as listed in the organizational

profile and more diffusely described on TETA's website.

Table 4.2: TETA Member Benefits

TETA Member Benefits
Advocacy
Annual conference
Curriculum/standards guidelines
Career or employment information
Interactive forums (listservs, online forums)
Legislative or policy information
Online publications/newsletters
Professional development opportunities
Print magazines/journals
Research results
Teaching and learning resources
Web site

The association's governance structure is a fairly complex mixture of staff and volunteer leadership. Staff leadership consists of a Chief Executive Officer who is located at the east coast office and serves as the primary spokesperson and visionary of the association and a Deputy Chief Executive Officer who resides in the west coast office and has primary responsibility for TETA's day-to-day operations and staff management. The volunteer leadership consists of a Board of Directors comprised of member-elected educational leaders and a complex structure of committees whose chairs are appointed by the board president. The board consists of 17 additional national and international representatives. Board elections are held online each spring and all members may run for open board positions. Once the membership has elected the new board, the members of the board participate in an internal election process to fill the

executive positions, including president, secretary, and treasurer. The board meets face-to-face three times per year and monthly by phone. TETA also supports approximately 75 Affiliate nonprofit member organizations worldwide. These affiliates work with TETA to provide advocacy support at the grassroots level. Representatives from each affiliate organization meet face-to-face annually at TETA's annual conference.

Like many professional associations for educators, volunteers do much of TETA's work, serving as members of standing and project committees, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Current association committees include Accreditation and Standards, Awards and Recognition, Conference, Finance, International, Policies and Procedures, Public Policy and Advocacy, Publications, SIG Advisory Council, and Affiliate Members Advisory Council. Staff members responsible for coordinating volunteer activities estimate that there are currently 332 volunteers (not counting publications reviewers and contributors) actively contributing time and expertise to the organization.

TETA's SIGs have played several important organizational roles. The SIGs, with their focus on areas of specialization within the broader framework of educational technology (such as digital media) or education itself (for example special education), provide members of a diverse educational community with opportunities for engagement and networking with those who share common interests or responsibilities. Because the SIGs also have their own leadership structures (consisting of elected executives), and in some cases even their own publications, the SIGs have also served as a leadership development environment for future volunteer leaders of the organization as a whole.

TETA describes itself as being mission-driven and advocacy focused. It lists the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program and broader education

legislation such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and the Higher Education Act as key areas for engagement. According to its web site, TETA's policy activities arise from its belief that the effective use of technology can drive academic success and is an essential element in ensuring a citizenry that is prepared to succeed in an evolving global economy. The focus on educational policy and legislation has also created an opportunity for TETA to conduct outreach to other organizations with similar missions.

Like many educational associations directed at specific academic disciplines, TETA also plays an active role in defining both curriculum content and teacher preparation requirements. Through the development and distribution of curriculum standards, its efforts to ensure adoption and implementation of these standards, and its professional development and training initiatives, the association is attempting to fill the numerous educational gaps. These gaps have resulted from the decentralized educational decision making and funding mechanisms that distinguish the United States from many other countries where policy, curriculum, and funding are determined on a national rather than local level.

Participant Profile

While it is impossible to provide rich descriptions of each of the 19 direct participants in this study without compromising their anonymity, I believe it is important to provide the reader with some idea of the diversity of experiences, viewpoints, and levels of engagement with the association that they represent as a group. In fact, it is this diversity that I believe gives my story of this association whatever trustworthiness it may possess. Coming from a poststructuralist perspective, I do not claim (or even secretly believe) that mine is the "true" story. I feel quite certain, however, that somewhere,

between my participants' commonalities and differences, and amongst the intersections and disconnections of the stories they have told me, I might be able to capture enough of the essence of this association so that it resonates for those whose stories I have enfolded into my own, and provides something of interest and value for those who are just now creating stories of their own associations.

The study participants ranged in age from 31 to 67 and all of them are Caucasian. Eleven of the participants were women and eight were men. Seventeen of the members reside in various states across the United States, one resides in Canada, and another in Australia. The participants represent three distinct groups within TETA: staff members, current and former volunteers, and members. It is important to note that there is significant fluidity between the latter two categories. All of the volunteers are also members, but not all of the members are volunteers. In addition, some of the volunteers are currently involved in the organization, while others have not held a volunteer position for some time. Some of the participants have been members for longer than they can easily remember (the longest being 24 years) and two have joined in the past year.

The staff members who participated in this research also have differing lengths and levels of engagement. One staff member (widely considered to be the institutional memory of the association) has worked with TETA for 24 years. Others have been working for the association for only a short time. The staff members also represent a variety of areas of organizational responsibility and include the following: the CEO and Deputy CEO; and staff from the periodicals, membership, professional development, conference, and policy and advocacy departments.

The volunteer participants included the board president, a former board president, current and former members of the board of directors, current and former committee chairs, current and former SIG presidents, and current and former committee members. The volunteers and members also held a wide variety of jobs within the fields of education and educational policy. The participants included a retired teacher, school administrators (at both the school and district level), district technical coordinators, current university professors, the head of a major state educational project, and even an educational policy advisor to a U.S. governor.

Despite the differences in their association responsibilities and experiences, all of the participants shared several important characteristics. All of them were generous with their time and expertise, gracious in their support of this research project, and seemed interested in the work I was doing and what might be learned from this research. They were also articulate and had clearly given considerable thought to my questions.

Organizing the Story Elements

Like all stories, the one I am about to tell was engendered by my personal curiosity and shaped by the questions that I asked, and embodied in my original research question: How do the various stakeholders (staff, volunteers, and members) in an educational technology association describe the organization's contribution to the educational system in terms of its role as a change agent? As the result of the questions I posed to my participants, I expected that the following themes would emerge from the data:

1. Perceptions of whether and how associations contribute to the professional lives of teachers and their students
2. Perceptions of change agency and associations
3. Perceptions of leadership and associations

So I was not surprised to find that these themes occurred to greater and lesser extents in all of the stories my participants told me. As I read, reread, and wrote through the data, however, a number of subthemes also began to emerge within each of these larger themes. With regard to participants' perceptions of how educational technology associations in general, and how TETA specifically, impact education, for example, the data seemed to reveal three distinct areas in which the participants believed that associations played a role. These areas included supporting their educator members, enhancing the field of educational technology, and improving education as a whole. The participants' considerations of whether educational technology associations could or should serve as change agents within education seemed to focus around issues of the tools that these associations could use to effect change and the purposes of change itself. When asked to consider these same questions in relation to TETA, however, the participants spoke instead about how they knew TETA was a change agent, what factors made it successful, and what barriers existed to its effecting a greater level of change.

A similar pattern emerged in the data relating to leadership. When asked about educational technology associations as leaders, the participants focused on leadership qualities and whether the need for those qualities had changed over time. In their discussions of TETA as a leader, however, they focused instead on specific artifacts or programs that they perceived as providing proof of TETA's leadership. The data relating to personal leadership appeared to be more tightly coupled with the specific survey questions that attempted to draw out participants' perceptions of whether and why they see themselves as leaders, what motivates them to assume leadership roles, and ways in which they would like to improve their own leadership capacity.

The final theme, which one of the participants suggested, centered on the ways in which the participants (staff, volunteers, and members) feel connected to TETA. In this final section, three subthemes emerged: connection to mission, connection to professional community, and connection to personal community. The following sections explore these themes and subthemes in detail.

When reading the results tables, it may be helpful to note that a participant's answer to a question may contain multiple coded themes, so that the total number of responses will almost always be greater than the number of participants. The only cases in which this does not occur (that is when there are fewer answers in a table than participants in the study) is when a single subtheme has been organized into multiple tables to allow a more in-depth view of the data. It is also important to note that, for all of the tables in this chapter, I have grouped participants by their primary relationship to the association. Despite the fact that staff and volunteers are also TETA members, I have separated the participant responses into the following three categories: staff for whom TETA is their primary source of employment, volunteers who have donated their time to a TETA project or responsibility (e.g., board members, committee chairs, and SIG chairs), and members who pay their dues and may attend TETA events but do not otherwise actively participate in the association.

Participant Perceptions of Educational Technology Associations

Every story has a context, a sense of connection with the larger world that we all use to evaluate a specific experience or relationship. For some participants in this study, their understanding of educational technology associations has been formed entirely through their participation in TETA. For others, however, experiences with other

professional educational associations (usually at the state level) have led them to develop a broader perspective of these organizations and a sharper sense of what educational associations can and cannot achieve. To better understand the participants' perceptions of TETA's contributions to education in terms of its role as a change agent. I began by asking the participants about their perceptions of educational technology associations in general. I hoped that these general questions might provide a richer context for examining the variety and complexity of participant stories as to whether and how TETA contributes to the professional lives of teachers and their students.

Educational Technology Associations: Role and Goals

I began my interview with each participant by asking about the roles and goals of educational technology associations in order to get some sense of their views on these organizations in general. Analysis of the data revealed that the participants believed that educational technology associations contribute to the professional lives of teachers and their students in a number of ways. Close examination of this data indicated that while the participants identified a number of individual benefits, each of these benefits could be assigned to one of three subcategories: benefits to members, benefits to the field of educational technology, and benefits to education as a whole. Table 4.3 shows the benefits to member identified by the participants (including specific mentions by staff, volunteers, and members). The numbers in each table column represent the total number of participant iterations of a given benefit in the participants' responses to question 1: "What do you see as the role of educational technology associations in education?" and question 2: "What should be the goal of educational technology associations?"

Table 4.3: Member Benefits Provided by Ed Tech Associations

Benefits to Members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Provide resources	6	1	1
Networking	5	3	0
Professional development	3	2	2
Build community	2	2	1
Disseminate information	2	2	0
Building leadership	3	1	0
Improve member's technical skills	0	3	0
Publishing venue	0	1	0
Venue to demonstrate leadership/knowledge	0	1	0
Build advocacy skills	0	1	0
Provide mentoring	0	0	1

As Table 4.3 demonstrates, resources, networking and professional development are perceived as important benefits that educational technology associations provide for members. One staff member stated, “I think we provide a host of resources and professional development experiences that allow teachers to be more effective in the classroom in particular. Other members that resources apply to – technology coordinators, principals, etc. – we have resources for them as well” (7100) and a new member related the importance of access to TETA resources, saying, “I’ve only been a member of one for a very short time but so far, one of the things I think they do really well is provide resources” (7530).

Staff and volunteers also perceive the association’s ability to provide networking opportunities as a major member benefit. As one staff member noted, “I think we provide an opportunity for members to connect with other educators that might have

similar interests and play a similar role in education. I think we provide an opportunity for people to connect with other like-minded folks” (7550). Another volunteer also suggests that the technology itself drives the networking and community building in a way that may not occur in other similar organizations.

But what makes technology organizations unique is the time pressure of responding to rapid change. Our colleagues in traditional fields like psychology, for example, are still teaching about Freud. There’s not a lot that changes week-to-week or year-to-year. But in our field, things change weekly. So how do you personally keep up? How do you draw upon the expertise of colleagues with similar or dissimilar interests to kind of break that new ground? For example, if you’re new to podcasting, how do you look around to find other people to help you bootstrap and jumpstart your work in podcasting so you’re not starting from square one? I think, it is a unique challenge when we talk about technology. Other educational professions aren’t under the gun, with the amount of change and the pace of change that an educational technology association experiences. (7540)

TETA’s role as a provider of community for its members is also promoted in its numerous member publications. In an online publication, one member is quoted as follows:

TETA’s [annual conference] is my favorite professional development opportunity, whether I’m presenting or sitting in a plethora of interesting workshops or other learning opportunities. As the world of educational technology changes, I’m increasingly thankful for TETA, a place to keep a hand on the pulse of that change. Through my friends, many met at [the conference] over the years, I have become a better teacher. (TETA email newsletter, January 10, 2007)

The participants also identified a number of ways in which they perceived that educational technology associations contribute to the use of technology in schools. Table 4.4 shows the benefits to the field of educational technology identified by the participants (including specific mentions by staff, volunteers, and members). The totals for each benefit represent the total occurrences in the participants’ responses to question 1: “What

do you see as the role of educational technology associations in education?” and question 2: “What should be the goal of educational technology associations?”

Table 4.4: Discipline Benefits Provided by Ed Tech Associations

Benefits to Educational Technology	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Advocacy	7	7	2
Vision/leadership	5	2	1
Identify best practices	2	2	2
Disseminate information	1	3	2
Conduct research	3	1	0
Develop standards	1	2	0
Outreach beyond ed tech community	1	0	1
Elevate the discourse	1	0	0
Provide curriculum standards	0	1	0
Ensure appropriate use	0	0	1

The important role that educational technology associations play in advocating for the use of computing technology in teaching and learning was noted by a number of the participants at all levels of association involvement. TETA’s Director of Government Affairs stated that educational technology associations play a key role at the federal level by “making sure that policy makers understand the importance of educational technology for moving our schools to the modern age and influencing policy and funding and outcomes” (7610). A volunteer also noted the importance of association advocacy at the regional level:

I’m involved in a very active state-wide association, which is involved in advocating state level decisions, looking out for the best interest of teachers and students and school districts in Maryland, so at a local level I think an educational technology association needs to advocate and speak to the issues that are pertinent to its particular region. (7510)

This view of TETA as an advocate for educational technology at the national level is a constant theme in the association's member publications. For example, in an online publication focusing on the federal budget, TETA's senior executive is quoted as saying:

We are deeply disappointed that the Administration has chosen, once again, to eliminate federal funding for educational technology...Understanding and using technology are critical components of all students' academic careers and, most certainly, barometers of their future employment prospects. Given the president's emphasis in the State of the Union on the importance of developing math and science skills in America's students in order to keep America competitive globally, we do not see how eliminating federal educational technology funding advanced his global competitiveness agenda or helps our students. (TETA email newsletter, January 6, 2007)

On another occasion, a columnist in TETA's flagship magazine also encourages members to "learn how to build an effective advocacy organization in your state. Individuals or teams can gain skills to influence policymakers at the U.S. state and federal levels" (TETA flagship magazine, February 1, 2007, p. 7).

The participants also identified a number of ways in which they believe that educational technology associations serve education as a whole. Table 4.5 shows the benefits to education as a whole identified by the participants (including specific mentions by staff, volunteers, and members). The totals for each benefit represent the total participants' responses to question 1: "What do you see as the role of educational technology associations in education?" and question 2: "What should be the goal of educational technology associations?"

Table 4.5: Benefits to Education Provided by Ed Tech Associations

Benefits to Education	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Improve learning	1	5	0
Improve teaching	3	1	0
Support collaboration and partnerships	1	1	1
Improve schools	1	2	0
Better life for students	2	0	0
Venue for giving back to education	1	0	0
Support those who are struggling	1	0	0
Support school reform	0	1	0

TETA's president noted that educational technology associations could positively impact education by focusing on larger partnerships in a way that educational bureaucracies are not capable of doing.

The most important place in the learning process is that pyramid of teachers, students, and parents. Ed technology associations are able to focus on that in a way that large bureaucracies like school districts or state education associations or the federal education department can't so they play a special, unique role in supporting the learning and teaching process. (7140)

The participants' perceptions of the importance of partnerships in the formulation of TETA's advocacy strategy data is also supported by the following statement made by a senior TETA staff member in its flagship magazine:

TETA's presence in Washington D.C., continues to provide opportunities to collaborate with a wide range of institutions, agencies, and other professional organizations to provide leadership among many of those entities for effective use of technology in education and for effective influence on policy. (TETA flagship magazine, November 1, 2006)

These comments also demonstrate the participants' perception that professional educational associations are capable of building key partnerships with diverse groups

interested in promoting a common educational agenda.

A senior TETA staff member also noted the essential connection between TETA's status as a non-profit educational organization and its commitment to improving education for students' sake.

Ultimately, the role of an ed tech not-for-profit association is to use our status and position to leave the world a better place than we find it. We do that through promoting the use of educational technology as a tool for improving teaching and learning so that kids have a better shot at being successful at living a healthy, happy life. (7105)

This focus on improving learning for students can be found throughout TETA's internal and external publications, most particularly in its magazine. In an article on educational technology research, for example, an author noted, "It is clear that preparing students for their future roles in society (and the workforce) will require that computers are integrated into almost every aspect of their work—and probably their entire lives" (TETA flagship magazine, December 1, 2006, p. 38). And in a member profile published in a later issue, a TETA member references the essential link between improving teacher knowledge and the development of more effective teaching strategies.

Education technology allows us to connect with the world and teach children to be global citizens, communicating and collaborating with the world community. I try to motivate teachers to be lifelong learners, willing to try new ways to reach our digital kids and give them a global voice. (TETA flagship magazine, April 1, 2007, p. 47)

When asked to identify things that educational technology associations do well, the participants also identified a number of member benefits and benefits to the discipline. Table 4.6 shows the participants' responses relating to benefits to members (including specific mentions by staff, volunteers, and members).

Table 4.6: What Ed Tech Associations Do Well: Member Benefits

Benefits to members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Build community	2	2	1
Provide publications	1	2	1
Disseminate information	2	0	1
Develop leadership	0	1	0
Meet member needs	0	1	0
Provide resources	0	0	1

Table 4.7 shows the participants' responses relating to benefits to the field of educational technology (including specific mentions by staff, volunteers, and members).

Table 4.7: What Ed Tech Associations Do Well: Discipline Benefits

Benefits to educational technology	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Advocacy	1	2	0
Provide conferences	1	1	0
Perpetuate ed tech culture	1	0	1
Use technology effectively	0	1	1
Contribute to the body of knowledge	1	0	0

The perception that educational technology associations support a particular ed tech culture is an interesting one because both the volunteer and the staff member who allude to this benefit situate it in a specific venue, the educational technology conference. For the staff member, this sense of an ed tech culture distinguishes educational technology associations from other discipline-based educational associations.

I think that educational technology associations provide opportunities for networking with other like-minded educators. And I know a lot of associations do that. But what I've seen in the educational technology

community is a real connection. It is not just connection with wires and satellites, I think we're seen as a human connector as well. I go to a lot of different types of conferences and the enthusiasm and the energy among the educational technology community is just tremendous. And I think that's one of the things that educational technology associations have—it's our culture. It's one of the things that we've cultivated and nurtured, and we've watched increase over time. I think that differentiates us from other associations. (7550)

Another participant, however, indicated that the culture on display at such venues embodies more diversity of experiential knowledge and technical ability than one might suspect.

And when you take a look at programs or conferences that they put on, they really do have sort of haves and have-nots. I think of the haves as being sort of the higher end computer science people, the people that just live, breathe and die GIS, and desktop publishing, and multimedia and so on. And then the other aspect is that they provide things for what I like to call the "How Appleworks changed my life" type of sessions where people all of a sudden have found technology. (7600)

Educational Technology Associations: Unmet Expectations

As the previous Table and quotes indicate, the participants have very high expectations of educational technology associations. It is important to note, however, that they are equally forthcoming about the ways in which these organizations fail to live up to these expectations. Analysis of the data relating to the perceived shortcomings of educational technology associations again seemed to fall consistently into the three subthemes identified earlier. When asked to identify what educational technology associations do poorly, the participants identified problems in three benefit areas: member benefits, benefits to educational technology, and benefits to education as a whole. Table 4.8 shows the participants' perceptions of poorly delivered member benefits.

Table 4.8: What Ed Tech Associations Do Poorly: Member Benefits

Benefits to members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Meet diverse member needs	1	2	0
Balance mission with revenues	1	0	0
Market to diverse potential membership	1	0	0
Develop staff knowledge	1	0	0
Meet member needs	0	1	0
Build community at the local level	0	0	1

The participants noted a number of ways in which educational technology associations fail to meet the needs of their diverse membership. As a former volunteer noted, the failure to appropriately address diversity could result from conference or professional development offerings that are not perceived as meeting individual needs.

I guess—this sounds so self-important and self-serving, but I don't think that they do a whole lot for people who have been around a long time like me, I mean, who are very much in the top of our field. I think I'm in the top of my field. I know that sounds very vain but I don't think the...conference provides me opportunities for growth beyond networking. (7126)

As one of the staff members with conference responsibilities noted, though, “It is hard to be all things to all people, so you probably have to pick and choose your battles” (7506).

One of the staff members also expressed the belief that an organization's seeming inability to meet the needs of all educational technology association members may actually be linked to limited opportunities for the staff to improve and expand their personal knowledge of educational technology.

I think this is not necessarily just a function of educational technology associations but associations in general, and that's that they are nonprofit organizations that generally operate on a shoestring budget. Whereas the idea to position ourselves as a leading organization offering cutting edge or bleeding edge information, we ourselves as the staff people and the providers of that information aren't necessarily as on the edge as we should

be. For example...I should know enough about what technology is out there and how it works and how it might be applied in the classroom...and I can't necessarily get my hands on that technology because they cost money to get it, or, you know, we just don't have the resources to acquire those kinds of things. (7100)

This concern with the association's ability to meet the diverse needs of its membership is also given play in both its internal and external documents. Concern with TETA's current benefit structure is noted in the minutes of a Board meeting as follows, "The committee is suggesting discussion around the expansion of membership categories, such as schools, or different levels of membership. There's also strong support for the International event" (Minutes of the Board, December 7, 2006). A TETA magazine article by a TETA Board member also raises questions regarding the association's ability to provide sufficient member benefits to international members.

It's quite expensive for New Zealanders to attend [the conference], but go to South America or Africa where the salaries are nothing like ours. [The conference] is not ever going to be a possibility for them, so what other benefits are they going to get? Does the [flagship magazine], for instance, provide as much for non-U.S. membership? (TETA flagship magazine, May 1, 2007, p. 47)

Table 4.9 shows the participants' responses relating to perceptions of poorly delivered benefits to the discipline of educational technology. Participant criticisms of educational technology associations' advocacy efforts on behalf of the discipline and their lack of influence on educational policy appear to arise more from the perceived inability of such organizations to operate effectively and simultaneously on the multiple levels at which educational policy and decision making are enacted.

Table 4.9: What Ed Tech Associations Do Poorly: Discipline Benefits

Benefits to educational technology	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Advocacy	1	2	1
Influence policy	3	0	0
Collaborate with other organizations	2	1	0
Access funding	1	0	0
Use technology effectively	0	1	0

For one staff participant, the issue is a lack of impact on legislators.

I think what educational technology associations don't do well, and what TETA also does not do well, is to advocate at a level that has maximum impact. We don't advocate with legislators very well. We don't do a good job of sort of that governmental policy influencing. I think education in general doesn't do it well and educational technology does not do it well right now. (7105)

Another TETA staff member, however, noted that the failure of organizations with similar goals to collaborate on policy issues might also be a factor.

Too many associations also fail to leverage collaborative efforts. So I believe that in education, when organizations collaborate, kids win. And my sense is, is that we don't reach the policy makers very well, and in some cases, we fail to collaborate with other organizations in education. (7145)

A member of the Board of Directors, however, expressed concern with both the effectiveness of current advocacy efforts and with potential points of impact.

I guess what I mean by advocate is that I think we can all talk about why educational technology is important, but I don't think we write enough about it. I don't think we publish white papers about how it's being effective. And I certainly don't think we go up and sit on Capitol Hill and beat down on every Congressman or Congresswoman's door, and we definitely don't do it at the State houses. (7510)

One current volunteer, however, raised the possibility that the failure of educational technology associations to advocate effectively may actually be symptomatic of educators' discomfort with any kind of advocacy.

I don't think educational associations advocate well, period. I would go even further back. I just don't think teachers do advocacy well. I think for some reason there's an educational mind set that, well, you know, we're educators. But I think in order to get that message heard—and I think TETA and other organizations like TETA and MICCA here in Maryland—we're doing a better job. We're trying to figure out the whole advocacy piece. We're bringing the right people in to help us understand that. But I'm not sure we really do it well. (7510)

Table 4.10 gives the participants' responses relating to perceptions of poorly delivered benefits to education as a whole.

Table 4.10: What Ed Tech Associations Do Poorly: Benefits to Education

Benefits to education	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Solve real educational problems	1	0	0
Engage educators at a deep level	1	0	0
Focus on student learning	0	1	0
Address school accountability issues	0	1	0

For one volunteer, the failure of educational technology associations to solve critical education problems may result from their focus on technology: “I think about education and learning and it seems to me their focus is on the technology, not on what students learn or how we can get students to learn better” (7525). A long-time staff member, however, noted that it is not reasonable to expect educational technology associations to solve all the problems in education when they operate on a financial shoestring: “You have to be financially viable so you can always do every project that should be done. You have to balance staying in business with your mission” (7506).

TETA: Participant Perceptions of Roles, Goals, and Performance

When the participants were asked to identify the most important benefits that TETA is currently providing, their responses followed the same pattern found in questions relating to the benefits provided by educational technology associations as a whole. That is, the identified benefits fell into three distinct categories: benefits to members, benefits to the field of educational technology, and benefits to education as a whole. Table 4.11 shows the TETA member benefits the participants considered most important. The totals for each benefit represent the total occurrences in the participants' responses to question 3: "What is the most important thing your association is doing?" and question 5: "What does your association do really well?"

Table 4.11: Important/Best Member Benefits Provided by TETA

Benefits to Members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Publications/communications	3	4	5
Build community	3	4	3
Disseminate information	2	3	2
Provide resources	4	1	1
Professional development	2	0	0
Capacity building	1	0	0
Meet member needs	0	1	0

Many participants particularly noted the importance of TETA's publications, particularly its flagship magazine, as a primary benefit of membership. While several members of TETA's staff mentioned the importance of TETA's publications as well as the high regard in which they are held, TETA's members provided a clearer picture of the importance they attach to this particular member benefit. One very new member stated:

Most of my experience has been through looking at articles and reading TETA's [flagship magazine], which, as a member, I think is one thing they do really well. I love the fact that the magazine includes a resources list at the end of each article. This is an excellent idea. (7530)

Interestingly, a long-term member also expressed this sentiment, suggesting that appreciation for this publication does not fade over time, and therefore may be a factor in member retention.

In terms of TETA's [flagship magazine], it's an easy read. It comes out on a regular basis. And there's a noted attempt to make sure that there's a cross-section of topics and articles so that everybody feels included when they sit down and read the magazine. I don't think that you could ever pick up a copy of [this magazine] and sit back and you say there was nothing in there that was directly applicable to me. So I think that that is probably the thing that they do really, really well. (7600)

As one current committee member stated, membership in TETA additionally provides a sense of connection with and belonging to a larger community of educators.

But personally as a member, probably the part it does best for me is to give me a forum to connect with my colleagues. I think for its members probably that's the most important thing to help disseminate information but to do so in a way that connects its members with other people. (7204)

Another new member of TETA also noted the importance of opportunities to exchange ideas with colleagues who have a similar educational focus: "Providing easy access to resources and also to other members. For instance, I am going to the conference in Atlanta...So it's actually providing a place where people can connect" (7545).

A survey question on whether TETA meets the professional needs of its members in ways that are not otherwise being met also provided data on staff, volunteer, and member perceptions of the extent to which TETA understands and meets its members' needs and expectations. Table 4.12 lists the member benefits that participants stated

TETA specifically and exclusively provides to its members. As might be expected from already-reported results, staff, volunteers, and members commented on TETA's annual conference as the most obvious example of its professional development service to members. As one staff member noted,

I know that [our conference] is the best place to go for professional development in terms of a conference event. And lots of the other educational associations host conferences that are very similar. But if you want everything in one place and the biggest bang for your buck, TETA's [conference] is the place to be. (7100)

Table 4.12: Exclusive Professional Development Member Benefits

Benefits to Members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Professional development	4	3	1
National standards	1	1	1
Magazine meets member information needs	0	2	0
Leadership development	0	2	0
Professional community	1	1	0
Opportunities for volunteers	1	0	0
Assisting schools with systematic improvement	1	0	0
Advocacy	0	1	0

A volunteer also noted the importance of both the conference and the magazine.

I think it's the [TETA conference], and I think it's [flagship magazine]. I think the two of those keep teachers current with ideas and possibilities, and being able to see others who are doing it, so why can't they do it, that kind of thing. And then, of course, they have this wonderful vendor space at their conference where teachers can actually see stuff they've just read or heard about. (7136)

Similarly, a new member, who, while not yet having attended the conference, also expressed complete confidence that it would meet her needs: “I’ve not been to TETA’s [conference], but I’ve talked to people who have been...and those are phenomenal conferences. In the area of professional development, yes, I do see TETA fulfilling those needs” (7530). As might be expected, TETA members are strongly encouraged to view the annual conference as a major membership benefit and TETA heavily promotes this perspective in its publications. An email publication sent to all members, for example, offers the following member quote:

TETA’s annual conference is my favorite professional development opportunity, whether I’m presenting or sitting in a plethora of interesting workshops or other learning opportunities. As the world of educational technology changes, I’m increasingly thankful for TETA, a place to keep a hand on the pulse of that change. Through my friends, many met at [the conference] over the years, I have become a better teacher. (TETA email publication, January 10, 2007)

Consistent with earlier data, this question also generated participant reflections on the importance of national curriculum standards, especially as they contribute to leadership development for practitioners. One long-time staff member stated:

I think we’re learning more about leadership development and focusing more and more on that. And I think we’re starting to do a pretty good job of that as well. Probably starting with the standards for tech leaders and the tech integration specialists’ standards, I think that’s probably really provided a lot of help. (7506)

This perspective regarding the link between TETA’s work on curriculum standards and leadership development was also shared by a new member: “In terms of leadership, from what I know they were the first people to come out with technology standards for students, teachers, and administrators, so I do see them fulfilling the professional

development and leadership development needs.” (7530)

Again, this participant’s observation is consistent with the view of the association’s standards promoted in its external publications. For example, an email publication disseminated to all members argues that TETA’s curriculum standards “have served as a common denominator for effective technology integration throughout the country and around the world” (TETA email publication, January 10, 2007). TETA’s flagship magazine also promotes TETA standards as an answer to the current dilemma regarding high stakes testing.

We are reaching a tipping point of consensus on the importance of creativity and innovation that will end the current gridlock on testing and emphasis of basic skills in a limited number of areas. Developing creative and innovative ways for implementing the TETA Standards will be up to us. (TETA’s flagship magazine, April 1, 2007, p. 5)

Table 4.13 gives the list of TETA benefits to the field of educational technology that the participants identified as the most important thing that TETA is doing. The totals for each benefit represent the total occurrences in the participants’ responses to question 3: “What is the most important thing your association is doing?” and question 5: “What does your association do really well?”

Table 4.13: Important/Best Benefits TETA Provides to Educational Technology

Benefits to educational technology	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Advocacy	6	5	0
Provide conferences	2	6	2
Curriculum standards	3	4	2
Bring stakeholders together	1	3	0
Vision	2	1	0
Determine best practices	0	1	1
Develop consensus on key issues	1	0	0
Develop policy	1	0	0
International outreach	0	1	0
Conduct research	0	1	0
Define student technology needs	0	1	0
Introduce new technologies	0	1	0
Perpetuate educational tech culture	0	0	1

For a senior TETA staff member, there is a clear connection between advocacy and the current direction of education in the United States: “Our leadership for advocacy is extremely important at this time because of the fractured educational vision in the U.S” (7145). TETA’s president also referenced the link between current educational policy and the need for advocacy, particularly as it relates to funding issues.

It seems a shame, in this day and age, that we still need to be talking about whether or not technology has a place in schools and whether and how it should be funded...I have been involved with TETA for 20 years, and as pervasive as technology is in society, the school budgets have not changed in a way that technology is provided for and that the support for it is provided. So, I think that the advocacy role that TETA takes both in the Washington office and the work happening there, as well as in some of the things like the advocacy tool kit and the discussions at the [annual conference] really put technology in the limelight and also help to disseminate best practices. (7650)

A current member of TETA's Board of Directors also argued that current funding and legislative concerns increase the importance of TETA's advocacy initiatives. This participant noted, however, that the current challenges result specifically from a lack of understanding of the role of educational technology within education.

Without an organization that pushes technology to the forefront, I think technology can easily get lost, especially given the requirements of No Child Left Behind, the emphasis on testing, the emphasis on data-based decision making. I think we use technology all the time to do those things, but we don't think of it as an instructional tool. And TETA's voice pushes that to the forefront. (7510)

Another former volunteer and the participant with the longest history of membership in TETA indicated, however, that while TETA's focus on advocacy in United States is important to many members, it also may conflict with other organizational values, such as TETA's commitment to serving its international members.

I think what they're doing in Washington is really important for American members of the organization...And I think they're trying to be more international...I think it's a core value, but it isn't a core value like providing the leadership in Washington, for example. (7126)

TETA's educational technology standards also play a key role in the participants' perceptions of TETA and its importance to the field of educational technology and education in general. TETA's Senior Director of Membership described TETA's work to develop and disseminate educational technology standards both in terms of its importance to the association and to education in general.

I think one thing that TETA's doing that's important or puts it on the map is the work that it does with standards. That's been a very important kind of ground-setting piece to create awareness of critical technology skills within the educational environment. (7125)

A new member also noted the important role that curriculum standards play in providing guidance for members who themselves are expected to make curriculum recommendations.

I know that TETA is looking to refresh the [TETA standards]. That for me is really important because I teach in a school where we don't have a central office or specific "school district." Rather, we have a lot of individual schools. [Our] schools are grouped together in districts based on geography, but the districts don't provide the same sense of leadership that public school districts do. In our education circles I am continually asked what are you doing in terms of curriculum. (7530)

TETA's president also argued that its curriculum standards provide critical information, not just to teachers but also to those responsible for preparing future educators for the classroom.

Well, I think if I had to pick one thing, I would say setting national and even international standards for effective use of technology in the classroom and effective use of technology in preparing teachers and faculty. When I use the word teachers, I'm referring to faculty as well. So I'm talking about pre-kindergarten all the way up through graduate school faculty and teachers. (7140)

Finally, a long-time international member expressed the opinion that, while TETA's standards may not be applicable to non-U.S. members, they still represent an important effort to standardize learning expectations for U.S. students.

But the other thing is that they have done is TETA standards where they've attempted to lay out exactly what technology should look like from classroom to classroom to classroom, which can be a real challenge in a school district. And certainly when you take a look at something nationwide, it's a really daunting task to say that a grade four class in New Hampshire should be doing this and the same thing in New Mexico. I know that TETA would like to see their standards adopted worldwide. I'm not sure that's appropriate, however, I think getting everybody in the United States on the same page is a huge task and something that they're doing. (7600)

As is the case with TETA's advocacy and standards initiatives, participants noted the importance of TETA's annual conference, and while most agreed on the conference's consistent quality and relevance, the yearly event appeared to serve different purposes for different people. For a senior TETA staff member, the conference has a clear link to TETA's mission and goals: "Hosting a strong and well-respected international conference—the conference is a very powerful and effective way of moving the national and international agenda forward. It meets our objectives on many levels" (7105). To a former TETA president, the conference provides a venue for both promoting educational technology and improving professional practice: "the discussions at the conferences really put technology in the limelight and also help to disseminate best practices" (7650). For a former SIG chair and long-time conference attendee however, the conference's importance rests in its ability to sustain professional community: "I think the conference is very important in allowing people who are already leaders to stay connected" (7126).

The participants' perceptions of the benefits that TETA provides to education as a whole are clearly rooted in their expectations of educational technology associations in general. Table 4.14 provides a list of TETA benefits to education the participants identified as the most important thing that TETA is doing. The totals for each benefit represent the total occurrences in the participant responses to question 3: "What is the most important thing your association is doing?" and question 5: "What does your association do really well?"

Table 4.14: Important/Best Benefits TETA Provides to Educational in General

Benefits to education	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Transforming education	3	0	0
Enhancing learning	1	1	0
Enhancing teaching	1	1	0
Building consensus regarding student knowledge and skills	1	0	0

The question of TETA's ability to transform education is important because it indicates differing participant perspectives of change agency. For example, while a senior TETA staff member directly connects the services that the association provides and its power to be an agent of change within education: "I think we're providing information, capacity building, and advocacy around the use of educational technology to transform education for digital age learners" (7145), TETA's president focuses instead on TETA's ability to transform itself in the face of changing educational needs.

One thing that TETA does well is that it grows and evolves. It's like a continuous learning process, like organizational learning... TETA is a really strong learning community that isn't kind of stuck on one thing. It pays attention to what's going on throughout the country. It pays attention to the research. It pays attention to the federal government and state government and where we're going with policies, and makes adjustments to best meet the needs of its membership. (7140)

This view of the association's evolution toward successful change agency is also present in TETA's publication. In one issue of TETA's flagship magazine, for example, an editor notes the link between TETA's programs and benefits and its effectiveness as a change agent within education.

Over the years, we have learned lessons about what it takes for change and improvement in teaching and learning to happen. It takes shared vision, access, skilled educators, professional development, technical assistance, content standard and curriculum resources, student-centered teaching,

assessment, community support, and strategic policies. (TETA's flagship magazine, September 1, 2006, p. 10)

TETA: Unmet Expectations

In addition to providing indications of members perceptions with regard to TETA's benefits to its members, the field of educational technology, and education in general, the data also contains participant suggestions for improvements that TETA could make in all three of these areas. When specifically asked to identify ways in which TETA could improve its general member benefits, however, the participants identified a number of common areas of concern. Data analysis suggests two distinct areas where the participants felt that improvements were needed, specifically member benefits and professional development. Table 4.15 lists the areas of member benefits that participants identified as in need of improvement in their responses to question 7: "What does TETA not do very well" and question 8: "What do you wish TETA did better or more of?"

Table 4.15: TETA Member Benefits Requiring Improvement

Benefits to Members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Be more flexible/agile in responding to member needs	1	5	2
Meet needs of a diverse membership	1	4	3
Make volunteers and members feel more connected and valued	1	5	0
Have better membership data	3	1	0
Better member communications regarding membership	3	0	0
Improve revenues and funding	2	1	0
Build community	1	0	1
Improve member access to benefits	1	0	0
Seek out and support new leadership	0	1	0

The participants also spoke of needed or hopes for improvements to the association's professional development programs. Table 4.16 outlines the participants' suggestions for improvement with respect to TETA's ability to meet its members' diverse professional development needs.

Table 4.16: TETA Professional Development Benefits Requiring Improvement

PD Benefits to Members	Staff	Volunteer	Member
More leadership development	0	2	0
Professional development should focus less on supporting TETA initiatives	1	1	0
Better engagement of members	1	0	0
Better research about member professional development needs	1	0	0
Need to reach broader audience	1	0	0
Need forum for researchers at conferences	0	1	0
Does not serve as a central repository of information	0	1	0
More careers information	0	1	0
Improve understanding about teaching and learning	0	1	0
More effectively harness the power of technology for professional development	0	1	0
Make professional development more accessible at the local level	0	1	0
More partnerships with other organizations	0	1	0

Staff and volunteers perceive a need to improve the sense of connection volunteers and members feel with the organization. One senior staff member, for example, stated:

I wish that we could find a way for our members to be more engaged with our TETA initiatives. It's all about connecting the right people to each other and the right people to the activities and engaging them in providing the resources. So I think that's something we need to strive to improve.
(7550)

This concern was also echoed by a senior staff member who, in a presentation at TETA's annual membership meeting, noted that the association's goal is to find ways for members to stay connected throughout the year and to help them in their professional lives. A committee chair, while acknowledging that her experience may not be a common one, also provided a specific example of a lack of communication that left her feeling disappointed with the association.

And the result was as chair of the committee, I was required to make an annual report to the board. And I never knew when the board meeting was. I learned after awhile that it was a couple days before [the conference]. So then I would sign up to fly a couple days before [the conference]. I would get there, only to discover that it was two days earlier than that. So here I am spending all this extra money just to hang around some place or another and not being able to even make that report. So at that point I felt really unappreciated. So that's just a symbol for the issues of—it's hard to be on a committee and be out there and have nobody care what you're doing. What's the point of the committee? And that's the weakness. That's the weak spot with the volunteers, at least in my experience. Other people may not have had that experience. (7136)

A former SIG president expressed similar feelings.

My experience is they also don't do volunteers very well...They take people for granted. They don't seek out volunteers who are knowledgeable. It's sort of an old boys or old girls network, it seems to me. I think they could make much better use of volunteers without a whole lot of effort if they would. (7525)

Staff members and volunteers also expressed concerns about the need to improve their understanding of member needs and their ability to provide members with access to benefits. According to one Board member, the timely delivery of resources is especially important when trying to meet the needs of technology-using educators.

So how do we build an organization that embraces change and then has a flexible structure so that we can make decisions and act quickly? Technology moves so fast and we don't have a lot of time, to say, bring a

new book to market. Just this week, Apple released the iPhone. They just announced it. It's new. So if that was educational technology that was going to be used in classrooms, how quickly could we move as an organization so that we have a review in our publications; that we have a birds of a feather session at the conference; that we have sessions at the conference; that we have a SIG to develop a focus on it; that we have publications that help teachers integrate it? Again, it may be the wrong technology to use as an example, but the question is how do we recognize and respond to new relevant technologies? (7540)

The belief that TETA needs to improve its capability to meet the needs of its diverse membership is shared at all levels of engagement with the association. For TETA's president, for example, improvements in this area would take the form of making better use of volunteer expertise.

TETA has a board of directors of outstanding people from all over the country and a couple of representatives internationally. I wish we would do a better job of making use of their expertise. I'll give you a specific example. In the TETA board meetings, instead of them sitting and listening, if we could engage them in deeper dialogue about policy issues and strategic directions for the organization, I think we'd be a better organization. (7140)

A former president, however, suggested that TETA could markedly improve the effectiveness of its advocacy and outreach efforts by making better use of its affiliate member groups.

I would like TETA to actually be able to pull affiliate leaders together in a professional learning community that really enabled them to both share things that they're doing in their states as well as bring in some real leaders in the field to work closely with those affiliates to teach them new things, give them new skills, advocacy is being done, but you know, sharing best practices and resources and really building their strength so that they can build stronger affiliate organizations within the states and provinces. (7650)

For a long-time member, however, meeting the needs of a diverse membership means doing a better job of serving all the various subgroups of educational technology.

The other thing that they don't do terribly well is support computer science and computer engineering. I know in the beginning that's what it was all about. And in fact, it was that way everywhere. There were people that were teaching programming and computer science, and that was the *raison d'être*. However, with time, computer science has sort of taken a back seat to other things, and the main populous seems to be people that want do so a sort of generic, integrate technology into the classroom type of thing. TETA has gone along with that. If you pick up a program, for example, at the conference...or you take a look through their website, computer science is just another topic now, and I don't think that it has the respect and the notoriety that it should. I think that these are the people who really have the ability to push the discipline forward, and I'm not always sure that they get the respect that they deserve. (7600)

The participants also identified several ways in which they believed that TETA could contribute more effectively to the field of educational technology. Table 4.17 outlines the participants' suggestions in this area.

Table 4.17: TETA Benefits to Educational Technology Requiring Improvement

Benefits to educational technology	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Improve advocacy capacity	1	3	1
Use technology more effectively	2	2	0
Conduct more research	2	1	0
Better influence public opinion	2	0	0
Create vision documents	1	0	0
More effective collaboration with international organizations	0	1	0
Improve ability to see new trends	0	1	0

The desire to improve the reach and effectiveness of TETA's advocacy efforts is shared at all levels of association participation. For the president, improvement in this area would require a greater concentration of effort at the state level.

I wish we would spend more time assisting states. We...have worked really hard to create a Washington, D.C., presence and have more of an impact in Washington, D.C., but we haven't, I think, done a very good job of having a

presence at the statewide level. And if you look at the constitution in the United States, it doesn't list education. When it's not in the constitution, that means it's up to the states. So the states in the United States are responsible for education. (7140)

While for another volunteer, they would arise from more effective use of affiliate members in association advocacy efforts: "I also think that it would be nice if TETA did even more in the way of advocating and helping its affiliate organizations understand the importance of advocating for technology use and really what it means to advocate" (7510). Finally, for the CEO, it would mean having a greater impact on public opinion: "I wish we could impact public awareness and public opinion on a larger scale" (7145).

While one might be tempted to assume that educational technology associations, whose very business is technology, find it easier to keep current with and make effective use of that technology, the participants also indicated that in fact, these organizations are equally or perhaps even more challenged than other organizations. TETA's Deputy CEO, for example, expressed concern about the association's inability to utilize the technology more effectively to deliver member benefits: "I wish that we were better able to take the things that we have and, through electronic means, get them to people so that, for example, when a fifth grade teacher really wants something very specific that they can find it quickly" (7105). But according to one long-time volunteer, the technological problems are more widespread and worrisome.

I also think that TETA doesn't do technology well. I don't know quite why, but they have a not very good website. They have not a very good database. They don't use technology well in their business operations or their organizational administrative operations. (7525)

A former Board member, however, contended that TETA continually struggles with the challenge of trying to stay one step ahead of the constantly evolving technology.

One of my concerns is how do they manage innovation? I'm fairly close to the executives, being a past board member, so I've had their ear at different times. However, none of us has a crystal ball that works. So we need a mechanism to figure out what the next best thing is, and how that's going to come along, what it's going to look like, who are going to be the leaders in that area. (7540)

This concern with the association's ability to keep current with technology is also reflected in internal TETA documents. For example, the minutes of a Board meeting include the following notation: "In small groups, Board members discussed 'what's new in technology since the last time the Board met'? The ways we communicate, collaborate, create, innovate, and real-time access to information were among the responses" (Minutes of the Board, December 7, 2006).

Although their criticisms were fewer, the participants also had suggestions for improving TETA's impact on the educational system. These included working more systemically to improve schools (7145), doing a better job of demonstrating the connection between technology and improved student learning (7501), and focusing more on how students learn and ways to improve student learning (7145).

Recognizing Barriers

Staff, volunteers, and members seemed very willing to identify and discuss ways in which TETA could better serve its members, the field, and education, and while some expressed feelings of disappointment as a result of specific experiences, the participants also acknowledged that members and volunteers bring a great diversity of needs and expectations to their relationship with TETA that TETA may not have the capacity to

meet. Tables 4.18 and 4.19 detail the factors that participants identified as hampering TETA in its effort to provide a comprehensive spectrum of benefits. These factors were most easily classified as resource barriers and organizational barriers.

Table 4.18: Resource Barriers

Resource Barriers	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Lack of financial resources	7	4	0
Lack of human resources	1	3	0
Lack of time	2	0	1
Inability to influence public opinion	1	0	0
Ineffective collaboration with international organizations	0	1	0
Inability to see new trends	0	1	0

As the interviews and data analysis progressed, I was not surprised by the few stories of dissatisfaction with TETA given the large number of differing expectations placed upon it. The occasional story of disappointment seemed inevitable. What I did not expect, however, was that even the most critical participant was cognizant of the ways in which educational technology associations such as TETA are hampered in their efforts to provide for their members and bring about positive changes in education. Many participants noted that a lack of financial resources prevents TETA from providing more and better benefits. As one volunteer noted, the fact that associations for K-12 teachers must charge lower membership dues than other professional associations automatically limits their revenue potential and thus their ability to provide a wide range of benefits.

They don't have millions of dollars. I'm sure it's money. I mean, this is not an organization that charges the same kind of membership fees that if you belonged to the American Psychological Society or some other big

organization like that. And I don't think they should. But I think that you pay for one with the other. (7126)

The need to constantly seek out new sources of also requires TETA to choose among many possible initiatives that could benefit members, the discipline, and education.

There are just too many good things to do. That's a pretty easy one. As I said, it relates to just picking and choosing what's going to advance TETA and the field the most and keep you in business. I think that balance is very tricky and very hard. I think it really takes developing business plans around what you want to do. I think we usually understand pretty well the importance and the potential for the field but finding the financially viable model to accomplish what you want to accomplish is trickier. (7506)

Some participants also noted that finding a financially viable model to achieve the association's goals is a continuing struggle (7506).

In addition to resource barriers, the participants also told stories of organizational barriers they felt precluded TETA from achieving its full potential as a change agent and leader. Table 4.19 shows the organizational factors that the participants identified.

Table 4.19: Organizational Barriers

Organizational Barriers	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Too much bureaucracy	1	1	0
Lack of agility	1	1	0
Lack of collaboration	1	1	0
Perceived as a technology organization and not a school effectiveness organization	1	1	0
Lack of technology infrastructure	1	0	0
Infrastructure insufficient to handle growth	1	0	0
Lack of technical knowledge	0	1	0
Trying to do too much	0	1	0
Lack of appreciation for staff	0	1	0
Lack of opportunity for volunteer input	0	1	0
PD too centered on conference	0	0	1

It is not surprising that, in an organization where demands are high and resources are limited, pressure is brought to bear on staff to achieve more than should reasonably be expected, and at least one volunteer believes this to be the case with TETA's staff.

I think the staff do too much. That's certainly been my impression. They multitask, or they have job after job after job assigned to the same person, including, you know, running a publication, taking care of all the volunteers at [the conference], making sure this happens and that happens. So I think the staff can't possibly keep up with all the things they need to do and communicate with everybody, and make them feel appreciated, and have all the data they need to do their job and feel like they're part of something. (7136)

One staff member, however, noted that there might also be structural impediments that slow the organization's ability to respond quickly to member suggestions and needs.

Sometimes we shoot ourselves in the foot with bureaucracy and layers of hoops that have to be jumped through before we can make something happen. We're not very agile as an organization. We have a hard time responding to needs when we see them. We can't turn on a dime and change gears. We don't necessarily have clear lines of authority and decision making so that if something comes to my attention, for example, I usually have to run it up a chain. And where the chain stops isn't always entirely clear, so I may be bogged down in figuring out who stakeholders are and who has approving authority before I can move forward with an idea. And by the time that chain gets met, the idea's cold and old and moldy. (7100)

One long-time member and former volunteer also pointed to what could either be perceived of as a lack of transparency or lack of openness to diversity that may also limit the association's ability to meet the needs of its highly diverse membership.

In the not too distant past, it seemed to me that the elected leaders of the organization seemed to be people who were part of the good old boys or good old girls network. You valued people because you knew them as friends or co-workers, or people who have shared volunteer work with you. It was not so much about where the organization ought to go, what it ought to be doing, or what the leader ought to be doing...I think that that's a concern with TETA leadership, both staff and elected leaders, people who

get nominated for positions within TETA. I worry a bit that it's a clique of people who don't necessarily seek diversity of opinion and expertise in what they're doing. (7525)

Even the participants who were most critical of TETA seemed to agree that, in many cases, the association is forced to choose among a large number of potentially good initiatives purely on the basis of available funding. As one new member noted, however, the fact that volunteers and members recognize TETA's financial struggle does not preclude them from continuing to lay their many needs and expectations at its door.

I think that TETA should be able to respond to the areas that the members request. If members express a need for a certain area, then I think that TETA should be able to adapt to that if they feel that it's within their definition of their organization. But I think as time moves on members' needs might vary, so TETA's probably got the ability to adapt and provide what the members would like. (7545)

Associations as Change Agents

As the previous results demonstrate, educational technology associations exist in a complex environment where the ability to meet the needs of a very diverse membership must constantly be played off against the organization's economic sustainability. For these kinds of associations, sustainability depends upon attracting and sustaining members and funding. To do this, educational technology associations must continually prove their effectiveness and usefulness to their members and the rest of the educational community (including policy-makers and legislators). Associations that can demonstrate their willingness and ability to promote and drive the educational changes desired by the community of stakeholders are more likely to attract sufficient members and funding support to maintain their financial and organizational viability. Issues of change agency and leadership are exceedingly important to the TETA staff, volunteers, and members

who participated in this study because they are intimately connected to its very survival.

Despite differing perspectives on the nature of change required and the best way to achieve it, all of the participants in this study indicated that educational technology associations can and should be advocates for change. As I examined the data, the larger theme of change agency seemed to flow organically into two subthemes: the best tool for change and the purpose of change itself. Table 4.20 describes the tools for change identified by the participants. The totals for each column represent the total occurrences in questions 11: “Can educational technology associations make change happen?” and question 12: “Should educational technology associations make change happen?”

Table 4.20: Tools of Change

Tools of change	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Members should be the change agents	6	3	2
Curriculum standards are tools for change	3	4	0
Association must build a community of people who will advocate for change	3	3	0
Relevant associations must steer change	3	1	0
Technology itself is a tool for change	3	0	0
Publications can be advocates for change	1	1	1
Change can be achieved by coalitions	2	0	0
Associations influence change agents	1	1	0
Association must provide more advocacy resources for teachers	1	1	0
Conferences can be tools of change	0	1	1
Professional development inspires teachers to be change agents	0	1	0
Members’ stories are tools for change	0	1	0
Graduate students are tools for change	0	1	0

While the idea that change should and can happen is shared by all of participants, there is less consistency of commentary relating to what the best tools to achieve it may be. Some participants noted the importance of artifacts such as resources and curriculum standards. Others focused on potential dissemination channels such as publications, conferences, and professional development events. But almost all of the participants agreed that in order for educational technology associations to make change happen, they must involve their individual members. As one volunteer noted,

I think they can make change happen, but they can only do that at the grassroots level. A technology association can assert its lobbying power in Congress, but that can only go so far because education is happening at home not in the halls of Congress. To make change happen, national educational technology associations have to push for change to happen at the grassroots level. If they keep it small and local, ETA's can make change happen. (7530)

For a number of the staff as well, the power to effect change lies in the ability to engage and mobilize individual members: “There’s a power in numbers. If we can show our members that there is a benefit in belonging to a large association of educators, perhaps they will feel empowered to join together to advocate change” (7501). This perspective of membership as a means to achieve educational change is also promoted in TETA’s member publications. An email publication, for example, encourages members to submit nominations for positions on the TETA Board as follows: “Extend your reach with TETA, gain leadership experience and influence the future of Ed Tech—submit your nomination” (TETA email publication, January 10, 2007).

As a former TETA president noted, however, perhaps the greatest potential for change agency lies on the power of a good story and in creating opportunities for those stories to be shared.

I guess I'm a long-time believer in grassroots...I think that it's the members and their stories and getting their stories out there that can affect the policy makers. And I think it's the identifying of best practices and the publishing of those best practices, and especially as we look at how technology can be used to do it. So I'd like to see more things happening, not just in print, but in video and in voice stories that can get out there and make a difference. And I think just the sheer numbers, so when you pull together a conference like a NECC conference, it can bring in folks who might be some of the doubting Thomases and really see both the exciting things that are happening as well as kind of hear that powerful voice that comes from the folks who are in attendance at the conference. (7650)

The participants also identified a broad range of purposes or focuses for change, Table 4.21 shows the many areas of education that the participants hoped educational technology associations could improve through their active change agency. The totals for each column represent the total occurrences in the participants' answers to question 11: "Can educational technology associations make change happen?" and question 12: "Should educational technology associations make change happen?"

Table 4.21: The Focus of Change Agency

The focus of change agency	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Influence public policy and legislation	2	7	1
Improve education	0	4	0
Support teachers in their efforts to change	2	1	1
Improve teaching and learning	3	0	0
Change is a constant in education and associations must be part of it	2	0	0
Contribute to the body of knowledge	1	0	0
Advance the field	1	0	0
Produce evidence that change is needed	0	1	0

For the participants in this study, there seems to be little question that there is an intimate connection between promoting the interests of educational technology

associations, improving the lives of teachers and students, and improving education in general. Like the following long-time member and volunteer, many of the participants indicated that there is a powerful disconnect between those making educational policies and those who understand classroom realities that educational technology associations must somehow breach.

I think that legislatures of various levels don't have a clue about education. They tend to believe what a teacher next door told them, or some report they read, or something. I don't know where they get their information, but I think No Child Left Behind is a good example of really strange information providing them with, you know, being the basis of their decisions. So I do think that governing bodies need to be educated in whatever way that can happen. So yeah, that's probably one of the biggest changes we could make, and I do think we ought to be doing that. (7136)

Another participant also noted that advocacy and change agency are essential to improving educational as a whole.

TETA has a commitment now to being an advocate for technology to improve education. And that by definition, involves change because that part of education is not progressing as quickly as many of us would like. So I think it needs to work to make change happen, and it tries to do that through lots of methods, including disseminating information but also to serving as an advocate in terms of public policy and legislation. And I think all those are part of making change happen. (7204)

And while one participant expressed the belief that educational technology associations not only have the duty to promote educational change, but the tool to achieve it as well: "And so our duty is ultimately to make things better, to improve teaching and learning through the use of technology, using technology as a tool to do that" (7105), another argued that technology and students are, in themselves, creating educational change and so the focus for educational technology associations must be on helping educators deal with the changes they are already facing.

Of all the education content areas, technology changes so rapidly that change is inevitable. It isn't a matter of whether or not change happens, but it is how smoothly can educators make the transitions. I think they should make change happen. I think they should make change happen especially in the area of curriculum. It is not just technology that is changing but the way students process information is changing. And if we continue to allow teachers and schools to just muddle along then we're going to wind up not preparing kids for their future. (7530)

Finally, for a senior TETA staff member, whether the organization is driving change or helping its members cope with change, change itself is inevitable, and the association's survival depends upon being perceived as being an active agent in the change process.

TETA views itself as much more than a provider of resources to support individual educators. It's sort of like transformation is genetically encoded in us. And also because of my fundamental belief that change is a constant in education, it's difficult for me to picture a professional organization that would be optimizing its service if it weren't causing change, or at least steering that change in some way. (7530)

Despite their commitment to change and associations as change agents, TETA staff, volunteers, and members are not naïve about the difficulty of having a real and sustained impact on the educational system or of effecting true educational change. They recognize that education is a complex environment and that change is difficult to measure.

I think any professional membership association should make change happen, or help their members make change happen. We don't really have a way to measure that kind of change, though. We can say, oh, this legislation passed and we had an impact because we lobbied for that change. But we can't really know how many educators, or technology coordinators, or library media specialists are putting the ideas they got from TETA to work in their school setting on a daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. (7100)

It is also hampered by political realities.

If we're talking about bringing about systemic reform or transformation in learning at a large level, I think that's much harder. And until we can impact public opinion and policy as well as we do education practices, we probably will have a very difficult time making that change. (7145)

Despite the fact that it is often limited in scope, change, however, is still worth pursuing.

Presumably, contributing to the body of knowledge about the field and advancing the field is going to cause some change to happen. It might be incremental change... It may not be revolutionary change all the time. But I think it's implicit to the purpose of being. (7506)

TETA as a Change Agent

TETA promotes itself as an educational change agent and encourages its members to view it as an organization dedicated to improving student learning. TETA's 2006-2007 Annual Report, for example, states that the association's advocacy agenda, "is designed to educate, inform, and influence policy and budget decisions that affect the integration of technology into the teaching and learning process" (TETA 2006-2007 Annual Report, p.1). In an article on new federal legislation, a staff member also gave the following description of the association's advocacy strategies.

TETA achieves its policy goals through a combination of:

- public policy development and analysis
- direct lobbying
- coalition building
- grassroots mobilization, and
- media outreach. (TETA flagship magazine, December 1, 2006, p. 28)

This perspective appears to be consistent with that of many of this study's participants. As one volunteer noted:

I do think they work to promote change. As I look at their website, for example, I see that the first thing they say about themselves is that they are the trusted source for professional development, knowledge generation, advocacy, and leadership for innovation. (7136)

When asked whether or not they perceive TETA to be an agent of educational change, the participants seemed to respond as though this were an absolute given, the only differences being what they saw as the overall purpose of change agency (for example improving the teaching and learning experience or improving schools for the 21st Century). Participants therefore framed their responses to the question of whether or not TETA is an educational change agent primarily in terms of the TETA resources and services they perceive as the association's primary vehicles of change or the organizational shortcomings that they see as hindering TETA's ability to effect wide-ranging, long-term educational change. Table 4.22 details the programs and artifacts participants identified as either a primary proof of TETA's ability to effect change or proof that it has made change happen.

Interestingly, volunteers and members, but not staff indicated that they believe that TETA's flagship magazine serves as the association's primary vehicle of change agency. As a new member stated: "I do see TETA as promoting educational change through their publications, which support teachers with integrating technology into the regular classroom. So I do see that as a driving force for change" (7530).

Participants from all levels of the association noted the importance of TETA's advocacy. For a senior TETA staff member, there is a clear connection between advocacy and the current direction of education in the United States: "Our leadership for advocacy is extremely important at this time because of the fractured educational vision in the U.S" (7145).

Table 4.22: TETA as a Change Agent

Vehicles for or proof of change agency	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Flagship magazine	0	3	3
Advocacy programs	0	3	1
Annual conference	0	3	1
National standards	2	1	0
Symposia and forums	1	1	0
Research	1	1	0
Professional development	0	1	1
Resources	0	1	1
Surveys	1	0	0
Website messaging	0	1	0
Support for the SIGs	0	1	0
Fundraising	0	0	1

Another long-time member shared the following perception:

I keep harping back to [the magazine], but I do think that it is one of their big success stories. It is a professional journal. It is very scholarly. There are articles in there of interest all the time. And it does exist to support educational change. (7600)

Volunteers and members also perceived professional development events, such as the annual conference, symposia, and member forums, as vehicles to promote change.

I oftentimes feel like TETA spends a great deal of its time writing about and focusing on the status quo. I think one time a year for three days at the [annual conference], educational change is on the forefront. (7510)

Some participants told stories of how TETA's work as a change agent has influenced the way in which vendors test educational software (7506) and how TETA has changed the way students learn.

The formal learning in schools around technology, especially computing, in the U.S. is a clear result of efforts of TETA, of its affiliates and its collaborators. You could interview any student above the 8th grade now and they could tell you what technology experiences they had, though they're not ideal. But that consistency wouldn't be there without efforts by the association. (7145)

For one participant, however, the best indication of TETA's impact as a change agent is that it has grown to be seen as a major player in the field of educational technology.

I would say that it's a clearly identified leader in the field...It went through lots of political negotiations in terms of gaining control of [its conference], in terms of establishing its advocacy in Washington, in terms of growing its standards. And all those are quite mature now. I would say its leadership has been well developed and is thriving. When issues come up pertaining to technology in K-12 education, TETA is the major player. (7204)

As Table 4.23 shows, the participants identified a number of organizational factors and practices that they viewed as supporting TETA in its role as change agent.

Table 4.23: Factors in Successful Change Agency

Factors in successful change agency	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Productive governance structure	0	2	0
Structure designed for growth	0	2	0
Analyzes and revise systems and processes	1	0	0
Ability to reach and engage practitioners	1	0	0
Effective lobbying at state level	1	0	0
Strong staff support for change	1	0	0
Affiliates provide additional advocacy	1	0	0
Openness to organizational change	1	0	0
A safe place to take risks supports change	1	0	0
Setting effective core values and goals	0	1	0
An active board that supports change	0	1	0
Better access to DC policy makers	0	1	0
Board volunteers from all educational levels	0	1	0
Increased involvement of private sector	0	1	0

At the same time, however, staff, volunteers and members were also forthcoming about the organizational factors and practices that they perceive hinder TETA in its change agency efforts. Table 4.24 lists these perceived barriers.

Table 4.24: Barriers to Successful Change Agency

Barriers to successful change agency	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Departmental silos create overlap and redundancy	1	0	0
Poor outreach to policy makers and thought leaders	1	0	0
Elected board with considerable authority results in a lack of cohesion and consistency from year to year	1	0	0
Focusing on the status quo	0	1	0
Lack of follow-through	0	1	0
Organization supports incremental rather than fundamental change	0	1	0
Reactive rather than proactive leadership	0	1	0
Does not promote high-risk innovation	0	1	0
Lack of vision about the future	0	1	0
Structure seems too complex	0	1	0
Lack of broad outreach	0	1	0
Outreach at school level is not effective	0	1	0
Having two offices	0	1	0
Having the same people in positions of power for long periods	0	0	1

The participants also identified a number of factors that they perceived as being key to any educational organization attempting to effect change. These included: powerful tools and streamlined processes (7125); flexibility (7506); a constant awareness of how structure is being implemented, who is being selected to do certain

things, and how programs are evaluated (7525v); and a balanced structure that ensures that the strength of the organization rests in the members and those who support its mission (7650v).

Leadership as an Aspect of Change Agency

As I began to code and analyze the data from my interviews with TETA staff, volunteers, and members, I discovered a wealth of data relating to leadership. Although the primary focus of my research concerned issues of change agency, upon reflection, I can see that the questions I asked of my participants were driven, not only by my personal fascination with issues of leadership within volunteer organizations, but by my underlying assumption that there is an intrinsic link between educational change agency and leadership. As my data analysis progressed, I began to realize that whether or not this link actually exists, many of the participants shared this assumption.

For TETA's staff, volunteers, and members, change agency and leadership are inextricably linked. The participants' stories of TETA's contribution to its members, the field of educational technology, and to education in general center on this connection. In this way, issues of change agency and leadership are tied both to each other and to the exceedingly high expectation that all of these stakeholders have of their association, its leaders, and themselves. When asked specifically to identify the traits or qualities that make an organization a good leader, the participants provided an extensive list of attributes. As Table 4.25 shows, this list is so extensive, it leads one to wonder how any organization could possibly encompass all of these expectations, or at least a sufficient number not to disappoint.

Table 4.25: What Makes an Organization a Good Leader

Organizational Leadership Qualities	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Meet member needs	3	4	1
Visionary	3	1	0
Communicate well across the organization	1	2	0
Provide volunteers/members opportunities	1	1	1
Credible	0	1	2
Knowledgeable about the field	2	0	0
Attract good people to its leadership roles	0	2	0
Make members feel that they belong	1	1	0
Passionate	1	1	0
Energetic	1	1	0
Consensus builder	1	1	0
Able to advocate for change	1	0	0
Have a consistent message	1	0	0
Deliver on its promises	1	0	0
Differentiate itself from its competitors	1	0	0
Make good use of community resources	1	0	0
Sincere commitment to the greater good	1	0	0
Mission-driven	1	0	0
Uses data driven decision-making	1	0	0
Has access to resources	1	0	0
Strong values	0	1	0
Good strategic plan	0	1	0
Solves problems	0	1	0
Focused	0	1	0
Policy-driven	0	1	0
Provides a voice of reason	0	1	0
Education-focused	0	1	0
Trustworthy	0	0	1

Since TETA is a membership organization, it is not especially surprising that TETA staff, volunteers, and members argued that social and emotional skills are a key requirement for educational leadership. In fact, they indicate that the ability to identify and serve member needs is that most important marker of organizational leadership for an educational technology association. For one staff member, the key to this particular aspect of leadership lies in “Understanding what the people they are leading need and being able to communicate with them about those needs, and meeting those needs” (7501). This perception of a link between being a leading organization and meeting member needs is also shared by long-time volunteers and new members whose leadership stories focused on TETA’s willingness to be member-directed. For the long-time volunteer, “in TETA’s case—in an organization’s case—it’s listening to its membership, listening to the people that it’s trying to be the voice of” (7510) and for the new member “an organization becomes a good leader when it listens most to the people who make up the organization” (7530).

A number of TETA staff members also noted that a shared vision enables organizations to set priorities, determine directions, and measure success or failure.

So for an organization to be a strong leader, it has to be visionary, it has to know what the changes are that it wants to bring about, and it has to be effective at moving towards those changes. Otherwise, it’s just more of a social club than an effective leadership within the field. (7105)

This perspective of TETA as a visionary organization is consistent with the ways in which the organization presents itself in terms of its effectiveness as an advocacy-focused organization. In a column on global leadership, for example, a TETA senior staff member describes the association vision as follows

TETA's vision is to lead the development of a global community, sharing ideas and resources that will enable educators to transform their learning environments to include innovative curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the needs of all learners in this digital age. (TETA flagship magazine, February 1, 2007, p. 48).

As both staff and volunteer leaders noted, however, vision is just the starting point and is of no value until it is woven into the operational fabric of the organization. For one staff member, implementing the vision begins with building a constituency or community.

As I said at the beginning, having a vision and being able to work with other people to sort of flesh out the vision. You can't have all the answers, but you have to have a direction that you want to go in. And then you have to get everybody on board with that by helping everybody shape it and create it and kind of put flesh on the bones of your idea and vision. (7506)

And for TETA's president, vision can only become reality when it is embedded in a plan of action.

An organization involves multiple people working together so you've got to have a way of communicating across the organization so that people are on the same page, that they've got the vision. And one way to do that is just to have a really good strategic plan; and that strategic plan begins with the vision I was talking about and then goes to goals and objectives within divisions of an organization, within teams within the organization, and then all the way down to each individual performance objective. You want to have all of that lined up, so that it's all moving in the same direction. That's a difference between a person being a good leader and an organization being a good leader. (7140)

Like TETA's president, staff and volunteers also noted the important role that effective communication plays in successful leadership. According to a former committee chair, leading organizations must include people who can communicate caring to the members and volunteers.

They have to have good communicators among their leadership. They need to appear, and by that I don't mean fake it, but they need to look like they really care about issues that the people that are going to be working with the organization will buy into (7136).

Several of the participants also pointed to the importance of engaging volunteers and members in organizational leadership. For some, engaging members means making them feel welcome: "They need to provide things like they do at [the conference] for birds-of-a-feather and newcomers to come to a party and meet the old-timers, and that sort of thing" (7136) and involved: "Leading organizations also have to truly engage the constituencies and the communities and motivate members to action" (7145). It also means providing them with meaningful tasks: "They need to provide opportunities for people to volunteer, which I think TETA does a good job of" (7136). Two participants also noted the importance of attracting good people to leadership roles within the organization. As one former SIG president noted, failure to do so can drive good volunteers and members away: "I think the quality of the people at the top attract other good people. I mean, there are professional organizations I have abandoned because I don't think the people at the top get it" (7126).

Because this study focused specifically on educational technology associations, I was interested in determining whether the participants believed that educational technology leaders required special leadership skills or qualities. As Table 4.26 shows, the participants again identified an almost overwhelming list of abilities and qualities that educational technology leaders must possess.

Table 4.26: Special Knowledge and Skills

Special knowledge and skills	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Strong technical knowledge/credibility	3	7	1
Strong leadership skills	2	3	0
Strong pedagogical skills/ experience	2	2	0
Effectively model use of technology	2	1	0
Foresight/vision	0	2	1
Ability to keep up with constant change	0	3	0
Ability to influence people	0	2	1
Handle opportunities with agility	2	0	0
Not be profit-driven	1	1	0
Strong organizational/management skills	0	1	1
A change advocate	1	0	0
Both service and leadership-oriented	1	0	0
Patient with the slow rate of change	1	0	0
Flexible	1	0	0
Knowledge of professional development	0	1	0
Lifelong learner	0	1	0
Know how to make others feel valued	0	1	0
Strong interpersonal skills	0	1	0
Able to inspire others to change	0	1	0
Curious	0	1	0
Passionate	0	1	0
Generous with expertise	0	1	0
Unselfish	0	1	0
Able to operate with limited funding	0	1	0
Open-minded	0	0	1
Creative	0	0	1
Broadly focused	0	0	1
Enthusiastic	0	0	1
Energetic	0	0	1
Able to let go of what does not work	0	0	1
Does not take every failure personally	0	0	1

In addition to a host of general leadership skills (including vision, the ability to influence people, and strong communications skills) the participants identified the need for educational technology leaders to possess strong technical and pedagogical skills including a demonstrable understanding of common uses for computing technology.

I think that if the message is about using technology to improve teaching and learning but essentially as a tool in our lives, that they need to be able to understand how to use those tools. So they need to be able to use the tools in the way that they are proposing they should be used by people in general. (7105)

They must also be able to demonstrate their technical skills in an educational environment.

They need to know about the technology, and they need to be up to speed with the latest technology and be able to use it and make use of it in their teachings and working with folks. Because if they don't have that technology skill, they lose credibility and they're not an effective leader. (7140)

In addition, they must be knowledgeable enough to determine what is effective use of educational technology and what is not: "I think you have to be knowledgeable about the field of educational technology so that you can be an advocate for the right things" (7204).

As a long-time TETA staff member noted, educational technology leaders must also remember what it is like to be a new user.

Because of my job, I've always known a wide variety of things but they were only so deep. Just because there were so many topics and things that I had to know about that I couldn't know about too many of them at too great a depth. But I think you have to be really careful about that and spend some time actually with the technology yourself. You have to remember what it's like to learn new things and have to make it work and not just count on tech support to solve all your problems. I think that's where they may need a little help. I mean, it's sort of like you've got to walk the walk for what you're preaching here. (7506)

They also need to be able to convince other people (especially educators) to see the technology in a new way.

I think that educational technology leaders have a huge responsibility to try to make change as we were talking about, which, as I said, happens very slowly and sometimes not at all. But I still think they need to have some idea of how to get people to break out of the old mold. (7126)

As many of the participants noted, credibility within the context of an educational technology association also requires strong practitioner knowledge and practice.

I think they need to be skilled in understanding education, and how students learn and what both educators and students need to succeed. But I also think that since it's a technology association we do need to be skilled somewhat in technology so that we can model that behavior. (7501)

And finally, leadership in educational technology associations requires volunteers to be willing to give of themselves.

I also think when it comes to special qualities. It's that giving without getting back kind of concept when it comes to educational associations. You've got to do it because you're passionate about it, because it's what you believe in, and that you want to see good come from your being involved. And it can't be about benefiting individually necessarily. (7510)

I was also interested in determining whether the participants believed that the skills and qualities that educational technology leaders require has changed as the technology has evolved. While some participants stated that the skills and knowledge needed by educational technology leaders has remained consistent over time (largely consisting of strong leadership and advocacy skills coupled with a foundational knowledge of both technology and education), others felt that the times and the technology were creating a new level of expectations with regard to educational technology leadership. Table 4.27 details ways in which these latter participants believe the requirements of educational technology leadership have changed.

Table 4.27: Changes to Ed Tech Leader Knowledge and Skills Needs

Changes to knowledge and skills	Staff	Volunteer	Member
The membership is more diverse organizations have to change to keep up	1	3	1
Pace of change has increased and need to know is greater	2	1	0
As an organization matures, the skills needed to run it change	1	1	0
Focus now is more on good teaching than on technology	0	1	1
Leaders need to understand their association's purpose and their role within it	1	0	0
Need to keep up with changes to education/student learning	1	0	0
Leaders need to help teachers envision what technology might do	0	1	0
Pace of communication has increased	0	1	0
Leaders need to be more informed about strategic planning, security, management, and legal issues	0	1	0
Teachers now need more comprehensive technology skills	0	0	1

As one might expect, a number of the participants indicated that educational technology leaders must continually adapt and expand their skills to keep up with the changing technology, that is, to changes to the hardware and software. As one staff member stated, educational technology is one of the few academic disciplines where change is the only constant: “There is always a new iteration of the technology. Every few years it changes” (7610). As a former TETA president noted, continued improvements in technology are changing not just how we use the technology, but the pace at which we communicate with each other.

I'm sometimes astounded how quickly I need to work and long for the time 20 years ago when you got something off your desk, and you moved on to the next thing on your list. Whatever it was you had just sent off didn't get back in your attentional realm again for another week because of the time it took for that communication to move and get back to you. And now you get it done, and you're halfway through the next thing on your list, and the email's back at you ready for a next step. So I think today's leaders really need to work fast. (7650)

According to a new TETA member, the continually expanding choice of software applications is affecting teachers' abilities to maintain a sufficient depth of knowledge.

I've been involved with teaching computing studies for a long time now, and I think initially, you took up the basic skills—the sort of basic applications and things like that—but I think now the area is very wide. You've got lots of applications like database and spreadsheets, but also, you've got multimedia and robotics. As a teacher, it's a bigger area to keep track of. Nowadays you might be compelled to focus on one particular area because the discipline's so broad. Whereas in the early days, it was fairly easy to just be a jack of all trades sort of thing. Whereas now I think just keeping your head above all this ICT stuff is just a big job for teachers. I just think the discipline has grown in the 20 years that I've been involved in it. It's a much, much bigger job now to keep track of it all. (7545)

Other participants, however, were more likely to situate the need for change within the context of a growing understanding of, or appreciation for, the needs of students.

According to a current TETA Board member, over time, the focus has shifted away from technology for technology's sake to a deeper consideration of appropriate use in education.

I think back then it was much more about 'the technology.' It was about these tech leaders talking about technology. I think the organization is bigger than that now, and it's much more about instruction—about a mix of the technology and the instruction—and good teaching. (7510)

As a long-time member pointed out, educational technology leaders must also now appeal to a much broader teacher audience.

Now that educational technology has reached out to the masses, you now have English teachers, or history teachers, or geography teachers in the audience, and they're a tougher sell. Because they don't necessarily buy into technology for the sake of technology, you need to have a person that makes that bridge between pedagogy and technology and come up with a convincing argument as to why this is the way that we need to move. (7600)

This perspective is also present in TETA's publications. In a TETA magazine article on assessment, for example, the author notes the importance of attuning one's professional goals to the current measurement-driven educational environment: "Finding a persuasive answer to the question 'How do we demonstrate our impact on student achievement?' is increasingly important to library media specialists in the country" (TETA flagship magazine, December 1, 2006, p. 10). And, as a TETA staff member observed, educational technology must also address changing students needs.

Because students are learning differently—or we're finding out that they're learning differently. The world has changed. There's more stimulation than ever. And I feel like we need to catch up with being able to educate them so that it benefits them, new ways of teaching. (7501)

Some of the participants, however, focused on the changing needs of associations themselves. TETA's CEO, for example, argued that over time, the leadership qualities and skills that an association requires change as the organization grows and matures.

I think skills and qualities needed have changed or at least changed emphasis within TETA even over the last ten years, let's say. Over time we have moved from a very finite set of sources of revenue to a very complex organization—through a merger and bringing two organizations together—to addressing expectations of a large, mature organization. We've gone from sort of a start-up mom and pop shop, through the sun-drenched era of prosperity and promise in technology, to a much tougher policy context, and from a limited reach to a global platform. So I think over this time the

qualities and skills most needed to change within an organization have shifted. (7145)

According to a current TETA committee member, the growing educational technology association member base is also pushing the skills envelope for many leaders.

I think one of the changes probably has been from the organization early on being sort of attracting early adopters and being a place for early adopters to get together, support each other, and advocate for change. And I think over time as technologies have become more mainstream, then there are more and more people brought into the fold. And as a result, the organization's gotten larger. In addition to serving the needs of its leaders at various levels, lots of school and district-level leaders, it also has to take on advocating for and providing for some of the newer adopters. (7204)

According to a former TETA president, the increasing diversity of the membership base is also driving the need for a more inclusive leadership style.

I think in today's world the kinds of leaders that our times call for need to be leaders that can really work with folks who have diverse opinions and help really bringing diverse opinions and diverse talents together to achieve goals. I think there was an old style of leadership that was sort of based, just as learning was, on a factory model. You ran schools in certain ways. I think there was a leadership mood in our country—and this is not speaking internationally but just as a nation—that was old style. And I think at this point in time leaders need to really work with far more dynamic groups of people and situations that change much faster than they ever did. (7650)

And as a TETA Board member noted, the pressure on leaders to demonstrate an almost super-human array of knowledge and skills is not limited to educational technology associations. It is a common phenomenon across the entire leadership spectrum.

I observe things like...the development of that whole field of leadership and it's no longer simply technical. It's more strategic. It's management. It's security. It's legal. How do we put the right policies and practices in place? Like any leadership job, it's getting more comprehensive. (7540)

TETA staff, volunteers, and members indicated that educational technology leaders must be able to evaluate new educational technologies and their impact, create a vision that allows educators to believe that educational technology is the best possible solution to an identifiable education problem, identify potential key supporters, and influence them through the articulation of vision.

TETA as a Leader

When asked whether they considered TETA a leader in the field of educational technology, many of the participants again pointed to specific association artifacts or services that they perceive of as indicators of its leadership in the field. Table 4.28 contains a list of these artifacts and services.

Table 4.28: TETA as a Leader

Proof of leadership	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Conference	1	5	1
Flagship magazine	2	2	1
Influence of national curriculum standards	2	1	0
Collaboration with other organizations	2	0	0
Its long history of accomplishments	0	2	0
Its strong and knowledgeable staff	0	2	0
Professional development programs	1	1	0
Ability to influence policy	1	1	0
Largest/most well known association	1	0	1
Impact on students' technology experience	1	0	0
Media attention it receives	1	0	0
Its focus on educational technology	1	0	0
Research	1	0	0
Its increasing global presence	1	0	0
Resources	0	0	1

As Table 4.28 shows, many of these markers of TETA's leadership are identical to the ones the participants referenced as proof of TETA's role as an educational change agent.

For a senior TETA staff member, for example, the conference stands as a beacon of the association's leadership because so many other organizations use it as a guideline for their own event planning.

I know that we lead through the way that we do the conference because people tell us that. Other conference organizers tell us that. They tell us that they get the ideas for the things that they implement through some of the choices that we make. They tell us that they watch for the keynotes we use and try to get them as well. So we lead in that way. (7105)

For members, the conference also serves as a bellwether for trends in educational technology:

It's noticeable over the last little while that the keynote speakers that they bring to the conference do cater towards the application side of things and away from the computer science type of things. And maybe that's the way of the world or maybe that's the reality in the classroom, that we're seeing less and less of the technological type of stuff, and it's becoming more of computer technology for everybody. And TETA seems to be right there doing that sort of thing. (7600)

For some volunteers and staff members, however, the combination of the conference and TETA's publications most clearly demonstrate its leadership in the field of educational technology.

Yes, I do [think TETA is a leader]. I've worked with them for years, and I've gone to their conferences, and I get their journals. They're doing all the things that I think they need to do. In fact, I would venture to say they're the most outstanding leader for teachers in the field. There are lots of conferences, there are lots of publications, but at least for teachers, I think this group tops them all. (7136)

I get a lot of feedback that people look to what they're finding out in the magazine and at the [annual conference] for how they're going to do their

job. I do get a lot of very positive feedback about what TETA offers to people and how it helps them; how it's changed their lives. (7506)

The participants also referenced TETA's curriculum standards as proof of leadership (both in the field and among associations). For TETA's CEO, these standards serve as a key mechanism for influencing policy and hence for directly impacting students' educational experiences.

I certainly see TETA as a leader in the ed tech community and, to some extent, among a wide range of associations. I mentioned the impact we've had on students' technology-related experiences, especially in the U.S. We've had some influence on programs and policy at the federal level and a lot more in states, I think. And they're using TETA's expertise in many of their efforts at the state level to try to move education to the digital age. I think the...standards were a leadership activity within and outside the U.S. (7145)

A long-time staffer who shares this perception commented, "I think we've made a big impact, again, with the TETA standards on practice in classrooms" (7506).

For other, participants, however, proof of TETA's leadership is grounded not in artifacts or events, but in the people whose efforts create those artifacts, specifically its staff and volunteers. For TETA's president, the strength of TETA's leadership lies in the organization's ability to harness the expertise of the volunteer leaders in the field.

I do see TETA as a leader, and I think it's because of the people primarily. The people that are in leadership positions in TETA at the board and the staff level and at the affiliates, they're all the top people around the country, and some of them are international leaders. And when you bring a whole group of leaders together and you use techniques to manage those egos in that leadership, you become an organization that's a leadership organization, and I do think TETA is one. (7140)

For a past-president, however, TETA's leadership is grounded in expertise and in the dedicated service of its staff.

I do see TETA as a leader...I also think that the staff at TETA are remarkable, those long-time folks who've been there like [Maureen] who has been steadfast in the leadership of both publications and in the conference; and the Deputy CEO heading things up in the west coast office, and [Michelle] and [Elaine] and the team who runs the TETA conference...These are the kind of folks who have come on board and worked at TETA. And I think [the CEO's] transition from an educator and a former board member into the CEO role has been very effective. (7650)

Staff, volunteers, and members also perceive TETA's educational technology focus as an indication of its leadership: "I see it as a leader possibly just because it is really the only organization fulfilling its function or at least the only major organization. It's the biggest player around, so de facto I think it's a leader" (7610), and because of its international reputation: "I also see a lot of demands on our time to participate in ed tech activities that are outside of TETA's realm or outside of TETA's initiative," and because of the media attention it receives: "We also receive a lot of media inquiries. I think we have a role in rallying the ed tech community. So yes, I do see TETA as a leader" (7145). This vision of TETA is highly consistent with the vision of the association promoted in its member publications. An email publication distributed to all members, for example, offers the following description of the association: "Spanning the globe, increasing its reach, TETA continues to learn with and from the global education community—and provide technology leadership around the world" (TETA email publication, November 7, 2006).

Only two participants (one staff member and one volunteer) expressed the opinion that TETA was not an education leader. For the staff member, it was an issue of the association's not reaching as many members as it should, while for the volunteer, TETA's lack of impact with industry stakeholders and post-secondary organizations was the primary impediment to leadership. As one staff member noted, however, for TETA,

as for most educational associations, leadership is a resource-dependent undertaking that is often mitigated by a lack of resources, both financial and human.

I think TETA has a lot of opportunity to be even more of a leader. It's a conundrum, because the field of technology, particularly, is accelerating all the time. So for all the reasons that we talked about in terms of funding and all of that, you've got this dynamic where to be really out in front takes focus, time, money, energy. And I think that's challenging. (7125)

As might be expected, the data analysis also revealed a number of areas where the participants perceived that the organization could or should improve its leadership capability. As Table 4.29 shows, the suggestions for improvement were not focused on instituting new procedures or programs, but rather on enhancing existing ones.

Table 4.29: Improving TETA's Leadership Capacity

Improving TETA's Leadership	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Work more effectively with other groups	2	3	0
Improve sustainability	3	0	0
Improve how it deals with volunteers	1	2	0
Support diversity at all leadership levels	1	1	1
Better attract and engage members	2	0	0
Improve member data collection	1	0	0
Improve its use of technology	1	0	0
Closer coupling of operations and goals	1	0	0
More attention to leadership development	1	0	0
Conduct more and better research	1	0	0
Improve outreach to general public	1	0	0
Increase engagement in state-level policy	0	1	0
Improve international presence/leadership	0	1	0
Provide more resources at the local level	0	0	1
Increase turnover in top leadership	0	0	1
Hold conference in more locations	0	0	1

Many TETA staff and volunteers associate successful association leadership with ability to form key partnerships. This is demonstrated by the fact that the most common suggestions for improvement from these participants concerned TETA's outreach to other organizations. According to one senior staff member, TETA could enhance its leadership capacity by more successfully engaging educational administrators in the work of advocating for educational technology.

I think this goes back to being a leader within the entire education community. I do that in my job on the government relations aspect. And I know we have a leadership summit once a year where we have a meeting with people from other associations. But I don't think we try to find principals and superintendents that have bought into TETA's mission in educational technology and have them then influence their respective associations. (7610)

A former TETA president also noted that, through its cooperative efforts with other organizations, TETA not only builds its reputation as a leader in the field of educational technology, but ensures a level of access to influential educators and policy makers.

If you're talking about TETA's leadership as an organization I guess the question is: How could we help TETA be more recognized as a leader. Probably this could happen with some of that crossover that I mentioned in working with other kinds of associations, so that if folks are meeting and pulling together curriculum organizations that it would be inconceivable to have such a meeting without TETA there. It's that networking piece and really networking to the point where TETA gets included in priority meetings. (7650)

Volunteers and members also suggested that TETA could increase its leadership capacity by improving its outreach and services to specific target sectors. Not surprisingly, these suggestions tended to reflect a particular individual focus. For TETA's president, who works as an educational advisor at the state level, improved leadership capacity could be achieved through increased focus on advocacy at the state level.

We don't invest a lot of resources and time working with states. And the reason I think that is because back in the early 1990's, specific states—West Virginia, Texas, and Florida—became real leaders in the country with how you use technology in a classroom. And that leadership had such an impact it caught on in Washington, D.C. And in the late '90's, Washington, D.C., was picking that up and taking a leadership role. And that's all gone away now. The federal government is not a leader in technology in education... The educational technology legislative proposals that we're working on for our legislature that starts early in January are more expansive and show more leadership than ever before. We've got a proposal to dramatically improve teacher/professional development and how to use distance learning technologies in the classroom for credit recovery, for advanced techniques, or just in rural communities. And that's one of about 12 other proposals, huge proposals, for funding that are leadership initiatives within the state. So that's why I'm thinking that TETA needs to switch back and start working more with states. (7140)

TETA members, who serve as technology coordinators for their districts, however, argued that TETA's leadership goals would be better served by improving access to resources at the local level. A member of less than a year recommended that TETA should "Enable a portion of an organization to branch out locally" (7530), while for a long-time member whose primary connection with TETA is through its annual conference, the grassroots would be better served by improving access to this key member benefit.

Even in the conference itself, it's always in southern states. And if it was happening in January, then I think it makes a whole lot of sense to have it in the southern states, but if you've got a conference at the end of June, there's no reason why it couldn't be held in New York or couldn't be held in Minnesota so that you're reaching out to everybody and showing leadership, that we move things around and we listen to the people. There is a grassroots input to this sort of thing. (7600)

Some TETA volunteers and members expressed concern with what they perceived as a lack of openness and transparency in TETA's leadership structure. One long-time volunteer expressed his concern, saying

In the not too distant past, it seemed to me that the elected leaders of the organization seemed to be people who were part of the good old boys or good old girls network. You valued people because you knew them as friends or co-workers, or volunteer people who have shared volunteer work with you. It was not so much about where the organization ought to go, what it ought to be doing, or what the leader ought to be doing. I'm hoping, thinking that maybe that's changing. So I think that that's a concern with TETA leadership, both staff and elected leaders, people who get nominated for positions within TETA. I worry a bit that it's a clique of people who don't necessarily seek diversity of opinion and expertise in what they're doing. (7527)

A current Board member also noted that, for better or for worse, TETA may also be limiting leadership opportunities to people whose approach is consistent with current organizational values.

I'm not quite sure how to say this. It appears to me that we don't want anybody too strong that rocks the boat; we'd rather have some people that are of known quantities, people who don't control but kind of steer. We use our processes to try and keep the boat on an even keel. (7540)

TETA volunteers also argued that TETA's leadership capacity could be improved by greater attention and support to its volunteers. For a former SIG president, such improvements would take the form of providing more support for SIG leaders: "I think if TETA could somehow or other continue to improve the life of the...leaders of the SIGs I guess it is, it would be a good thing" (7126). A former committee chair argued, however, that TETA could do a better job of recognizing and supporting all of its volunteers.

I do think that TETA leaders could be more accessible to the volunteer groups that do a lot of the work and make an effort to know who these people are in communication and be interested in the problems they're working on. Otherwise, they feel like they're kind of out on their own doing something irrelevant. So I guess that's what I'd like to see improved first. (7136)

A few volunteers and members also expressed concern with a perceived lack of regional diversity in TETA's leadership structure. One member, for example, contended that more turnover and broader regional representation would significantly improve TETA's leadership structure.

I think what they need to do is they need to have a little bit more turnover of the people at the top; or if you're going to stay in the model where you have the same people at the top, it would be nice if they had sort of regional leaders that you could funnel things through and funnel it up to the top. Right now without that sort of regionalism, you know, the US is a big place, and if you have a group of people at the top, I don't think that there's a real sense that it listens to all of the regional components. (7600)

Another suggested that TETA could improve both the scope and diversity of its leadership base by improving its leadership development programs.

I think it would be interesting to have a competitive leadership academy, to train a new generation of school and state based technology leaders; and to have a summer invitational retreat... You could bring a cadre of people together like they do at the Harvard school of leadership. They could work on some developmental studies and cases, and talk, and think, and be part of a group... It is a question of how do we identify people that have some special characteristics, and then invest in them and allow that cohort to go forward and help everyone. An initiative such as this would produce tangible results in terms of new leaders for the field but would also produce intangible results such as new networks of diverse leaders and I suspect would generate intense loyalty to the organization for the opportunity it affords the participants. (7540)

While volunteer and member suggestions for improving TETA's leadership capacity were, not surprisingly, focused on volunteer and member programs, TETA's staff were more likely to suggest improvements to the association's operations and infrastructure. For the Deputy CEO, the key to continual improvement in TETA's leadership capabilities requires continual vigilance with regard to its financial operation.

I think that we're on the right path, and that the thing that will make us continually better leaders is to be able to take care of some of our own housekeeping in terms of dealing with—we have to be good at running our association as an association. We have to be good at running the business of the association in order to be stable enough...to have that in place so that we can do the things that we want to do that are mission driven. (7105)

For another managerial level staff member, closer coupling of the strategic plan and volunteer programs would result in continued improvements.

I'd like to see us build out a much more—much richer engagement model where people coming into the organization can see how they could fit in, how they could contribute. I definitely want to see us do more in terms of recognizing the contributions of volunteers. That whole piece, starting with the Board - I think it would be very—I think it would be great for TETA to have a more thoughtful design as to how all the different pieces work together, and tie that all in to our strategic goals. (7125)

One long-term staff member also suggested that TETA leaders should pay more attention to keeping their educational technology skills current.

I think the whole thing about the technology skills is that you need to be out there learning them and doing them, too. I think all that applies to our current TETA leadership. I think they're all kind of like me. We've gotten a little rusty and we need to sharpen up a little bit. So I think that's probably the main area. (7506)

Another staff member pointed out, leadership is very much a matter of perception and it is not enough for an association to be a leader in its own mind. An association can be doing all of the right things but it will have little impact if no one knows it exists.

I'm not sure this answers the leadership piece of the question. But what I'd really like to improve is our potential members' awareness of our existence. I don't know that we've been good leaders in terms of making sure the right people know that we're here. (7100)

As one member noted, however, being an educational technology leader is a complex

business. Associations such as TETA have many constituencies to represent, each with its own ideas about where and how the organization should lead (7105). Perhaps the most interesting thing about TETA is that it has somehow managed to balance these often conflicting expectations for more than thirty years. It is also possible that continued success may be directly related to the willingness of both its volunteers and staff to recognize where improvements are needed and commit themselves to making them.

Personal Leadership: Attributes and Motivations

In asking the participants questions about personal leadership, I was hoping to discover whether there was a similarity between staff, volunteer, and member perceptions of personal leadership and their perceptions of organizational leadership, in other words, are their expectations for their educational technology association possibly grounded in their ideas about personal leadership? As perhaps might be expected, the participants' views and opinions about personal leadership were consistent with their views of organizational leadership. As Table 4.30 shows, the participants not only identified a similarly large number of personal leadership traits, but reiterated many of the traits they identified as key indicators of organizational leadership in their stories.

The table below demonstrates a strong consensus regarding the importance of vision and communication as key personal leadership skills. TETA's president posits that the ability to provide vision, to communicate that vision effectively and to diverse audiences, and the ability to build relationships are requirements shared across all aspects of leadership (for an organization, for its leaders, and for individuals who seek a leadership role in a professional or volunteer capacity).

Table 4.30: Personal Leadership Requirements

Attributes of individual leaders	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Visionary	6	3	1
Strong communication skills	4	5	0
Strong interpersonal skills	2	1	1
Demonstrate knowledge of the field	0	4	0
Passionate/enthusiastic	1	2	1
A sincere commitment to the greater good	2	1	0
Inspires/motivates others	2	0	1
Willing to ruffle feathers/push envelope	1	2	0
Willing to take responsibility	2	0	0
Mission driven/focused	0	2	0
A consensus builder	1	1	0
Energetic	1	1	0
Persistent/follows through	1	1	0
Trustworthy	1	0	1
Innovative	0	1	1
Allows others to dream/voice their opinions	0	1	1
Know which battles to fight	1	0	0
Manage time wisely	1	0	0
Wise	1	0	0
Curious	1	0	0
Consistent	1	0	0
Good model for organization	1	0	0
Understands and meets member needs	1	0	0
Likes people	0	1	0
Charismatic	0	1	0
Open-minded	0	1	0
Builds for sustainability	0	1	0
Able to marshal resources	0	1	0
A continuous learner	0	1	0
Decisive	0	1	0
Confident	0	0	1

I think what makes a person a good leader is somebody that, first of all, has a vision for where they want to go; secondly, has the ability to communicate that vision to a very large audience and a very diverse audience; and has to be able to communicate it to all kinds of people, and all kinds of ages and different levels of education. (7140)

As one staff member observed, visionary leaders must also choose wisely between can or should be done and be willing to do what is necessary to achieve their vision.

When you think about a good leader, it's somebody that does have a vision. They are aware of what potentially might be, so they're enlightened, but they're also willing to get in there and fight the fight, put things into action. So I really like the idea of the enlightened warrior. (7550)

The participants also identified trust as a key factor in inspiring others to follow a vision.

A good leader is someone you can follow into a room when you don't even know where you're going. You need to have trust in that leader. You need to respect him or her. You need to know that they have a vision...so that you have an idea of where you're going. (7550)

A number of participants also noted that interpersonal skills, particularly the ability to forge consensus were an important leadership quality.

Being able to work with other people to shape that vision; being able to forge consensus among groups of people, staff, and inside and outside the staff in the organization; being able to sort of choose which battles to fight and get in there. (7506)

For other participants, leadership was most exemplified in a willingness to seek out and consider other opinions and a commitment to inspire and foster leadership in others.

It's not a dictator. It's not somebody who thinks they have all the answers by themselves, but somebody who knows how to corral the information and the relationships with the people. Because, really, it's the relationships that make change happen, in my opinion. It's not just having a good structure in place or a good set of procedures. It's understanding who the players are, how they interact with each other, and how you can bring out the best in them. (7100)

A good leader is someone who has vision and can foster it in others. I had a principal last year, who has since retired, who was very good at allowing me as a technology coordinator in a small Lutheran school to dream and to have vision, but was also very good with saying “No” when it was necessary without stifling me as an individual. (7530)

For some participants, personal leadership is also about more than just envisioning and accomplishing a goal, it is about doing one’s share of the work, treating others well, and doing good in the world.

I think maybe they need to not ask anything of people who are working for them, in quotes, that they wouldn’t do themselves. Getting down and dirty and doing some of the work with the people makes people respect them a lot more, and you get to know the people you’re working with. (7136)

They make things happen and leave “the state of affairs” better than when they found them. An effective leader is also someone who is able to bring about change but do it in a way that respects the people that they’re working with. (7105)

You can be an effective leader and not necessarily be a positive leader. So lastly, you’ve got a set of qualities that make someone a leader that cause people to move and act. And then you’ve got to have that commitment to the good, the cause, also, if you want to be a positive leader as well. (7145)

When asked to identify their own leadership strengths, the participants were more focused on interpersonal skills and the goals of leadership than on vision-building. Table 4.31 lists leadership qualities the participants incorporated in their own stories.

Table 4.31: Participant-Identified Personal Leadership Skills

Participant Leadership Qualities	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Able to motivate others	2	1	1
Committed to transformation leadership	0	2	1
Achieves results	1	1	1
Good listener	0	2	0
Knowledgeable about the field	0	1	1
Decisive	1	0	0
Good communicator	1	0	0
Creates a healthy work environment	1	0	0
Makes people feel a part of something	1	0	0
Creates optimism	1	0	0
Problem-solver	1	0	0
Willing to share ideas	1	0	0
Good at strategic planning	1	0	0
Strong collaboration skills	1	0	0
Able to learn quickly	0	1	0
Passionate about social justice	0	1	0
Mission-motivated	0	1	0
Relationship-builder	0	1	0
Visionary	0	1	0
Consensus builder	0	1	0
Trustworthy	0	0	1
Supports coworkers	0	0	1

When it came to telling of their personal leadership abilities, there was little consensus. TETA's staff, volunteers, and members did, however, note the importance of motivating others. As a new member of TETA noted, sometimes just being the only one with real knowledge of educational technology, places you in a position of leadership and influence over others.

I am a member of a very small teaching community without much educational technology background, so it's easy to lead in the area of technology. There are not a whole lot of other folks in our building who feel comfortable using a lot of technology, so I see myself as an encourager, trying to get them to utilize the tools. (7530)

A senior TETA's staff member observed that being in a leadership position within a professional association could often provide a platform for engaging and inspiring people.

I think that any of us who go out and speak and talk about what it is we want to see happen and to bring about a change are in a leadership position, we have the opportunity to get people thinking about things and questioning their own positions or their own—you know, just kind of seeing things differently, and to move in a certain direction. (7105)

And as TETA's president also pointed out, access to the political process also provides an opportunity to share and achieve a vision.

I work at a state-wide level for a governor and in states governors are in charge of education. And over 90 percent of a school district's budget comes from the state. So I'm in a position where I'm able to work with lots of people and build the interpersonal relationships and move resources in the direction of a common vision, not necessarily my vision but a vision that's been worked out amongst lots of leaders across the state. (7140)

In telling me their personal leadership stories, some participants also spoke of the underlying passions that ground and drive their efforts. For these volunteers and members, personal leadership often stems from a core commitment to social justice.

I have the energy for change. My particular content area is technology in special education. Because of the historical discrimination against people with disabilities, there's clearly an important mechanism of advocacy in my area. This is an artifact of historical discrimination against certain groups that have been marginalized. As a result, there's an impatience for change and trying to improve things on behalf of others who often are not able to

...speak for themselves. In my case, there's a passion and energy to utilize technology to make things better for people with disabilities. (7540)

It can also stem from a personal commitment to making change happen and to steadfastly supporting those whose lives are impacted by that change.

So I've committed myself to not being just a leader but a transformational leader, which I defined as something a little different than just being a leader. And I work really hard at that every day. (7140)

I think that I do have a track record of making change and implementing change. I think that I have the demonstrated record of being able to move an entire system one way or the other. And I think it's built upon the fact that I am a trustworthy person, and that when I do something, it may be a little bit conservative in my approach, but people know and can trust that when I say this is going to happen, I will be there to support them.

Motivating and Improving Leadership at All Levels

For TETA, as for most educational associations, both staff and volunteers do the work of the association. While staff manage the day-to-day operations, such as advocacy, membership, marketing, publishing, and events management, the volunteers contribute their labor and expertise not only to guiding the organization, but to creating curriculum standards, giving presentations at conferences and workshops, and writing articles for its print and online publications. One can therefore safely assume that the ability to engage and maintain highly effective staff and volunteers is of considerable importance to the association's long-term sustainability. As Table 4.32 shows, TETA's staff, volunteers, and members mentioned a variety of motivations that underlie their personal pursuit of leadership roles within educational technology. Some participants indicated that they are motivated and inspired by others, while other participants said they are motivated by their desire to inspire or benefit others. By far the most common motivation given, however, is

the opportunity to work with others who share similar goals.

Table 4.32: Leadership Motivations

Personal motivations	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Working collaboratively	3	2	0
Impacting individuals'/students' lives	2	1	1
Seeing tangible results	2	1	1
Making a difference/contribution	1	3	0
Sharing common goals	1	2	1
Seeing others benefit	1	0	1
Developing a vision	2	0	0
Motivating others	1	0	0
Strategizing to achieve a goal	1	0	0
Inspired by coworkers	1	0	0
Inspired by teachers and students	1	0	0
Defining one's own role	1	0	0
Advancing the field	1	0	0
Being engaged by a project	0	1	0
Acknowledgement of effort	0	1	0
Being on the cutting edge	0	0	1
Personal challenge	0	0	1

In considering what motivates them the most, TETA's staff, volunteers, and members appeared to focus most strongly on the opportunity to work within community.

I really enjoy finding talented people, determining what needs to be done, and then kind of opening up pathways for them to do what they need to do. That's just very energizing to me. I really like that. It's important to me to work within an environment where there's a lot of good collaborative effort. (7125)

And in my experience with TETA, much of it's been just taking initiative towards supporting people who have similar goals...So a lot of the leadership I've taken on with TETA has not been butting heads with people

who are playing politics. It's just been, "Okay, guys, let's get together. What are our goals here and how can we get it done?" And I think by and large now people in TETA have been like-minded and very supportive. (7204)

They also reported that the potential to change education for students and teachers is key motivator and that the artifacts of these changes can include producing useful benefits for TETA members, fixing what needs to be fixed, improving the teaching and learning process, and even simply spreading a message of hope.

I enjoy having a common goal that we're all working toward and figuring out the best way for the group to get to that goal; turning out a quality product. One of the things I particularly like about my job now is that I am involved in turning out a high-quality, tangible benefit of membership. (7100)

When I see something that's not being done effectively, that could be done better, or that needs to be not just changed but improved, I think that's really motivating. I love to tackle things that I firmly believe can be improved upon. For me it's not about changing something that doesn't need change just for the sake of changing it. Again, TETA does a number of things extremely well, so there's no reason to fix something that's not broken. So what motivates me is really looking at those things that need some type of modification that is going to be beneficial. I love doing that. (7510)

Seeing a kernel of an idea or seeing a nugget that just is an idea initially that becomes reality through collaborative effort. Watching those ideas become something real and truly making a difference in advancing the field and supporting others in their teaching and learning processes is really what motivates me. You know, the absolute most favorite thing about my job that I don't get to do nearly enough is getting out and talking to educators or students and seeing something that started out as an idea in a conversation that became a reality that really made a difference in their lives. (7550)

What disturbs me most is when I run up against people that seem to have lost hope for bettering their situation in life. As long as people are in pursuit of learning and self-improvement, I think hope lives. So I'm committed to leadership at TETA because I believe TETA's work extends hope for a large number of people for a long time, because it keeps them learning and it keeps them engaged in learning. (7145)

This link between volunteerism, community, and change for the better was also demonstrated at TETA's annual membership meeting. In a presentation to more than 700 meeting attendees, a volunteer described her decision to engage more fully in the association's work as a process of transitioning from being a consumer to being a contributor. In her case, this shift began with her decision to write an article for an association publication and continued with her increasing involvement in the association's virtual environment. She was motivated, she said, by the desire to find ways to give back to her professional community. The unexpected rewards of her volunteerism included the strongest professional connections she had made so far in her career and the reaffirmation of her belief in education as transformative tool.

Given the opportunity to identify specific ways in which they would like to improve their own leadership skills, the participants identified a wide variety of things they would like to improve, things they would like to learn, and things they would like to do. Table 4.33 lists the participants' responses. This list of desired personal improvements is consistent with the highly valued leadership qualities (such as knowledge of the field, time management, problem solving, strategic planning, communication, and the ability to influence others) mentioned in the participants' responses to questions relating to important personal and organizational skills and found throughout the research literature discussed in Chapter 2.

Table 4.33: Personal Leadership Improvements

Personal Improvements	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Improve knowledge of the field	2	0	1
Improve time management	2	0	0
Find a personal mentor	0	2	0
Improve knowledge of fiscal systems	2	0	0
Improve communication skills	1	1	0
Improve leadership skills	1	1	0
Mentor others more	1	1	0
Read more	0	1	1
Improve problem-solving strategies	1	0	0
Improve fundraising skills	1	0	0
Spend more time developing a vision	1	0	0
Improve strategic planning skills	1	0	0
Learn other languages	0	1	0
Do more research	0	1	0
Develop more patience with the slow rate of change	0	1	0
Do more facilitation training	0	1	0
Improve ability to influence others	0	1	0
Become more detail-oriented	0	0	1
Improve listening skills	0	0	1
Be less impulsive	0	0	1
Delegate more/do less micro-managing	0	0	1

The participants also provide an interesting view of their perceived personal and professional limitations. One new member noted:

I think that sometimes I need to pay more attention to the details in documentation and following up the details. When the information or documents come to you, you need to actually go through them more scrupulously and take it all in rather than skimming. (7545)

Another new volunteer stated:

I could probably be a better listener. I work on it all the time. Sometimes I have to take a deep breath and go, 'you know what, you talk to me' because I can go on and on without paying attention to what someone else might be saying in a particular situation. (7510)

A new member indicated, however, that he could improve his leadership capabilities by doing less rather than more.

I could improve my leadership skills best by fostering other people to lead as well; giving over some of my responsibilities, allowing other people to take over, and not micro-manage. Leadership isn't only about micro-managing. It's enabling. So I'd like to do more of that. (7530)

A current committee member also told of how improving his personal leadership skills was simply a question of developing more patience with the slowness of change.

I think sometimes it's more of a challenge when there are lots of competing goals and competing agendas. And when things don't work as clearly, then sometimes I could use some help in being patient or understanding that sometimes things don't change as quickly as we'd like them to. I understand that at the intellectual level, but sometimes when things don't work as well as they could, I might have trouble staying as positive as I'd like to. (7204)

The participants also identified a number of factors that they believe hinder their ability to improve their skills despite their best intentions. Not surprisingly, the most commonly mentioned barrier is time. For one member, pressing everyday concerns make it impossible to take the necessary time for personal professional development.

My biggest problem in my job is that I've lost total control of my personal timetable, and I spend so much of the day putting out fires and solving problems for other people that I never really have the time that it takes for me to sit down and do some things. And I know that if I had the time, I could do some really important reading that would help me improve my leadership skills...But you need to have that sort of professional development basis that will allow you to be able to do that. And time right

now is the thing that I blame for not being able to move ahead like I would like to. (7600)

For a staff member, lack of time is not just a barrier to personal leadership development, but also to better staff and member interactions.

I'd like to be able to provide more time with individuals. I feel like I am really stretched. This is a recurring theme, I know, but I really do wish I had time to meet with individuals on our team and different teams in the organization and with teams in the association membership, and to hear their visions, share my vision, develop implementation strategies. I really wish I could figure out a way to spend more time doing that. (7550)

And, as another staff member admits, not making the time for professional leadership development also limits one's current professional abilities.

At this point in TETA's evolution, that kind of learning or that kind of professional development really is self-motivated. And I find it challenging to find the time to devote to that when I'm just trying to get the job done. But of course, I know that if I took a little time out to learn more about that, I might be better at getting the job done. (7100)

A number of participants also commented upon the link between professional development and personal motivation. One staff member made it clear that there is an important connection between the commitment one is prepared to make to ongoing professional and leadership development and one's current career trajectory.

Right now I think I'm so near retirement. The goal is to continue to contribute for the next two or three years—survive the next few years, but still contribute as much as possible. For me, my own technology skills are where I think I'm interested in focusing a little bit, because that will be something that I'll continue to use probably for the rest of my life. (7506)

Another staff member who shared this perspective noted:

I don't really want to improve them in the sense that I don't want to be in a position where I have to really lead people. I want to lead by example by

getting better at what I already do, my own professional development, but that's as far as it would go for me. (7501)

For two long-time volunteers, however, improving their leadership capabilities was more a question of changing the way they relate to the world, a change they were no longer prepared to make. One female volunteer contended that getting ahead, even in the association world, often requires women to adopt masculine interaction patterns.

At some point I might have said what I really need if I'm going to get any better at this is to be able to schmooze, to talk football, or whatever it is that gets you part of the old boy network. But I don't need to do that anymore, and I sure don't want to. (7136)

For one of the volunteers, however, too often leadership means never saying anything for which you will need to say 'I'm sorry'—a prohibition he is not willing to accept.

I seem unwilling to become less outspoken. It would probably be useful to me if I could figure out how to exercise some better control when I'm discussing things with people... I would like to perhaps continue to be outspoken but be under a little better control. I'm not sure I'm willing, at my time in life, to do what's necessary for that to happen. (7525)

Multi-Level Connectivity

The participants in this study were a remarkable group of people. To a person they were thoughtful, articulate, and generous with their time. It therefore seemed foolish not to seek their advice about issues or ideas I might have failed to consider. And so, my last question to each participant was always "What have I not asked you that I should have"? During my fifth interview, one participant answered "You didn't ask me how I feel connected to TETA. You should ask me this. You should ask everyone this." (7126).

The answers to this question, while not specifically addressing change agency or leadership, gave me greater insight into TETA than any other question I asked. They allowed me to see the variety of ways in which these participants feel connected to TETA and to each other, not just in their commitment to the goal of supporting educational technology, but as a community of learners and leaders and human beings. Table 4.34 lists the kinds of connections the participants identified.

Table 4.34: Participant Connections to TETA

Personal Improvements	Staff	Volunteer	Member
Connected to a social community/network	3	3	0
Connected as volunteers	2	3	1
Connected to the mission	3	1	0
Connected to a professional community	1	2	1
Connected by the publications	0	2	1
Connected to a department	1	0	0
Historical connection	0	1	0
Connected by membership	0	1	0
Connected by the annual conference	0	1	0
Connected by national standards	0	1	0
Connected through access to resources	0	0	1

Unfortunately, this table falls far short of showing the richness of these connections staff, volunteers, and members feel with the association and with each other. Some, like the following long-time TETA staff member, told of an all-encompassing connection: “At the hip. I feel kind of like I live and breathe it almost 24/7. I’m very connected to TETA” (7506). TETA’s CEO also referred to this sense of a pervasive connection.

You know, I think I'm probably fatally and irrationally connected to TETA in a lot of ways, maybe more so than is even healthy for the CEO, because, you know, TETA had a really major impact on my career. The core of my social and professional network has arisen out of my experiences and so forth. So, you know, in some ways I'm fatally committed to make the organization as good as it could be...I'm sort of connected and imbedded in TETA in a big way, I think. And I think it has some pluses and minuses, honestly. (7145)

Another staff member described her connection as multi-leveled and both professional and personal.

I see myself connected to TETA in several ways. First, I am connected to TETA's mission. My career background includes 10 years of teaching, so TETA's commitment to improving education struck a real chord with me. I am also connected to the TETA staff. My co-workers are a terrific bunch of people to work with. Though I do feel a real connection to TETA's mission, on a day-to-day basis, it's the people that keep me coming back to work each day. They are committed to doing the best job possible in everything they do and with integrity, ethics, and passion. I also feel very connected to our members and volunteers. In the past 8 years, I have had the pleasure of working with a great group of professionals in the field, from our volunteer authors and editors to SIG leaders and committee members, I have encountered many people who share TETA's mission and passion for improving education. Many of them have also just been plain fun with terrific senses of humor. (7100)

For some volunteers, the sense of connection arises from a combination of personal and professional engagement centering on doing good together.

And I'm still a committee chair, and I feel quite connected to people there...And I think that in addition to everything else, my associations with people have been very positive. So it's not just—for me my professional involvement has to do with a combination of feeling like I'm doing good, but also enjoying it. So I've enjoyed very much the connections I've had with TETA people, and that's what gets me to want to come back and keep doing it. Because it not only leads to some accomplishments and to some of TETA's success, but also it's fulfilling for me. (7204)

While for others, the connection may be more tenuously situated in a commonly perceived mission.

I guess I will continue being connected to TETA so long as it appears that they are vaguely interested in addressing what students need to know about technology, and be able to do with technology, and to help reach teachers with knowledge and skills that will enhance what they do. (7525)

Some participants described the connection as one of access to information and, more importantly, of access to people.

So for me it's a direct connection. I couldn't imagine missing the [annual conference] because of the information I get there, because of the people I get a chance to network with and talk to, because of the friends I've met, because of the people I now have across the country and across the globe who I can talk to thanks to the connection I've made through TETA. So for me it comes in multiple ways. (7510)

For one Board member, continuous communication creates the sense of connection: "I am in routine contact with TETA executives, elected leaders, and staff. As a result, I feel well-connected as a member and as a leader" (7540). The association's publications also play a role in continuing to connect people to the organization, even after their days of significant engagement have passed.

Sure, historically. I feel connected to them even though I haven't gone to [the conference] for a couple of years. I pay attention to what they do. I read the online newsletters now and then, the journals. I'm not involved in the SIGs or committees anymore, but, you know, I'm a member. I'll probably stay a member even after I'm fully retired. (7136)

While for a new member, a hoped for connection centers in access to needed resources.

I'm sure I'll be using TETA more and becoming connected. I believe it's got a lot of the information that I will need to find out or link me to areas that I can find out about different material. I've got a new job, and a lot of that material will be available, and TETA will be of great benefit to me. (7545)

One long-term member, however, describes a far more tenuous connection: “I’m just a member. I pay my dues. I get my [magazine]. I go to the conference where I’m able to go” (7600).

Perhaps the most interesting description of connection, however, was provided by a former volunteer, the very one who suggested I add the question about connection. For her, the sense of connection was both deeply personal and profoundly important, because it was about how belonging to an educational association such as TETA can make people feel valued and cared for at the times when that experience of that human connection is immeasurably important.

I feel pretty warm about TETA. And TETA makes me feel good. I have felt for years that TETA staff really cares about me. When I was diagnosed with breast cancer ten years ago they were so loving and supportive. And I’m probably not the only one. (7126)

The Hardest Lesson

I had hoped that asking the TETA staff, volunteers, and members to tell me of the hardest lesson that the association had learned might provide additional insight into how their sense of the association’s role as a change agent might have been mitigated by their knowledge of its history. Although a number of the participants felt that they did not have enough understanding of TETA’s inner workings to identify the hardest lesson that the association had learned, those who did answer the question provided valuable insight into their perceptions of the difficulty educational technology associations have sustaining themselves in light of pressing member needs and expectations and limited funding.

The participants appeared to be most concerned with the on-going challenge of meeting the needs and expectations of a diverse group of stakeholders. One volunteer

noted the importance of being member-focused: “I think one of the hardest lessons would be that TETA can’t be all things to all people. We need to be really clear about who our customer is and then focus on that” (7140), while a staff member commented on the difficulty of serving members in a discipline where the only constant is change

I’m not sure that we have recognized a level of progress in terms of where educational technology has come in the 20 or 30 years we’ve been around. In some ways, I think we’re still back thinking that we’re pioneers. But really, our pioneers have moved out ahead of us and we’re catching up in our covered wagon. (7100)

Another participant, with considerable experience as a volunteer leader, pointed to TETA’s engagement with its affiliates as an ongoing lesson in managing cooperative relationships.

From my perspective, which, for the most part has been working on TETA’s professional development side and dealing with affiliates, the hardest lesson that TETA has had to learn when dealing directly with affiliates is that each affiliate is its own organization, and has its own mission, vision, and goals. And TETA is sort of the Grand Poo-Bah, the big organization. But each of those individual organizations have their own agendas. And I think TETA has had to learn how to play with every one of them...And each one is different and unique...And I think they’re still learning the lesson that all of those organizations can’t be handled the same way. (7510)

As might be expected, the staff was more cognizant of the need for the organization to manage its resources, both financial and human, as effectively as possible. For some staff, the hardest lessons learned centered around staffing issues.

I think the hardest lesson that we’ve had to learn and that we’re still learning is how to work most efficiently with limited staff and numerous opportunities: looking at these opportunities, thinking about how we can work with those opportunities with our limited staff, making the most of them, and getting them moving forward (7550)

For other staff, it involved the need for better planning and priority setting: “I think the

hardest lesson is how to—and I'm not even sure we've learned yet—decide what projects to attack and do" (7506).

For TETA, like most educational technology associations, there is also considerable conflict between investing in member services or benefits, and investing in the association to ensure sustainability: "The hardest lesson we've had to learn, I think, that infrastructure's really an important component of running an organization, and that infrastructure must be invested in order to give the organization the power to be effective" (7125). One staff member also observed that growth itself might come at a price: "In my time of being here, my perspective is that growing too fast can be costly, sometimes trying to do too much at once" (7501).

TETA's volunteers and staff also noted that the organization has struggled to learn critical lessons regarding leadership and that these struggles are not always well understood by the broader membership. For some, the changes in leadership seemed confusing.

I know the hardest period that I've ever seen them go through was when [a former leader] left, and they changed to some other form of government, I want to say...I don't know why that happened. I don't know what lesson they thought they were learning out of it. It would only be a guess. I have no idea. They certainly didn't tell me. (7136)

While for others, this same transition in leadership was part of the necessary evolution of the organization.

There have been a number of hard lessons, but I think there were a lot of growing pains with leadership. There's some folks who were very important in creating an organization, [a former leader] in particular. I think determining the kind of leadership needed as an organization changes and grows, and effectively making that transition, was a lesson hard learned, and hopefully it is kind of mending, because I think that TETA has made some very right choices in moving forward. (7650)

As one former SIG president argued, however, the true key to long-term sustainability, especially for an educational organization, lies in having people with appropriate kinds of leadership skills at many levels of the organization, both staff and volunteer.

You need an organization that has really good administrative skills, but you need the leaders to be leaders. Once an organization reaches a certain critical mass, you've got to have both. I think [the Deputy CEO] rocks as an administrator and as an intellectual leader...I think [the CEO] is a good leader...But I think they've also got people who are practitioners or who have practitioner background...I think these are people who provide good leadership. We've been very fortunate to have a couple of good presidents. I'm crazy about [the president], of course. I think he's pushing the envelope somewhat. (7126)

Summary

The tables and quotations provided in this chapter indicate that the participants in this study have a complex relationship with their educational technology association. In addition they show that ideas of change agency, advocacy, and leadership play an important role in how the participants see TETA and how they experience their own involvement with it. Regardless of the nature of their engagement, TETA's staff, volunteers, and members see TETA as an instrument of and an ally for improving teaching and learning through the medium of educational technology. They also experience their connection to the association as both a support for and reflection of their professionalism.

The results of this study are highly consistent with the extensive body of earlier commentary and research (Harris, 1987; Inos & Quigley, 1995; McCann et al., 2005; Thomas et al., 2003) regarding the importance of professional educational associations as communities of learning for practitioners. The participants in this study clearly see

themselves as connected to a rich community that sustains them as professionals and as people. They see themselves as both receiving from and giving to their chosen professional community. Within TETA, they are learners and they are teachers, mentored and mentoring. They are also people with a personal connection to each other beyond their knowledge needs and career goals. They are people who care and are cared about.

The participants believe that TETA offers a number of benefits that make membership worthwhile. TETA staff, volunteers, and members see professional educational conferences as a core benefit of membership in a professional association (Dotten & Kerr, 1996; Gallemore & Li, 1997; Harris, 1987; Petersen, 2006) and point to these professional development events as essential venues for acquiring and sharing expertise and resources. They also see association publications as a key venue for membership building and information dissemination (Gallemore & Li, 1997; Petersen, 2006). TETA members also express a great deal of appreciation for and connection to the association's flagship magazine as an instrument of professional development that keeps them current with issues and developments in the field of educational technology.

It is perhaps not surprising that association participants who value this sense of connection to the association and to other members are also concerned about what some perceived as the inability of educational technology associations such as TETA to fully embrace and serve their diverse membership. Echoing the concerns of Kouzes and Posner (1989), Cherniss (1998), and Fullan (2005), who noted that effective leadership at both the personal and organization level requires the ability to understand and incorporate the demands of a highly diverse member group, several participants indicated that they were concerned with diversity on a number of levels. Some pointed to what they perceived as a

lack of diversity among TETA's leadership, leading some to perceive a certain cliquishness in the development and selection of association leaders. Other participants expressed concerns about TETA's ability to provide appropriate resources to members with vastly different learning needs or to provide access to key learning opportunities to international members who do not have the level of income required to attend international conferences.

The participants in this study also perceive TETA as providing several benefits to the discipline and to education as a whole. In particular, they indicated the important role that TETA is playing through the development and dissemination of curriculum standards (Anderson & Dexter, 2000; Dotten & Kerr, 1996) and in advocating for their discipline to the broader educational community and to the general public (Dotten & Kerr, 1996; Petersen, 2006).

TETA staff, volunteers, and members clearly see TETA as an advocate for educational technology, not just as a teaching tool, but as a medium for transforming teaching and learning. They are aware, however, that the arguments TETA puts forward in support of educational technology must be shaped by and consistent with the shifting priorities and expectations to which education is so often subjected. For example, several participants mentioned the importance of ensuring that TETA research and advocacy efforts address day-to-day classroom issues such as improving student performance (Culp et al., 2003).

Despite their commitment to advocacy and their perceptions of educational technology associations as advocates for and instruments of change, TETA staff, volunteers, and members are not naïve about the difficulty of having a real and sustained

impact on the educational system or achieving systemic change. In fact, their observations are consistent with Bauch and Goldring's (2000) conclusion that substantial educational change is exceedingly complex and difficult to measure and with Waters, Marzano, and McNulty's (2003) observation that systemic educational change demands a profound understanding of and engagement with the culture in which the change must take place.

Despite their high expectations of the association, many participants seemed cognizant of the barriers that educational technology associations face and the extent to which these barriers mitigate their effectiveness as advocates and hence as change agents. For example, one long-time staff member notes that it is not reasonable to expect educational technology associations to solve all the problems in education when they operate on a financial shoestring: "You have to be financially viable so you can always do every project that should be done. You have to balance staying in business with your mission" (7506). In this way, the participants seemed to understand that professional educational associations are hampered by their need to constantly seek out new sources of funding and must therefore choose among many possible initiatives, all of which could benefit members, the discipline, and education in general (Anderson & Dexter, 2000; Sherry & Gibson, 2002).

TETA's staff, volunteers, and members see a profound relationship or, one might even say, a lack of distinction between advocacy, change agency, and leadership. When asked how they know that TETA is an advocate for educational change or how they know that TETA is a leader, the participants give almost identical answers. They know that TETA is a change agent because it supports teacher efforts to use educational

technology and provides benefits such as publications, conferences, and curriculum standards. They know that TETA is a leader for exactly the same reasons. To support teachers in their efforts to change how students learn is perceived of as both the ultimate act of advocacy and the ultimate proof of leadership.

When it comes to organizational and personal leadership, however, TETA staff, volunteers, and members demonstrate a very high level of expectation but no such consensus. While most of the participants indicated that associations and individuals aspiring to leadership require an extensive list of qualities, characteristics, and skills there was insufficient agreement on what those qualities, characteristics, and skills should be to formulate a definitive list.

It is possible, however, to at least begin to formulate a generalized picture of the idealized educational technology association and the idealized leader of that association. The ideal association leads from a vision that is communicated to and shared throughout the organization. Alignment to this vision at all levels enables the association to set priorities, determine directions, and measure success or failure (Anderson & Dexter, 2000; Cory, 1990; Costello, 1997). The ideal association also places the greatest emphasis on determining and serving member needs. Like the best of students, the ideal association also plays well with others, forming key partnerships with other organizations to support its mission and achieve its goals (Dotten & Kerr, 1996).

The picture of the ideal association leader that emerges from the data is more complex. According to TETA staff, volunteers, and members, educational technology leaders must possess sufficient technical ability to understand the strengths and limitations of various technologies and the conceptual issues underlying any application

of instructional technology (Kearsley & Lynch, 1992). The educational technology leader must be able not only to evaluate new educational technologies and their impact but also to possess the skills required to create a vision that allows educators to believe that educational technology is the best possible solution to an identifiable education problem.

The leader must also possess a rich array of social and emotional skills (Cherniss, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1996). She or he must be able to identify potential key supporters and be the consummate storyteller—able to influence staff, members, partners, policy-makers, and the general public through the articulation of the shared vision (Kearsley & Lynch, 1992). In addition, the educational technology association leader must be a consensus builder, coordinator of team efforts, and diffuser of unproductive conflicts (Cherniss, 1998). She or he must inspire and build strong relationships with others (Cherniss, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 2002), be trustworthy (Thomas et al., 2003), and be committed to developing the leadership of others (McCann et al., 2005). The ideal educational technology leader must also be committed to doing good and to social justice (McCann et al., 2005). All in all, the ideal educational technology leader, like her or his association, must somehow embody all of those qualities that the staff, volunteers, and members admire, desire, and demand in themselves and in others. And here is where the inevitable tension occurs, for where needs and expectations run so high, some disappointments must inevitably follow.

The participants also identified a number of areas in which they would like to improve their own leadership skills. Not surprisingly, many of these areas were consistent with the broad range of leadership qualities and skills they desired in association leaders. Interestingly, despite the findings of earlier researchers regarding the important role that

professional educational associations play in capacity building and leadership development (Jeffrey, 1996; Laden, 1996), not a single person who participated in this study mentioned any way in which TETA was assisting or supporting them as leaders.

Every participant I interviewed, regardless of their relationship to TETA, seemed to truly love this association. They support its efforts to improve teaching and learning through the appropriate and effective integration of educational technology and value the things that TETA has given and might in future give to them. They are not, however, uncritical in their assessment of the organization. Many participants, including staff members, mentioned ways in which the organization had failed to live up to their expectations and how its initiatives might be improved in the future. Even their criticisms, however, seemed to come from a place of great hope, a belief that this association is capable of fulfilling the incredible variety of expectations that its staff, volunteers, and members place upon it. Perhaps the best way to put it is to say that they all seem to love this association for what it always has the potential to become.

As TETA's staff, volunteers, and members asserted, expectations of agency and leadership are, by necessity, mitigated by the realities of too many expectations and too few resources. For TETA, meeting the almost overwhelming needs of its members is an ongoing challenge given its fiscal and operational limitations and shifting educational priorities and policies. The continuing engagement and dedication of its staff, volunteers, and members, however, is a testament to its ability to do, if not everything, at least enough to continue to engender faith in its perceived and proclaimed role as a leader and agent of change. Whether or not TETA actually is improving the professional lives of members, the field of educational technology, and the learning experiences of students is

a question for another study. For the purposes of this study though, it is safe to say that for thirty years, TETA has engendered both hope and connection, and that alone should be considered a remarkable achievement.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The title for this chapter is somewhat disingenuous in that it promises far more than it can deliver. That is, it implies a sense of finality, an assurance that the story has come to its end, and we have now learned all that we can learn from it. My hope, however, is that this story is just beginning. In its current form, it is limited by the abilities of this particular storyteller to hear, to understand, and to tell the stories of those who participated in this research. It is also an unfinished story because any real lessons it might offer can only be found in the minds of those who read it and in the extent to which it launches them on their own stories about advocacy, leadership, and the role of educational technology associations as change agents. In the previous chapter, I tried to relate the stories that were shared with me in a way that would answer the original research questions I posed, but in the process of creating that story, I realized that there was something else that perhaps should be shared. I want you to know that while I have been telling you this story, it has also been telling me.

Over the past 20 years I have held just about every position it is possible to have in an educational technology association (member, conference presenter, conference volunteer, newsletter editor, SIG president, committee member, member of the Board, recorder, vice-president, president, and past-president). Three years ago, however, I was given a new role to play. The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), the oldest scientific and technical organization in the world, offered me an opportunity to build a new professional association for K-12 computing educators called the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA). As a result, this research project has been about more than

listening to and retelling the stories told to me by TETA's members, volunteers, and staff; it has been about learning, reflecting, and changing how I see and what I do.

The Storyteller is Told By the Story

From the moment I began to consider possible areas for my research, I knew that I wanted to focus on the growing role of professional associations within education. This is in part because I believe that there is an unfortunate lack of research in this area given the increasing impact these organizations are having on a number of academic disciplines and on their practitioners. Another reason, however, is that participation in these organizations is so much a part of my life as a teacher that I cannot separate my professional and personal growth from what these associations have given me. Until I began this research project, however, I was never consciously aware of this profound connection. Being part of these organizations was just something I did. When I began to hear the stories shared by TETA's members, volunteers, and staff, however, this realization finally bubbled up to the conscious level. I began to look at my own participation in educational technology associations through the multi-perspective prism their stories provided. This experience enabled me not only to see my professional practice and my connection to these organizations in a more expansive way, but also to live it in a deeper way.

The Members

I joined the Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO) the minute I realized that I was way over my head professionally. It was 1986, and I had just been hired by the University of Toronto to help them design resources and professional

development opportunities for high school computing teachers. I was quickly realizing that I knew very little about what these teachers did, what they knew, and what they needed. Like many of TETA's members, I joined ECOO because I was looking for help, for information, for resources, and although I did not realize it at the time, for professional community. Reading the ECOO publications provided me with a rich overview of the field of educational technology. I came to understand the lexicon, to know what engaged and enraged the practitioners, to learn the ins and out of programming language choice, and to appreciate the extent to which pedagogical choices were so very often dictated by fiscal realities (how teachers choose the programming language they teach, not because it is the best one for their students, but because they can afford it). By attending conferences, I got to know the leaders in the field. I listened to their perspectives on issues relating to our discipline and to education in general and soaked up every ounce of information I could.

Reflecting on the stories told to me by the most recent TETA members, I believe that my perspective and experiences were fairly typical of many new association members, especially those at the beginning of their careers. My needs were clear. I needed to learn a great deal and I needed to learn it fast. I wanted to know more about the technology and its effective application in education. Unlike those who were coming from a more traditional route (previous teaching experience or at least a bachelor's degree in education), I also needed to learn a great deal about how to be an effective and engaging teacher. But like most members, I approached my new association with complete confidence that it would meet my personal needs. When I reflect on those early experiences, it becomes clear to me that they were so satisfying specifically because I

was so new and needy. I knew so little that everything I learned was interesting, and important, and helped me to be a better teacher. The benefits of membership that were most valuable to me were not necessarily the things that would produce additional revenue for the association (such as conferences); rather, they were the resources that were immediately accessible and had no additional cost beyond my membership fee.

Over time, however, my relationship to my educational technology association began to change. As my general knowledge of the field increased, my need for information specifically geared to my particular educational niche increased. Where one might be inclined to expect that over time a member's needs might become less pressing and therefore easier to meet, I found in fact, that the opposite was true for me. As I gained more professional and practical experience and expertise, I actually became more demanding of my association. I did not want more of everything; I just wanted more of that thin slice of educational technology that is computer science. I only realized how fragmented the field of educational technology was when I began to care less about all of it and more about my own particular discipline. And therein lies twin challenges for educational technology associations.

The first challenge is the nature of the discipline itself. Not only does educational technology cover the continuum of education and educators from kindergarten to twelfth grade, it encompasses both the use of computer hardware and software to support learning across the curriculum and the discipline of computer science. While one may be inclined to think that the knowledge and interest gap is widest between the elementary and secondary panels, the division of educational technology into those who teach *with* computers and those who teach *about* computing is actually more problematic and more

rife with misunderstandings and hard feelings. It is very difficult, I would even say impossible, for any one organization to serve both of these constituencies with the same level of conviction, focus, and resources. Those organizations, like TETA, who are making an effort to do so, often find themselves subject to complaints and hard feelings among the computer science members. This is the primary reason that ACM decided to create CSTA in 2004. There was simply too much to do just for the computer science teachers to expect other educational technology associations to carry the burden on their own. It was time for the computer scientists to step up and support their colleagues at the beginning of the educational pipeline.

The second challenge lies in the fact that members' demands for support and resources are likely to become more rather than less pressing over time. While long-time members may not need the sheer volume of rudimentary resources required by new practitioners, they are more particular in their needs. They are no longer satisfied with what one long-time TETA member described as *How Appleworks Changed My Life* presentations. They want more information and materials specifically geared to their grade level, district standards, state standards, academic subject, hardware, software, and teaching methodology. What this means for educational technology associations is that it is likely easier to attract and to please new members than to keep them over the long-term on the basis of member benefits alone. There has to be some other experience that wins their loyalty.

Because educational technology associations depend upon membership revenues for their survival, the retention challenge cannot be taken lightly. Somehow, they must use their fiscal and human resources in a way that will ensure that the needs of a wide

variety of members continue to be met over the long term. This means that every project they undertake must be clearly aligned with the existing needs of members. They cannot afford to do something because they think members need or will like it; they have to know this to be the case. Their resource choices must be data-driven and constantly tested and reevaluated. Educational technology associations must also provide a sufficient variety of resources to ensure that most members find what they need at least frequently enough that they are inspired to continue renewing their memberships. Decreasing support for educators within the federal and state educational system (diminishing opportunities for professional development and a lack of classroom resources) makes it imperative that associations like TETA and CSTA step into the gap, find out what teachers need, and find ways to give them access to opportunities to improve their professional practice.

TETA has grown large enough that it can capitalize upon its considerable staff and revenues and draw upon a diverse volunteer base. TETA succeeds in satisfying its long-term members because it has the financial and human resources to provide members with a publication that offers enough variety to continually engage. TETA also draws upon volunteers and other interested educators to offer a diverse array of presentations, workshops, keynotes, and other learning opportunities to ensure that its annual conference is both a continuing draw for educators and a continuing source of revenue for the organization.

Participation in educational technology associations also provides educators with other less concrete but equally important benefits. Perhaps the least conscious motivation and at the same time the most profound personal and professional benefit that

members, volunteers, and staff receive is community. They become part of a group of similarly directed seekers. I believe that most educational technology association members are people who believe that access to technology must be intrinsic to the learning experience of every child and that the ability to use technological tools to support teaching and learning is an essential element of full participation in the 21st century. While it should not be assumed that all of these members, volunteers, and staff think alike or even assign the same priority to technology as a teaching and learning tool, at some level they have all connected with the vision of the association.

As part of their community-building function, professional educational associations also have the capacity to develop a voice for their constituents. These days, it is becoming increasingly difficult to be heard above the noise about the state of education. Everyone who has ever gone to school (regardless of their knowledge of teaching as a profession) has an opinion and a proposal, and everyone feels that they have an obligation to tell educators how to do their jobs. In these days of subtle and not so subtle efforts to deprofessionalize teaching and silence teachers, educators need a voice. They need someone who can articulate what they do and why it is important. They need someone to slog through the mire of educational policy and legislation and advocate on behalf of teachers and students and learning. They need an association like TETA or CSTA, or Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA) that can build partnerships among organizations, do the research, publish the papers, and train educators how to advocate for themselves.

As one long-time TETA member and volunteer noted, educators should also have an opportunity to become part of a caring community. Nineteen years ago, when I was

much younger and perhaps a little more open to the world, I attended an educational technology conference. Sitting beside me was a woman with curly gray hair and sparkly eyes. We started a conversation that morning, which turned into a lunch, which turned into 19 years of meeting at the conference, and sitting on committees together, and generally enjoying each other's company. I cannot remember what we talked about that first day, but I know these conversations have enriched me greatly because she is someone who always pushes me to see and to be beyond my limited perspective. Our conversation has lasted across time, different lifestyles, two countries, and a life-threatening illness. We are colleagues who care enormously about education, equity, and social justice, and we are friends who care deeply about each other. I teach and learn better because I know her. I met her because I found a place for myself within the educational technology community.

Because I have had the opportunity to create an association from the ground up, my potential to learn from my research participants has been limited only by my own imagination and the fact that there are only so many hours in a day. To be honest, what I have learned from this study about the needs and expectations of educational technology association members has scared me to death. How can one association possibly meet the diverse set of needs and expectations that members bring to their membership and participation? How can I make sure that the teachers who have strong technical skills but weaker pedagogical skills and the teachers who have terrific pedagogical skills but are baffled by object-oriented programming and design all have an opportunity to get the new knowledge they need to become the best practitioners they can be? How do I successfully manage the limited resources at our disposal to get the greatest possible

diversity of benefits for our teaching community? How do I speak with a true voice for my constituency, a voice grounded in a profound understanding of what our members want and need and a broad knowledge of the subtle and seemingly impenetrable web of power and influence that dictates what happens in education in this nation? And perhaps most importantly, how do I create opportunities and experiences that allow people to feel part of a vibrant, committed, and caring community? I am not sure that I know yet (if I ever will) how to do all of these things. But the participants in this study have taught me that it is absolutely essential to try.

The Volunteers

I am not sure what year it was when my relationship to educational technology associations changed, but I remember that it was May and it was hotter than blazes. A freak spring heat wave resulted in temperatures in the high 80s, almost unheard of in Toronto in May, and I was giving a presentation at ECOO's annual conference in a hotel room with no air conditioning. It was four in the afternoon, everyone was wilted and cranky, and one of my friends was asleep in the front row. If I had been then who I am now, I would have announced "Nothing I have to say is worth putting us all through another hour of torture so let us skip this presentation and retire together to the bar." But I was young and earnest and made them suffer through it because I just did not know any better, and because I was very excited by the idea of sharing what I had learned with my fellow teachers. I was tired of being a sponge. I wanted to move to the next level and give something back. I gave the worst presentation of my life. But I learned, and I got better. I became a volunteer.

Some of us are born to be volunteers. Some believe that we have a professional duty to give back to the world for the benefits we have received. Some of us have a commitment to teaching and learning (our own and that of others') that just seems to flow naturally into our volunteer experiences, and some of us are just bossy and want to run things. I think all of these are true in my case. I love teaching, so sharing what I had learned with my colleagues just seemed a natural part of my professional commitment. I am also someone who cannot shut up in meetings, and as I quickly learned, people who sit around offering suggestions must either volunteer to put some work into making them happen, or they will quickly become organizational and likely social pariahs.

Like many volunteers, I moved up through the ranks of my chosen association. I started off as a conference speaker, got invited onto a committee, was convinced (not too much arm twisting was necessary) to run for the board of directors, and over time I moved up through the executive positions. I loved being the past-president best. I still had some influence, but I experienced the joy of passing the baton to someone who loved the organization as much as I did and was committed to it and to the educators and students we served. I was incredibly proud of being a board member. I met people who taught me how to plan, how to build consensus, and how to know when consensus could not be reached and find a new path. I learned to love Robert's Rules of Order (I became a true procedure wonk), but I also learned how compassion must sometimes trump rules because humans are much more fragile than we sometimes believe they are. Over time, I also joined other organizations and took similar roles. Some were a more comfortable fit than others, and in at least one, much like the TETA volunteer who could not stifle his candor despite himself, it was clear that my forthrightness was an impediment.

My interviews and conversations with the TETA volunteers gave me an opportunity to see volunteerism in a new, multi-faceted way. The volunteers showed me how the desire to do good in the world drives the participation and commitment of people who are already busy and likely overloaded. While it is true that people want to be recognized for their contributions, the participants in this study taught me that most volunteers are more concerned with making sure that those contributions have meaning, that they achieve something of importance, and that they make life and learning better for teachers and students. They also taught me that the best way to discourage and to aggravate volunteers is to neglect them, to forget about the importance of the community experience, and to waste their time with trivial projects.

In my three years with CSTA, finding a way to meaningfully engage volunteers has been my biggest challenge. CSTA has approximately 5,000 members and a community of more than 2,000 educators from across the world who have offered to volunteer. Unfortunately, we have only one full-time staff member (me) with the job of finding them meaningful things to do. We have plenty to do. It is just that I want to fit the right people to the right task, make sure that they will succeed, and ensure the project is successfully completed. The result is that I seem to find myself going back to the same volunteers over and over again. I do this because I know and trust these people. I can depend on them to get done what needs to be done quickly. But in the meantime, I am shutting people out, missing out on their potential, and making them feel as though CSTA does not value their offer to be part of our community. However unwittingly, I am doing something that TETA volunteers found very off-putting. I am creating a clique.

Working with the TETA volunteers has helped me not only see this volunteer challenge in a new light, but to reach a gut-level understanding of the importance of diversity at all levels of the organization. You not only have to be inclusive, you have to appear inclusive. The face of your organization must be the face of your membership in all of its beautiful variety. To help better achieve this, CSTA's board has given more authority to its equity committee. We have redefined its role so that it now encompasses increasing diversity in every aspect of our operations. The equity committee now helps ensure that all of our project plans include a diversity element, that all of our committees provide participation and leadership opportunities, not just for members who represent various ethnic and racial minorities, but also for young members who will keep us looking forward and protect us against the graying process that hampers many professional associations. Our nominations committee chair also went much deeper out into the community this year to ensure that our board of directors includes new people with new perspectives and new ideas.

I know that TETA is trying to do a better job with its volunteers, to engage them more effectively, and to make them feel appreciated. And thanks to what I have learned from the TETA volunteers, CSTA is also doing a better job of recognizing the volunteer work that people do for our association. We write letters of thanks to them (and to their bosses), we celebrate them in our publications and at our events, we try to make sure that our meetings are productive and fun, and we make it clear that we would not exist without them. I still need to work harder, though, to find a way to better engage all of our volunteers and to make sure that everyone has the opportunity, not just to contribute,

but to grow in their own professionalism and leadership. This is a commitment educational technology associations cannot afford not to make.

The Staff

At an Invitational Forum on Leadership and Management sponsored by the American Society of Association Management (ASAE) and the Center for Association Leadership, speaker Bill George noted the importance of having not just an organizational vision, but a vision that is known and practiced throughout the organization: “The hardest job is to get everyone in the organization aligned around the mission and values of the organization” (George, 2007). What struck me most about TETA’s staff was the extent to which the association had achieved this goal.

TETA’s staff members are not just aware of the mission, they believe it, and they live it. They believe that the use of educational technology provides students with the opportunity to be 21st century learners and to develop critical skills they will need to succeed in an increasingly technological world. With the exception of one staff member, every single person I spoke to saw his or her specific job as tied directly to that mission and providing a key element of support for that mission. The staff members were also remarkably supportive of projects and services offered by departments other than their own but which they perceived as central to achieving the association’s goals. They were passionate about education and about the potential to improve teaching and learning.

In some ways, this should not have been surprising. Many of the staff members I interviewed had been with TETA for many years and had chosen to stay with TETA despite the potential for higher paying salaries in the private sector. Many had also come from the education sector, and as former teachers and administrators, were painfully

aware of the shortcomings of public education and the significant and long-term effort needed to make improvements.

What was surprising, however, was not that the staff members spoke so much about improving learning for students, but that they spoke so little about meeting the needs of their members. It was almost as though, in an effort to prove that educational technology improves student learning, they had forgotten that their members are in fact not students, but practitioners. Despite their references to the importance of making data-driven decisions, I began to wonder if the association really had a solid sense of who its members were and what they wanted. While it was clear that TETA's conference is incredibly successful and its flagship magazine is highly valued by members, I came away from this research with very little sense of what other benefits the association provides to its members. Looking at the TETA web site, it is clear that the association does provide a selection of resources for its members. I simply found it strange that, with the exception of its conference and its curriculum standards, TETA's staff never mentioned how the resources they were developing and disseminating met the expressed needs of their practitioner members.

This lack of emphasis on ascertaining and meeting member needs may be related to the fact that TETA is an educational association run largely by educators. TETA may be able to flourish despite its lack of concentration on teachers because its members are also more focused on their students than on themselves. Or, the explanation may be more pragmatic than that. TETA's focus on students rather than teachers may offer advantages when it comes to attracting government, research, and corporate funding or might

improve its ability to lobby legislators in support of educational technology (after all, there are more parents who vote than teachers who vote).

As a nascent association, CSTA does not have TETA's existing membership base or the long-term reputation. For this reason, I feel it is absolutely essential for us to have a deep understanding of what our members expect and want from us. CSTA collects this information through surveys of our entire membership. We attempt to determine whether and how they are using the resources we are currently providing and what resources they would like that we have not developed yet. Interestingly, the most important thing we learned from our first membership survey is that many of our members had no idea what their benefits were. The emails we were sending them upon joining, the articles in our publications, and the pages on our web site were not having the impact we had hoped. My guess is that like many exceedingly busy people, teachers do not tend to think too much about a specific resource or benefit until they need it, and then they need to find it right away. For this reason, we have developed new print-based materials that describe all of the member benefits and how they can be accessed. Our hope is that our members will keep this document somewhere that they can find it when they need it. But if my own office is any indication, we may be hoping for too much.

The Association

Getting an educational association off the ground is not as difficult as it may seem. In the field of educational technology associations, for example, there are a number of local and regional groups run entirely on volunteer efforts that manage to provide a small number of member services over some period of time. Moving a fledgling organization to long-term sustainability, however, is an enormous undertaking that requires solid

management, considerable ingenuity, and a great deal of luck. As Bailey (2007) pointed out, associations, like for-profit organizations are subject to a broad array of external forces, including: competition, globalization, change in markets, buying pattern shifts, demographics, technology, regulations, politics, the economy, and public expectations. Because education is a highly politicized environment and is carried out in a very public way with public funding, associations operating within this sphere are also under enormous pressure to balance the expectations and interests of their membership with political and public concerns and mandates attached to funding. In order to be fiscally sustainable, educational associations must be exceedingly creative and crafty when it comes to seeking out funding sources and managing their limited revenue. Like for-profit companies, they must always be searching for potential new products and services that they can sell to their members, to other educators, and to the educational system as a whole. Unlike for-profit companies, however, they must also find a way to provide a sufficient level of free services to attract new members and retain existing members.

For many associations, the constant search for new sources of revenue leads to engagement in the world of government, foundational, and corporate funding, each of which offers distinct challenges. Government funding, especially in relation to educational research is often extremely difficult for associations to attain. Despite the fact that associations are carrying more and more of the responsibility for creating curriculum, developing teaching and learning resources, and supporting teachers' ongoing professional development, funding bodies continue to assume that educational research will be carried out by major research institutions rather than by practitioner-centered groups. Available research funding is also often heavily influenced by political

ideologies centered around process (for example the current emphasis on quantitative research), content (such as the preference for specific methodological approaches such as phonics) and desired outcome (current emphasis on improved performance on high stakes standardized tests), which may run contrary to the association's mission or require the association to undertake activities that are only tangentially connected to its goals.

In speaking to TETA's staff and volunteer leaders, it becomes immediately apparent that the association's current success is due to a series of interventions, in terms of both staff and practices, which have allowed it to evolve from a small university-supported team to a well managed, mid-sized business. TETA's leaders, for example, speak of the need to balance both revenue and mission concerns when determining which of many possible projects should be undertaken by staff and volunteers. But even well-managed associations can be buffeted by external demands (for example the need to support research that links educational computer use to standardized test performance) and the same marketplace realities that impact for-profit organizations operating in the educational marketplace (such as shrinking school budgets that result in downturns in book sales). The problem is that not all associations are well managed over time.

The reliance on volunteer boards for ensuring sustainability and conducting fiscal due diligence can be extremely precarious for educational associations. Even the best-managed association is one incompetent or dishonest board away from financial ruin. For example, one organization in which I had been involved for many years experienced a coup that resulted in the replacement of almost the entire board of directors. Over the next two years, the new board undertook a series of projects and negotiated a number of contracts (many with former directors or the family of directors) that saw the

association's coffers reduced from a \$300,000 reserve fund to near bankruptcy before the members had any clue what was happening. Thanks to the efforts of many members and volunteers, the association was saved from insolvency, but it never regained the financial security or the influence that preceded that one bad board.

Many educational associations also endeavor to improve the bottom line by seeking corporate funding either through sponsorship or funded project work. While these partnerships can provide much-needed financial stability for associations, they can also be extremely problematic to both the organization and to its membership if not entered into with a great deal of caution. Educators can be sensitive to issues of corporate collusion. This became very clear to me when I was the president of an association's special interest group for computer science educators and a software vendor offered to provide free copies of a particular software application to our members. To educators who are hard pressed for funding to purchase hardware and software, this seemed like a wonderful opportunity, a way in which we could benefit our members directly. When we began to discuss this proposal more broadly with the members, however, we learned they were very concerned about the fact that our agreement to distribute the application could be perceived as an endorsement of a particular product and vendor in a highly competitive market. The most important thing we learned from this experience was that members (who do not feel a responsibility to engage with issues of revenue) can be extremely sensitive to any agreement or undertaking that has the potential to compromise the association's reputation. The old adage, "It takes a lifetime to build a reputation and one foolish moment to destroy it" is as true for associations as for individuals.

I believe that CSTA's successful launch is due to a large number of factors. First, we had good data. A task force supported by our parent organization had spent several years investigating the state of computer science education in K-12 and determining that there were serious problems with regard to curriculum, certification requirements, professional development, and the diminishing number of students entering the discipline. Second, our parent organization had visionary leaders who pushed to have K-12 education moved to the forefront of the larger association's agenda and who pushed for adequate seed funding and staff resources to support the fledgling association. Third, we had an amazing cadre of dedicated volunteers who agreed to form the steering committee and begin creating the member benefits that would draw other educators to the organization. And finally, we were simply in the right place at the right time. Just as CSTA was coming into being, knowledge of the computer science educational pipeline crisis began to make its way onto the social and political agenda with the growing awareness that the United States was losing its technological competitiveness edge in the global economy and that this downturn would continue to worsen because there were no longer enough graduates in the field of computing to meet the needs of the high tech industries. The fact that CSTA had data and recommendations to address these issues has played a major role in its success so far.

But long-term economic sustainability is another issue entirely. CSTA's staff and volunteer team is exceedingly cognizant of the need to create multiple streams of revenue and in only two years we have managed to develop two successful grant proposals for the National Science Foundation (within the Broadening Participation in Computing and Teacher Professional Continuum programs) and have received

significant support from a small number of corporate partners. We have also been very careful to build these grants and partnerships around projects that we believed were highly supportive of our mission and our goals. We have not, however, been able to attract foundation funding. We could not possibly undertake the projects we are engaged in (careers in computing posters for classroom and brochures for students, major research efforts on the state of computer science education in K-12 and state teacher certification requirements, and an online repository of teaching and learning materials) without the ongoing support of our parent organization. CSTA is still a work in progress. We have a long way to go and we may not succeed, but having TETA out there as an example of an association that has faced all the same challenges and survived, gives cause for hope.

Leadership

In a presentation to association leaders at an Invitational Forum on Leadership and Management in Toronto, journalist Aaron Brown (2007) noted that while few areas of study have attracted more interest than leadership, it is still extremely difficult to reach precise scientifically supported conclusions about it: “There are 166 million Google hits on the word *leadership*, but at the end of the day, what each of us perceives of as leadership is inevitably filtered through our own value system”. It strikes me that, in this way, good leadership is like good teaching: it is science and it is art, it is spirit and it is practice, it is in the individual and in the organization, it is many things to many people, and as Brown noted, it is in the eye of the beholder.

My sense, from the beginning of this study, was that there is some intrinsic link between change agency and leadership. Perhaps, because we take from all stories the

lessons we are ready to hear, my work with the TETA staff, volunteers, and members confirmed my assumptions about this link. The stories they shared, however, also gave me a far richer understanding of the role of leadership throughout the whole organization than I had expected. From the participants in this study I have come to understand that leadership drives the conviction that change is necessary and possible, creates the organization to engage in the efforts needed to define what changes should be made and how they should be made, and sustains the individuals and activity needed to bring those changes about and support them over time.

I believe that the survival of educational technology associations such as CSTA and TETA depend upon leadership. Without visionary leadership, that is, the ability to see a need and determine how to fulfill it, they would not come into being. Without fiscal leadership, they could not be sustained over time. And without the leadership skills required to manage, support, direct, inspire, and reward staff and volunteers, they could not create the benefits nor have the desired impact on education that members desire. From the bottom to the top, educational technology associations have to be constantly and continuously focused on both organizational and personal leadership and on leadership development.

I have learned things about leadership from this study that have both terrified and inspired me. When I first began to compile the lists of organizational and personal leadership traits identified in the research literature and provided by the participants, I despaired. How could any organization, let alone one executive director live up to these expectations? It was only near the end of my study, when I heard George (2007) argue that “No one has all of the traits that have been identified as key leadership traits” that I

began to appreciate the importance of deciding what kind of leader you want to be, choosing to develop the knowledge and skills that support that kind of leadership, and living in a way that is consistent with those leadership goals over the long term.

According to George (2007), there are two kinds of leaders: takers and givers. For takers, it is about attaining personal power and goals. The taker is focused on the career path and the extrinsic rewards. The giver, on the other hand, sees leadership as service and stewardship. The giving leader focuses on responsibility, on aligning the actions of the association and the people in it to a shared mission and goals and on empowering others. For the giving leader, the job is not to get people to follow, but to get others to step up and lead. Covey (2007) further extends the metaphor of leader as steward by positing that the ability to grow and establish trust is the critical leadership competency of the new global economy. The ability to inspire trust, he argued, has two key dimensions: character and competence. He posited that character is defined by credibility and influence, and involves four key elements: integrity (being true in the hard moments), intent (personal benefit versus the general good), capabilities (possess skills that are current and relevant), and results (delivering on what you promise). Competence, he argued, is founded on five different kinds of trust: self-trust (credibility), relationship trust (behavior), organizational trust (alignment), market trust (reputation), and societal trust (contribution). According to Covey, putting character and competence at the forefront of leadership practice allows association leaders to build relationships and to build trust, which in turn allows associations to become empowering organizations.

When I reflect on the stories told to me by TETA's staff, volunteers, and members, I see the entire association as a tapestry interwoven with threads of competency and trust in a way that both defines it and holds it all together. The current staff and volunteer leaders clearly see themselves as stewards of the organization (credibility) intent on creating positive changes that will enhance and support the use of educational technology in schools (reputation). Despite the intense pressure to attract diverse funding sources to support long-term sustainability, they see the importance of linking their activities to the mission (alignment) and framing their role in education as one that is focused on improving student learning and student lives (contribution).

That is not to say, however, that TETA does not have its leadership challenges, but these challenges seem to be more inwardly than outwardly focused in that they relate more to how TETA treats its staff and volunteers than how it functions in the public sphere. From my discussions with TETA's staff and volunteers, it became immediately apparent that they know and care a great deal about leadership. They see leadership as central to the success of the organization and also to their personal success. What I did not find much evidence of, however, was what George (2007) referred to as the commitment to building up the human capital of the association. While many TETA staff and volunteers spoke of the importance of contributing to the association through the application of their leadership skills, not a single staff member or volunteer mentioned any way in which TETA was helping them improve or develop those skills.

This apparent lack of engagement with the leadership potential of the staff and volunteers is consistent with my experiences, not just in educational technology associations, but in education as a whole. I believe that educational associations, like the

education system itself, have a tendency to put teachers last. It is as though we have operated so long in a field that practices the politics of scarcity (forcing educators to continually do more with less) that we do not know how to offer our members the abundant support they need. We are so focused on helping students that we forget to help ourselves as both professionals and human beings. We are so busy trying to continually prove to the world that what we do has value (in a time of continually shifting public perceptions of value) that we focus all of our resources on developing and improving a very limited subset of our professional skill set.

One of the challenges of educational technology as a teaching field is that it requires a great deal of professional development just to keep up. Technology is always changing and what we know about hardware and software one year can be almost irrelevant a year later. In addition, research and practice are constantly improving our understanding of the relationship between methodology and learning and how we need to continually adapt our teaching strategies to the changing needs and demographics of our students. Helping educators keep their practical skills current is therefore a constant challenge and one we tend to focus on to the exclusion of other things, most especially leadership.

For many years, I have been part of a team that organizes one-day annual symposia for computer science and information technology teachers. The purpose of this symposium is to provide professional development that is practical, relevant, and at least a little cutting edge. Each year, a team of dedicated volunteers from all levels of education plans the event. This team determines the topics for the sessions, hand-picks the presenters, and tries to ensure that the needs of all of the teacher attendees will be

met. And every single year the team argues about whether there should be any time in the program for sessions that focus on the so called “soft topics” such as leadership. It is not that the planning team does not care about leadership, it is just that we are so focused on all of the practical knowledge our teachers need to keep up with the discipline that leadership keeps falling to the bottom of the pile.

This research project has taught me that it is no longer acceptable for educational technology associations to ignore our members’ leadership goals. We have to bring people together to determine how they would like to grow their personal leadership skills and how we can help them do so. This is not simply an altruistic goal on my part. I want our volunteers and members to become better advocates for our discipline. I want them to become empowered enough to see themselves as change agents, and they cannot do so without strong leadership skills. I have not yet found the funding for this on a large scale, or maybe I have not yet, however, found the courage to tell my board that money would be better spent on this than on the teaching and learning materials we are creating or the technical workshops we sponsor.

I have also become more aware of the importance of supporting our volunteers and staff in the development of their leadership skills. We now purchase resources for our volunteers that can help them and have designed our committee structure so that even the newest board member has the opportunity to lead a major project within the first two years of his or her service on the board. We also now encourage all of our committee chairs to involve newer teachers in our programs. The board has also been extremely supportive of staff efforts to improve both our practical and leadership skills. For example, over the three years I have become so focused on the work of the association

that I have been neglecting my own leadership development. I am therefore extremely grateful that our president sat me down during my annual performance review and said, “So far this is all about what you are going to do for the association, what is the association going to do to help you continue to develop your skills?” He then gave me funding to attend a leadership conference. It seems that none of us is immune to the politics of scarcity.

Change Agency

Before this study began, I understood that it would never answer the question of whether educational technology associations are or can be agents of educational change. My efforts were instead focused on determining whether or not the participants in this study perceived their association (TETA) as a change agent. The results presented in the previous chapter strongly indicate that the participants believe that educational technology associations can and should be change agents and that TETA, because it plays a key role in both promoting and supporting educational change, is an agent of educational change. The results also show that the question of change agency is intimately interwoven with the participants’ beliefs about the transformational nature of technology.

For those of us in the field of educational technology, it is not about the machines, about terabytes or terminals, about wires or wikis or the World Wide Web. Educational technology is about transforming how teachers teach and students learn. It is about accessing information to construct new knowledge. It is about the teacher as the guide and the student as the seeker. It is about preparing students for the now and for the future because the world is changing and the skills and knowledge needed to not just survive,

but to thrive, in this new global economy require a fundamental shift in both what and how students learn. We see our educational technology associations as agents of change simply because they support educational technology which we see as a fundamental transformational medium.

I have also learned that within the confines of this study, it is impossible to draw a clear line between change agency, advocacy, and leadership. As shown in the previous chapter, the participants made little distinction between leadership in educational technology and change agency in education. I found this surprising since I define these terms quite differently. For me, change agency requires a commitment to and facilitation of change; advocacy is simply making one's case; and leadership is about envisioning possibilities, building community, and creating a pathway for that community to follow to achieve this shared vision. Looking back on the research protocol, it is clear that the participants may have been more likely to distinguish between change agency, advocacy, and leadership had I asked them to define each of these terms individually. I resisted doing this, however, because I had hoped that the participants' definitions might arise more organically from their answers to other questions.

It is interesting to consider, however, that this lack of distinction may also result from TETA's success at weaving these three qualities together in the stories it tells about itself in its magazine, in the advocacy emails it distributes, and in the way it describes its annual conference. Perhaps the participants tended to offer the same association artifacts (curriculum standards, a high-quality flagship magazine, a successful annual conference) as proof that TETA is a leader and a change agent precisely because TETA has so

effectively linked its artifacts to those qualities in the minds of its staff, volunteers, and members.

Interestingly, the participants also saw TETA's advocacy efforts as both proof that the association is an educational change agent and as a necessary strategy for ensuring the continued funding of technology in schools. This view is shared and supported by other educational technology association leaders. At a 2007 Educational Technology Capacity Building Conference, for example, a panel of technology association leaders (Byer et al., 2007) noted that advocacy efforts are needed to make sure that policy-makers understand what the issues are and that funding continues. The panelists noted that many states rely entirely on federal funding initiatives for their entire educational technology budget but that often the people who hold the purse strings have no idea what educational technology associations do or how educational technology supports student learning. The panel therefore called on the assembled associations to resist the temptation to be reactive and to instead become proactive (Smiley, 2007) champions and advocates for educational technology, helping policy makers make the necessary connections between the funding support, student learning, and national concerns about 21st century skills and national competitiveness.

I have found though, that political engagement does not come easily for educational technology associations. As International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) President Kurt Steinhaus noted during his welcome at the ISTE Capacity Building Conference, advocacy can be a challenge for many educators because it requires them to "create a language around advocacy that expresses the urgency of issues and concerns" (Steinhaus, 2007). Effective advocacy can also be very time-

consuming and expensive and therefore beyond the means of associations that struggle for sustainability funding at the best of times.

In my work with educational technology associations I have experienced what some of the participants described as educators' general discomfort with advocacy. This discomfort seems to come from two sources: the fear of putting one's job at risk by undertaking political action and the belief that someone else will do the work so we do not need to worry about it. Lately, however, I have sensed a shift in the zeitgeist. The educators who belong to CSTA are becoming increasingly concerned about policy and funding issues. In fact, no issue has generated more email, blog postings, letters to the editor, and articles in CSTA publications than the current mess that is computing teacher certification. And so we find ourselves trying to find low-cost ways to get the attention of the policy-makers and legislators who can impact our domain. Our approach has been to position our organization as a trusted source of research and information specifically about computer science education in K-12, and I believe we have made some progress toward that end.

I believe that groups such as ISTE and The EdTech Action Network are also playing an important role in efforts to advocate for educational technology. These groups are bringing associations and individuals together to provide training and tools to help associations conduct more effective advocacy and outreach initiatives. They are building coalitions and facilitating partnerships that have the potential to get the message out far more effectively than any one association could do on its own. And CSTA needs to make more effort to be part of this growing advocacy community.

Perhaps it was not possible to separate issues of leadership, advocacy, and change agency within this study because, as educational technology associations, we see them as so intimately linked as to be indistinguishable. We cannot separate them in our stories because we cannot separate them in our minds. As educational technologists, we see ourselves as agents of change, transforming not just the tools of learning, but learning itself by empowering teachers and students to seek new ways to access information and build knowledge. We see our associations as the external manifestation of this vision and of our collective will. Our vision is about change, promoting and supporting change requires leadership, and convincing the legislators and policy-makers to make the technology and teacher professional development required to achieve our goals requires advocacy. This is, at the most fundamental level, the work of educational technology associations. I am called to do it because I believe it is good work, and because I have been fortunate to meet many people in this field who have guided and inspired me with their knowledge, their commitment, and the sense of connection and community they have given me.

Recommendations for Future Research

A good story always leads you to wonder about all of the pieces that were left out. What happened to the characters and what really comes after happily ever after. Good research is like a good story in that it leaves everyone wanting more. From the beginning of this research project, I was very much aware of its limitations. As Lincoln (2006) noted, in the postmodern sense,

there is no *gold standard* for methods in inquiry. There are only studies which are open and aboveboard about their findings, about the logic which led to their conclusions, about the standpoints of their authors, about their

limitations. There are studies which possess validity because those from whom the findings were gathered assent to their credibility, their match with the respondents' realities, and their ability to ring true to lived experience. (pp. 15-16)

This is a case study of only one educational technology associations and the people I interviewed. The results cannot be generalized to other staff, other volunteers, other members, or other organizations. What the results do indicate, however, is that there is a great deal we do not yet know about professional associations and the role that they play in education.

As one of the participants in this study pointed out, this study does not tell us why educators join professional membership associations or why some people are content to be passive members while others become active volunteers. The American Society of Association Executives has begun to create research tools that help associations explore member engagement and connection and it would be very interesting to see these applied to educational associations and to learn whether educators are typical of other kinds of professionals in their relationships to their associations.

While there seems to be a considerable body of research relating to educational leadership, there is very little known about the role of change agents in promoting and supporting change. Strudler's (1987) research on the role of technology coordinators established that the field of educational technology provides fertile ground for exploration of this topic. My hope is that this study also makes some small contribution in terms of looking at perceptions of change agency at the organization level. At present, however, the research in this area is particularly lacking. Future research efforts, for example, could explore the actual impact of educational technology associations on

education, particularly in areas such as curriculum development, standards and assessment, and professional development. They might also address the question of whether these associations actually promote change or simply support the status quo.

If the observations of the participants in this study are to be taken into account, it would also be helpful to know what kind of strategies associations can use to determine the professional development and leadership development needs of their members. While there is a significant amount of research on professional development for teachers within an academic setting (pre-service and in-service), I was not able to find a single study on the role of educational associations as providers of professional development. It would also be very useful to know how the professional development needs of educational technology teachers change over the course of their careers. Are their needs similar to teachers in other disciplines or does the constantly evolving technology create the need for more intensive on-going learning?

Educational technology associations have been an important part of my professional and personal life, and it is clear that I perceive them as making a significant contribution, not just to my understanding of technology and its applications in education, but to my teaching and to my sense of myself as a professional person. But how true is this of other educators? What are the differences between those of us who belong to such associations and those who do not? Are we better teachers? Are we happier in our profession? How does our membership in such organizations impact our teaching careers and our attitudes towards them? All of these quests are yet to be answered.

The Story Begins

At the beginning of this dissertation I noted that, for all its appendages of scholarship and research, it is really a series of stories. It is the story that is my life, encompassing who I am and what I believe about learning and teaching and the work I feel called to do in the field of educational technology and professional associations. It is stories shared with me through the generosity of the organization that allowed me unfettered access and the many thoughtful and generous people who agreed to be interviewed for this project or who guided me in this work. I have done my best to tell the retold story with integrity despite the limitations of understanding and my storytelling. And now it has a chance to become another story. This is the story that the reader will take from it, to shape her or his own stories of work, study, and service. And for me, this is the most important story of all, the story of how stories teach and live and have meaning beyond themselves.

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Appendix A

Project Descriptions for Association Staff and Interview Participants

Brief Description of Project (Email to Association Senior Staff)

I am writing to request your participation in an educational research survey I am conducting as part of my doctoral research at Oregon State University.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to examine the ways in which educational technology associations believe that they are contributing to the educational system, and how they can increase their effectiveness as educational change agents. My hope is to collect and to analyze data (interviews, observations) provided by leaders in your association and to examine selected documents (for example association publications) to determine how your association contributes to the educational system and what sorts of things you are doing to promote and support educational change.

Timeline:

The data collection would begin in November 2006 and be completed by June 2007.

Demands on Your Association

I would like to interview approximately 20 people from your association. Interviewees would include senior staff, volunteer leaders (members of the Board of Directors and committee chairs, long-standing members and new members. All participation would be voluntary. Interviews would be arranged at the convenience of the interviewee and could be conducted either by telephone or in person. Interviewees would be provided with the questions beforehand and would be given the opportunity to review and revise a written transcript of the interview for correctness, completeness, and clarity. I would also like to attend one of your board of directors meetings and two committee meetings as an observer. My purpose would be to get a better understanding of the context under which the association operates. You will also be asked to complete a three-page association profile.

Benefits

At present, very few people are aware of the important contributions that professional associations make to education, especially in the field of educational technology. My belief is that this study will provide a better understanding of the ways in which these associations support teachers and students and ensure that both have the skills that they require. In addition to providing you with copies of the final dissertation, I would also be willing to work with your association to find a way that I might share the research with your Board and your members.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please respond by email and we can begin by scheduling a one-hour meeting so that I can provide you with more detailed information.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Brief Description of Project (Email to Interviewees)

I am writing to request your participation in an educational research survey I am conducting as part of my doctoral research at Oregon State University.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to examine the ways in which educational technology associations believe that they are contributing to the educational system, and how they can increase their effectiveness as educational change agents. My hope is to collect and to analyze data (interviews, observations) provided by leaders in your association and to examine selected documents (for example association publications) to determine how your association contributes to the educational system and what sorts of things you are doing to promote and support educational change.

Timeline:

The data collection would begin in November 2006 and be completed by June 2007.

Participation Requirements

You will be asked to take part in an interview with me lasting between 60 and 90 minutes. Interviews will be arranged at your convenience and could be conducted either by telephone or in person. You will be provided with the questions beforehand and given the opportunity to review and revise a written transcript of the interview for correctness, completeness, and clarity.

Benefits

Participants receive no direct benefits.

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please respond by email so that I can provide you with more detailed information.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Appendix B
Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: **Change, leadership and the role of educational technology associations in education: A case study**

Principal Investigator: **Karen Higgins, College of Education**

Co-Investigator(s): **Christine Stephenson, College of Education**

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to examine the ways in which educational technology associations believe that they are contributing to the educational system, and how they believe that they can increase their effectiveness as educational change agents. The researcher's intention is to analyze data provided by educational technology associations (interviews, observations, and documents) to determine how educational technology associations believe that they contribute to the educational system, what sorts of things these associations are doing to promote educational change, how they believe they can increase their effectiveness as change agents, and what they see as the barriers to improving their effectiveness as change agents. The results/outcomes will be used as part of a student doctoral thesis. The researcher is studying this because she believes that this research can provide information that will help professional associations identify and overcome current barriers to their full participation as agents of educational change.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you currently hold a staff, volunteer, or membership position in an educational technology association.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

If you agree to participate, your involvement will consist of one interview that will take place either in person or by telephone at a time and location convenient to you sometime between November 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007. Subsequent to the interview, participants may be asked to answer additional follow-up or clarifying questions by email. They will also be asked to read transcripts of their interviews to ensure accuracy and completeness.

If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for up to 90 minutes. If follow-up or clarifying questions are required, they will be sent to you by email within 30 days of the completion of your interview to be answered at your convenience.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study include the possibility that people within the educational technology community may be able to identify the association and/or individuals in a leadership position within the association despite use of pseudonyms for both people and organizations.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study. The researcher anticipates, however, that this study may benefit participating associations by providing them with another perspective on their perceived role as education change agents. The researcher also anticipates this study may benefit society through presentations or publications that raise awareness of the function of professional associations in education.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION I GIVE?

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. To help protect your confidentiality, the researcher will ensure that data documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet assessable only to the researcher and all computerized data will be stored in password-protected computer files accessible only by the researcher. The researcher's major professor is the only other person who will have access to transcripts from the study. In addition, data forms for participants will be identified by identification code numbers only. If the results of this project are published your identity will not be made public.

DO I HAVE A CHOICE TO BE IN THE STUDY?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. When you participate in the interview, you are also free to skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researcher will discard any information collected from you from the study

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact, Chris Stephenson at 1.800.401.1799 or by email at cstephenson@comcast.net or Karen Higgins at 541.737.4201 or by email at higginsk@oregonstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541) 737-4933 or by email at IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name (printed):

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

Appendix C
Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Participant Information

Name: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____

Volunteer Title: _____ Years of Service: _____

Job Title: _____ Years in Field: _____

Interview Questions

1. What do you see as the role of educational technology associations in education?
2. What should be the goal of educational technology associations?
3. What is the most important thing your association is doing?
4. What do educational technology associations do really well?
5. What does your association do really well?
6. What do educational technology associations not do really well?
7. What does your association not do really well?
8. What do you wish your association did better/more?
9. What gets in the way of your association doing better/more?
10. What is the hardest lesson your organization has had to learn?
11. Do you think educational technology associations should make change happen?
Why or why not?
12. Do you think educational technology associations can make change happen?
Why or why not?
13. Does the structure of your association support or hinder its effectiveness when it comes to educational change? Why or why not?

14. What makes a person a good leader?
15. What makes an organization a good leader?
16. What do you believe your association values in a leader?
17. Do you see yourself as a leader? Why or why not?
18. What is the thing that motivates you the most as a leader?
19. In what ways would you like to improve your leadership skills?
20. Do educational technology association leaders need to have special qualities/skills? Why or why not?
21. Have the needed skills/qualities changed over time, and if so, how?
22. Do you see your association as a leader? Why or why not?
23. In what ways would you like to improve your association's leadership capabilities?
24. Do you see your association as fulfilling a role that is currently not being met for its members in terms of professional and leadership development? Why or why not?
25. How do you see yourself as connected to your association?
26. Do you think your association promotes educational change? If so, how?

Appendix D
Association Profile Instrument

Association Profile Questionnaire

Purpose:

This questionnaire is intended to gather general information about your educational technology association in order to provide a richer context for the information that the leaders from your association participating in this study are providing.

Please have the appropriate person from your association complete the following information to the best of her/his knowledge

PART 1: HISTORY

1. In what year was your association formed?

2. Who was responsible for starting your association? (Please list their names by key individuals and organizations.)

3. What was the originally intended scope of your association? (Please circle one.)
 - Local
 - State
 - National
 - International

4. Did another institution or body provide financial or staff support for your association in its early years? (Please circle one.)
 - Yes
 - No

If yes, please indicate the type of institution or body.

- College or University
- Foundation
- Business of industry partner
- Government
- Other: _____

PART 2: GOVERNANCE

5. Do you have a mission statement? (Please circle one.)

Yes

No

6. Do you have a set of by-laws? (Please circle one.)

Yes

No

7. Do have a volunteer president or chair? (Please circle one.)

Yes

No

8. Do have a volunteer Board of Directors? (Please circle one.)

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate type? (Please circle one.)

Appointed

Anyone who is willing to help

Elected

PART 3: STAFFING

9. Does your association have paid staff? (Please circle one.)

Yes

No

If yes, how many full-time staff does your association employ?

1-10

10-30

30-100

>100

PART 4: MEMBERSHIP/BENEFITS

10. Does your association charge dues for membership?

Yes

No

If yes, what is the cost of your basic yearly individual membership?

If yes, how many individual members do you currently have?

11. How many members does your association have (not including affiliate memberships)? (Please provide an estimate.)
12. What benefits do you offer for your individual members? (Please circle all that apply.)
- Advocacy
 - Annual conference
 - Curriculum/standards guidelines
 - Career or employment information
 - Interactive forums (listservs, online forums)
 - Legislative or policy information
 - Online publications/newsletters
 - Professional development opportunities
 - Print magazines/journals
 - Research results
 - Student contests
 - Teaching and learning resources
 - Web site
 - Other _____

PART 5: FINANCES

13. Is your association a registered non-profit organization? (Please circle one.)
- Yes
 - No

If yes, what was your total revenue for your last fiscal year?

14. Please indicate your primary sources and types of revenue by approximate percentage. (Please include all that apply.)
- Ancillary sales
 - Annual conference
 - Corporate sponsorship
 - External service contracts
 - Government sponsorship
 - Grants (private and government)
 - Membership
 - Research contracts
 - Workshops/training

Appendix E
Coding Notes

QUESTION 1: ROLE OF ED TECH ASSOCIATIONS

Note: I assigned each participant in the study a four-digit numerical identifier (e.g., 7100). I then used this identifier to organize the participant responses in the database and for participant attribution of quoted text in the body of the thesis. During the coding process, I also assigned each participant an alphabetic identifier indicating each participant's role in the association. In the coding notes below, the letter "s" appended to the numerical identifier indicates that the participant is a staff member, the letter "v" indicates that the participant is a volunteer, and the letter "m" indicates that the participant is a member.

Member Benefits:

- Networking (7100s, 7105s, 7125s, 7126v, 7140v, 7145s, 7204v, 7550s)
- Professional development (7100s, 7126v, 7136v, 7140v, 7600m)
- Disseminate information (7204v, 7501s, 7506s, 7510v)
- Provide resources ((7100s, 7105s 7506s, 7550s)
- Building leadership (7105s, 7126v, 7506s)
- Publishing venue (7136v)
- Venue to demonstrate leadership/knowledge (7140v)

Discipline Benefits:

- Advocacy (7105s, 7126v, 7140v, 7145s, 7501s, 7510v, 7600m, 7610s, 7650v)
- Vision/leadership (7145s, 7510v, 75550, 7600m, 7610s, 7650v)
- Conduct research (7105s, 7136v, 7506s, 7550s)
- Identify best practices (7506s, 7510v, 7530m, 7545m, 7600m)
- Develop standards (7145s, 7204v, 7510v)
- Outreach beyond ed tech community (7145s, 7600m)
- Serve as clearinghouse (7530m, 7545m)

Educational Benefits:

- Improve learning (7105s, 7126v, 7136v, 7140v, 7506s, 7525v, 7550s)
- Improve teaching (7105s, 7140v, 7506s, 7550s)
- Support collaboration (7125s, 7540v, 7545m)
- Better life for students (7105s)
- Venue for giving back (7550s)
- Moving schools to the modern age (7610s)
- Improving how schools function (7650v)

Notes:

- Ideal of leaving the world a better place (7105s)
- Importance of shared vision and lexicon for members (7140v)
- Importance of being member-centered (7506s)
- State-level and national organizations serve different functions (7510v)

QUESTION 2: GOAL OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATIONS

Member Benefits:

- Provide resources (7100s, 7204v, 7145s, 7545m)
- Build community (7204v, 7510v, 7530m, 7545m)
- Provide professional development (7100s, 7145s, 7600m)
- Improve members' technical skills (7540v, 7650v)
- Grow membership (7126v)
- Understand members (7100s)
- Increase organization's power (7126v)
- Build advocacy skills (7204v)
- Provide a voice (7530m)
- Understand member needs (7540v)
- Improve members' consumer knowledge (7540v)
- Build leadership (7550s)
- Provide mentoring (7600m)

Discipline Benefits:

- Advocacy (legislation and policy reform technology use (7100s, 7204v, 7510v, 7530m, 7550s, 7610s, 7650v)
- Be mission driven (7105s, 7145s, 7550s)
- Provide forums for information exchange (7136v, 7510v, 7545m)
- Identify best practices (7540v, 7610s)
- Disseminate information (7204v, 7545m)
- Provide vision (7105s, 7145s)
- Elevate the discourse (7125s)
- Highlight breakthroughs (7125s)
- Influence the field (7204v)
- Create standards (7510v)
- Ensure appropriate and best use of the technology (7600m)

Educational Benefits:

- Improve student learning (7506s, 7525v)
- Better life for students (7501s)
- Support those who are struggling (7125s)
- Support school reform (7650v)
- Improve schools (7650v)

Notes:

- Goals need to be determined locally (7140v)

QUESTION 3: MOST IMPORTANT THING TETA IS DOING

Member Benefits:

- Build community (7100s, 7204v, 7545m)
- Provide resources (7105s, 7126v, 7545m)
- Publications (7136v, 7610s)
- Disseminate information (7145s, 7204v)
- Capacity building (7145s)

Discipline Benefits:

- Advocacy (funding) (7105s, 7126v, 7145s, 7204v, 7501s, 7510v, 7610s, 7650v)
- Create standards (7105s, 7125s, 7140v, 7204v, 7510v, 7530m, 7600m, 7610s)
- Conference (7105s, 7126v, 7540v, 7545m, 7600m)
- Move technology agenda forward (7105s)
- Determine best practices (7145s)
- International outreach (7126v)
- Collaboration (7510v)
- Vision (7550s)

Educational Benefits:

- Transforming education for digital age learners (7145s)
- Building consensus regarding student knowledge and skills (7506s)
- Enhancing learning (7525v)
- Enhancing teaching (7525v)

Notes:

- Goals need to be determined locally (7140v)
- Tension between US focus and relevance to international members (7600m)

QUESTION 4: ASSOCIATIONS DO REALLY WELL**Member Benefits:**

- Build community (7105s, 7126v, 7545m, 7550s, 7650v)
- Publications (7136v, 7506s, 7540v)
- Disseminate information (7100s, 7145s, 7545m)
- Develop leadership (7126v)
- Provide resources (7530m)
- Meet member needs (7204v)

Discipline Benefits:

- Advocacy (7510v, 7525v, 7610s)
- Conferences (7136v, 7506s)
- Use technology effectively (7545m, 7650v)
- Contribute to the body of knowledge (7506s)
- Perpetuate ed tech culture (7600m)

Notes:

- The educational technology community has a unique culture that associations support (7550s)
- The community is very diverse in terms of the skill levels of the members (7600m)

QUESTION 5: TETA DOES REALLY WELL

Member Benefits:

- Publications (7100s, 7105s, 7136v, 7204v, 7530m, 7600m, 7650v)
- Build community (7105s, 7140v, 7145s, 7204v, 7510v, 7650v)
- Disseminate information (7105s, 7204v, 7530m, 7600m, 7650v)
- Provide resources (7100s, 7105s, 7550s)
- Professional development (7100s, 7501s)
- Communicate with members (7530m)
- Meet member needs (7140v)

Discipline Benefits:

- Conferences (7100s, 7136v, 7510v, 7540v, 7650v)
- Advocacy (7126v, 7501s, 7610s)
- Bring stakeholders together/build relationships (7140v,7145s, 7510v,7540v)
- Use technology effectively (7140v, 7545m)
- Vision (7140v, 7145s)
- Conducts research (7140v)
- Develop consensus on key issues (7105s)
- Perpetuate ed tech culture (7600m)
- Define student technology needs (7525v)
- Introduce new technologies (7540v)
- Create standards (7650v)
- Develop policy (7610s)

Educational Benefits:

- Being the face of educational transformation (7125s)
- Improve teaching (7145s)
- Improve learning (7145s)
- Provide services to impact education (7145s)

Notes:

See standards as dated (7540v)

Need to provide resources for a very diverse community (7550s)

Importance of L&L (7600m)

QUESTION 6: ASSOCIATIONS DO POORLY**Member Benefits:**

- Develop staff knowledge (7100s)
- Meet skills needs of diverse membership (7126v, 7136v, 7506s)
- Balance mission with revenue realities (7506s)
- Build community at the local level (7530m)
- Reach out to diverse potential members (7600m)

Discipline Benefits:

- Advocacy (local level, state level) (7105s, 7140v, 7510v, 7600m)
- Influence policy (7105s, 7125s, 7145s)
- Collaborate with other organizations (7145s, 7610s, 7650v)
- Use technology effectively (7540v)
- Access funding (7100s)

Educational Benefits:

- Address school accountability issues (7140v)
- Solve real educational problems (7506s)
- Focus too much on technology rather than student learning (7525v)
- Fail to engage educators at a deep level (7550s)

Notes:

Staff need real world experience and access to advocate effectively (7100s)
Teacher mindset diminishes ability to advocate effectively (7510v)

QUESTION 7: TETA DOES POORLY

Member Benefits:

- Meet skills needs of diverse membership (7140v, 7204v, 7530m, 7600m, 7650v)
- Communicate benefits to potential members (7125s, 7501s, 7501s)
- Identify member needs (7100s, 7140v)
- Not agile/flexible (able to respond quickly (7126v, 7204v)
- Doesn't treat volunteers well (7136v, 7525v)
- Seek out and support new leadership (7525v)
- Balance mission with revenue realities (7145s)

Discipline Benefits:

- Use technology effectively (7506s, 7525v, 7540v)
- Collaborate with international organizations (7140v, 7650v)
- Conduct research (7610s)
- Create vision documents (7610s)
- Influence policy (7105s)

Educational Benefits:

- Build coalitions that advocate effectively for change (7105s, 7550s, 7650v)
- Focus on effectiveness (7136v)
- Not enough focus on how students learn and how to improve learning (7525v)

Notes:

- The association's hierarchal structure slows the organization down and limits its agility (7126v)
- Conference focuses on what's new and does not follow-through on measures of technology effectiveness over time (7136v)
- Organization is not good at working with other countries (7140v)
- Does not support its SIGCS when they are trying to make change happen (7204v)
- Does not use the community building potential of the technology well (7506s)
- Does not use the technology to disseminate member services effectively (7540v)
- Volunteers feel that there is an oldboys/old girls network that controls the organization (7525v)

QUESTION 8: TETA DOES BETTER/MORE OF

Member Benefits:

- Make volunteers and members feel connected and valued (7136v, 7140v, 7525v, 7550s)
- Be more agile/flexible (able to respond quickly (7126v, 7204v, 7506s, 7540v)
- Meet skills/resources needs of diverse membership (7510v, 7550s, 7600m)
- Have better member information/data (7100s, 7105s)
- Improve revenues/funding (7105s, 7650v)
- Build community (7125s, 7530m)
- Improve member access to benefits (7105s)

Discipline Benefits:

- Improve advocacy capacity (state level, affiliates, members) (7140v, 7145s, 7510v, 7525v, 76600m)
- Use technology more effectively (7105s, 7506s, 7525v, 7540v)
- Conduct more research (7136v, 7610s)
- Collaborate with international organizations (7140v)
- Improve ability to see new trends (7540v)
- Influence public opinion (7145s)

Educational Benefits:

- Work systematically to improve schools (7145s)
- Demonstrate connection between technology and improved student learning (7501s)
- Focus more on how students learn and how to improve learning (7145s)

Notes:

- Volunteers do not feel valued (7136v)
- Working internationally- China (7140v)
- Need to address needs of a wide range of members—neophytes to computer scientists (7600m)
- Need to be proactive rather than reactive (7126v)
- Connection between services and revenue/funding (7650v)

QUESTION 9: BARRIERS

Resources

- Lack financial resources (7100s, 7105s, 7125s, 7126v, 7136v, 7145s, 7506s, 7540v, 7550s, 7610s, 7650v)
- Lack of human resources (7105s, 7136v, 7204v, 7540v)
- Lack of time (7100s, 7530m, 7550s)

Organizational

- Too much bureaucracy (7100s, 7510v)
- Lack of agility (7100s, 7204v)
- Lack of collaboration with other organizations (7105s, 7650v)
- Perception that it is a technological organization rather than a school effectiveness organization (7145s, 7525v)
- Lack of technology infrastructure (7105s)
- Lack of technical knowledge (7525v)
- Higher education mentality (7510v)
- Trying to do too much (7204v)
- Lack of appreciation for staff (7136v)
- Lack of opportunity for volunteer input (7136v)
- Infrastructure insufficient to handle growth (7501s)
- Centering all of pd outreach on conference (7600m)

Notes:

- Difficulty of finding financially viable model to accomplish goals (7506s)
- Difficulty of setting priorities and boundaries to achieve goals (7540v)

QUESTION 10: HARDEST LESSON

Member Benefits:

- Keeping on cutting edge to meet member needs (7100s)
- Know members and focus on their needs (7140v)
- Understanding the importance of online learning as a means of delivering professional development to members (7510v)

Organizational

- Leadership changes as the organization matured (7126v, 7136v, 7650v)
- Importance of investing in infrastructure (7125s)
- Centering all of pd outreach on conference (7600m)
- Understanding connection between national leadership and funding (7145s)
- Cost of growing too fast (7501s)
- Need to establish strategic priorities (7506s)
- Work effectively with limited staff (7550s)
- Recognizing and meeting the needs of the affiliates (7510v)
- Work in collaboration with other organizations (7550s)

Educational

- Need to focus on learning in school setting (7145s)

Notes:

- Importance of recognizing the need for different kinds of leaders at different times (7126v)
- Some volunteers understand need for leadership changes and others do not (7136v)
- New member would love to know the answer to this question (7530m)

QUESTION 11: CAN ED TECH ASSOCIATIONS MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

Identifying change agents:

- Association must build a community of people who will advocate for change (7126v, 7140v, 7501s, 7510v, 7550s)
- Associations must steer change to be relevant (7105s, 7145s, 7506s, 7525v)
- Technology itself is a tool for change (7105s, 7550s, 7610s)
- Members should be the change agents (7100s, 7125s)
- Associations influence change agents (7125s, 7126v)
- Publications can be advocates for change (7510v)
- Association must provide more advocacy resources for teachers (7136v)
- Standards are tools for change (7510v)

Purpose of change agency:

- To influence public policy and legislation (7136v, 7140v, 7204v, 7600m, 7650v)
- Change is necessary to improve education (7126v, 7136v, 7204v)
- To improve teaching and learning (7105s, 7125s, 7501s)
- To support teachers in their efforts to change (7136v, 7530m)
- Change is a constant in education and associations must be part of it (7145s, 7550s)
- To contribute to the body of knowledge (7506s)
- To advance the field (7506s)
- Produce evidence that change needs to occur (7525v)
- Helping education change and grow (7650v)

Outcomes of change agency

- Change must be relevant to members/ member driven (7100s, 7145s, 7540v, 7545m)
- Hard to measure (7100s)
- Outcomes are incremental rather than revolutionary (7506s)
- TETA demonstrates its leadership by facilitating collective action (7550s)
- National prove that TETA is a change agent (7510v)
- Need to focus on learning in school setting (7145s)

Notes:

- To create change that is educationally rather than politically driven (7600m)
- Practitioners must educate policy makers about classroom realities (7650v)

QUESTION 12: SHOULD ED TECH ASSOCIATIONS MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

Identifying change agents:

- Standards are tools for change (7105s, 7506s, 7510v, 7525v, 7540v, 7550s)
- Change is achieved by members at grassroots level (7126v,7501s, 7525v, 7545m,7650v)
- Empowered/engaged members become advocate for change (7501s, 7545m, 7550s)
- Association must build a community of people who will advocate for change (7105s)
- Publications can be advocates for change (7100s, 7600m)
- Conferences can be agents of change (7600m, 7650v)
- Change can be achieved by creating coalitions (7550s, 7610s)
- Change can only happen at grass roots level (7530m)
- Association must provide more advocacy resources for teachers (7105s)
- Professional development inspires teachers to be change agents (7510v)
- Member stories are an important tool for change (7650v)
- Influence graduate students (7136v)

Purpose of change agency:

- To influence public policy and legislation (state-level, federal level) (7105s, 7125s, 7126v, 7136v, 7525v)
- To support teachers in their efforts to change (7100s, 7125s)

Outcomes of change agency

- Concern about lack of intellectual depth of change at individual level (7136v)
- An association's ability to create change by lobbying Congress is very limited (7530m)
- Lack of influence at state level (7136v)
- Systemic reform is much more difficult to achieve because it requires changes in public opinion and policy (7145s)
- Hard to measure (7126v)
- Change to formal learning in schools in relation to technology is proof of TETA'S effectiveness as change agent (7145s)
- TETA
- The fact that TETA has influenced vendors to change how they do product testing is a marker of TETA'S success as a change agent (7506s)
- Broad recognition of TETA is a marker of its success as a change agent (7204v)

QUESTION 13: TETA STRUCTURE SUPPORT OR HINDER CHANGE

Organization: Support

- Productive governance structure supports change (7126v, 7204v)
- Systems and processes are regularly analyzed and revised as needed (7100s)
- Able to reach and engage practitioners supports educational change (7105s)
- Does an effective job of lobbying state departments of education (7145s)
- Affiliates provide additional advocacy outreach in support of change (7145s)
- Strong staff support change (7204v)
- Effective practices for setting core values and goals (7204v)
- Structure helps TETA increase its effectiveness as it matures and grows (7204v)
- Having an active board that is directly involved in activities supports change (7510v)
- Having two offices supports provides better access to DC policy makers (7510v)
- Association structure has improved over time (7525v)
- Structure supports change because it is not top-heavy (7530m)
- Openness to organizational change supports change (7550s)
- Being a safe place to take risks supports change (7550s)
- Curriculum standards improve effectiveness at state level (7540v)
- Good publications are an important part of supporting change (7540v)
- Good conference is an important part of supporting change (7540v)
- Board structure pulls in volunteers from all levels of education (7650v)
- Increased involvement of private sector advocates supports change (7650v)

Organization: Hinder

- There are departmental silos that create overlap and redundancy (7100s)
- Structure seems too complex to some members (7136v)
- Lack of broad outreach hinders change effectiveness (7140v)
- Poor outreach to policy makers and thought leaders (7145s)
- Having two offices (7510v)
- Outreach at school level is not effective which hinders change (7540v)
- The same people in positions of power for long periods hinders change (7600m)
- Having an elected board with considerable authority results in a lack of cohesions and consistency from year to year (7610s)

Requirements:

- Need powerful tool and streamlined processes (7125s)
- Importance of the association being a learning organization (7506s)
- Association must be flexible enough to change (7506s)
- Change is achieved by systems not by structure (7506s)
- Having two offices hinders change (7510v)
- Need have a balanced structure that ensures that the strength of the organization rests in the members and those who support the mission (7650v)
- Need to be cognizant of how structure is being implemented/who is being selected to do certain things or how programs are evaluated (7525v)

- Important to recognize that change is incremental and not always immediately apparent (7550s)

QUESTION 14: PERSONAL LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Individual Attributes

- Visionary (7100s, 7105s, 7140v, 7145s, 7204v, 7506s, 7530m, 7540v, 7550s, 7610s)
- Communication skills (7100s, 7126v, 7136v, 7140v, 7204v, 7510v, 7550s)
- Interpersonal skills (7100s, 7506s, 7530m, 7540v)
- Listening skills (7100s, 7501s, 7650v)
- Knowledge of the field (7126v, 7525v, 7540v)
- Sincere commitment to the greater good (7105s, 7145s)
- Willing to ruffle feathers/push envelope (7510v, 7525v, 7550s)
- Inspires others (7530m, 7550s)
- Consensus builder (7506s, 7650v)
- Passionate (7136v, 7145s)
- Enthusiastic (7136v, 7545m)
- Energetic (7145s, 7540v)
- Trustworthy (7550s, 7600m)
- Willing to take responsibility (7125s, 7506s)
- Innovative (7510v, 7545m)
- Mission driven/focused (7140v, 7650v)
- Follows through (7540v)
- Hardworking (7525v)
- Confident (7545m)
- Allows others to dream but keeps them grounded (7530m)
- Knows which battles to fight (7506s)
- Manages time wisely (7506s)
- Understands who the players are and knows how to motivate them (7100s)
- Wise (7105s)
- Able to effect change (7105s)
- Respects other (7105s)
- Able to think globally (7125s)
- Can adapt to change (7506s)
- Curious (7125s)
- Consistent (7125s)
- Models behavior and attitude that they want the organization to reflect (7125s)
- Strong practitioner skills (educator) (7126v)
- Likes people (7136v)
- Charismatic (7140v)
- Open-minded (7525v)
- Inclusive (allows others to voice their opinions) (7525v)
- Builds for sustainability (7140v)
- Can marshal resources (7140v)
- Is a continuous learner (7140v)
- Persistent (7145s)
- Decisive (7204v)

- Understands what people need and is committed to meeting those needs (7501s)

Notes:

- A good leader must have good administrative help (7126v)
- A good leader must be willing take on tasks along with staff and volunteers (7136v)
- Leader is an enlightened warrior (7550s)

QUESTION 15: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Organization Attributes

- Listens to the members' needs and concerns (7100s, 7136v, 7510v, 7530m, 7650v)
- Meets its members' needs (7125s, 7204v, 7501s, 7530m, 7650v)
- Visionary (7105s, 7140v, 7145s, 7506s)
- Communicates well with across the organization (7136v, 7140v, 7501s)
- Provides meaningful opportunities for volunteers/members (7136v, 7506s, 7530m)
- Credible (7545m, 7545m, 7650v)
- Knowledgeable about the field (7204s, 7550s)
- Attract good people to its leadership roles (7126v, 7510v)
- Makes members feel that they belong (7136v, 7145s)
- Passionate (7136v, 7145s)
- Energetic (7145s, 7540v)
- Consensus builder (7204v, 7506s)
- Able to advocate for change (7105s)
- Have a consistent message (7125s)
- Deliver on its promises (7125s)
- Differentiates itself from its competitors (7125s)
- Makes good use of community resources (7550s)
- Strong values (7136v)
- Good strategic plan (7140v)
- Sincere commitment to the greater good (7145s)
- Mission-driven (7145s)
- Perseveres (7145s)
- Solves problems (7204v)
- Focused (7540v)
- Policy-driven (7540v)
- Trustworthy (7600m)
- Has access to resources (7610s)
- Good data for decision-making (7610s)
- Voice of reason (7650v)
- Education-focused (7650v)

Notes:

- Importance of alignment and consistency throughout the organization (7140v)

QUESTION 16: TETA VALUES IN ITS LEADERSHIP

TETA Values

- Visionary (7100s, 7105s, 7204v, 7550s)
- Can connect with different stakeholders and communities (7125s, 7145s, 7501s, 7610s)
- Has the right credentials (7125s, 7126v, 7545m)
- Communication skills (7125s, 7530m, 7550s)
- Effective/ knows how to achieve goals (7105s, 7204v)
- Coalition builder (7100s, 7650v)
- Innovative/cutting edge thinker (7125s, 7506s)
- Can connect well with members (7126v, 7506s)
- Fair-minded (7105s, 7650v)
- Meets it members' needs (7100s)
- Strategic planning skills (7105s)
- Strong (7530m)
- Committed to change (7530m)
- Good listener (7650v)
- Mission-focused (7650v)
- Goal-oriented (7650v)
- Has a proven track record of effectiveness in the field (7545m)
- Confident (7530m)
- Ability to schmooze (7136v)
- Extroverted (7136v)
- Sincere (7145s)
- Visibility (7105s)
- Able to make connection between edu. technology and improving student outcomes (7530m)
- Respectful (7105s)
- Team-oriented (7105s)
- Action-oriented (7145s)
- Charismatic (7126v)
- Has good connections (7126v)
- Ability to take the initiative (7506s)
- Ability to motivate others (7100s)
- Relationship-builder (7100s)
- Trust-worthy (7600m)
- Hard working (7650v)
- Knowledgeable about the field (7510v)
- Makes members feel that they belong (7105s)
- Problem solver (7506s)
- Energetic (7145s)
- Delivers on its promises (7506s)
- Sincere commitment to the greater good (7204v)

- Understand the progress is incremental (7204v)

Criticisms:

- Leaders must be perceived of as being part of the old boys/old girls network (7136v, 7525v)
- There is a certain cliquishness to TETA's leadership (7525v)
- There is a lack of value for diversity of opinion and a lack of value for expertise (7525v)
- TETA avoids leaders who are too strong or who might make waves and values those who will keep the boat on an even keel (7540v)

Notes:

- TETA is made of several constituencies (members, volunteers, staff) each of whom has its own leadership values (7105s)
- Being an intellectual leader is not enough (7126v)
- Volunteer leaders need to be willing to share their knowledge and willing to give without a tangible reward. They must also have the time to contribute (7510v)

QUESTION 17: ARE YOU A LEADER

Personal Attributes:

- Able to motivate others (7105s, 7140v, 7145s, 7530m)
- Committed to being a transformation leader (7140v, 7540v, 7600m)
- Achieves results (7506s, 7600m, 7650v)
- Knowledgeable about the field (7126v, 7530m)
- Good listener (7510v, 7650v)
- Decisive (7105s)
- Communication skills (7105s)
- Focused on creating a healthy work environment (7105s)
- Able to learn quickly (7126v)
- Passionate about social justice (7540v)
- Mission-motivated (7540v)
- Relationship-builder (7140v)
- Visionary (7140v)
- Able to make people feel a part of something (7145s)
- Able to create optimism (7145s)
- Problem-solver (7506s)
- Consensus builder (7650v)
- Trustworthy (7600m)
- Supports coworkers (7600m)
- Willing to share ideas (7550s)
- Good at strategic planning (7550s)
- Strong collaboration skills (7550s)

Leadership Hindrances:

- Being outspoken (7525v)

Leadership Development:

- Leadership can be situation (be a leader in some circumstances and not in others (7136v, 7204v, 7510v, 7525v)
- Natural inclination (7100s, 7145s)
- Sometimes knowledge of technology itself can result in being perceived as a leader (7530m, 7610s)
- Acquired through experience (7100s, 7125s, 7145s)
- Need to be in a position to make change happen (7140v)
- There are different styles of leadership and one can change one's approach over time (7650v)

Notes:

- Contributed to promotion within TETA (7100s)
- ISTE needs both a visionary leader and someone to manage the work environment. *This comment reflects TETA'S current leadership structure. (7105s)*

- TETA'S pd efforts focus on collaborative leadership skills development (7550s)

QUESTION 18: PERSONAL MOTIVATION

Personal Motivations:

- Working collaboratively (7100s, 7125s, 7204v, 7550s, 7650v)
- Sharing common goals (7100s, 7204v, 7545m, 7650v)
- Having an impact on individuals'/students lives (7140v, 7145s, 7506s, 7545m)
- Making a difference/contribution (7136v, 7204v, 7510v)
- Seeing tangible results (7105s, 7126v, 7600m)
- Seeing others benefit (7501s, 7600m)
- Developing a vision (7105s, 7125s)
- Doing good work/making a difference (7525v, 7550s)
- Motivating others (7105s)
- Strategizing to achieve a goal (7100s)
- Being engaged by a project (7136v)
- Creating tangible member benefits (7100s)
- TETA'S mission (7145s)
- Inspiring hope (7145s)
- Frustration (7510v)
- Being on the cutting edge (7530m)
- Acknowledgement of effort (7540v)
- Personal challenge (7545m)
- Being goal-directed (7204v)
- Inspired by coworkers (7501s)
- Inspired by teachers and students (7550s)
- Creating something new (7610s)
- Defining one's own role (7610s)
- Advancing the field (7550s)

QUESTION 19: IMPROVING PERSONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS**Personal Improvements:**

- Improve knowledge of the field (7100s, 7506s, 7545m)
- Improve time management (7125s, 7145s)
- Find a personal mentor (7140v, 7650v)
- Improve communication skills (7506s, 7650v)
- Improve knowledge of fiscal systems (7145s, 7610s)
- Read more (7140v, 7600m)
- Improve leadership skill (7100s)
- Become more detail-oriented (7545m)
- Mentor others more (7550s)
- Improve listening skills (7510v)
- Be less impulsive (7510v)
- Improve problem-solving strategies (7105s)
- Improve ability to influence others (7126v)
- Learn other languages (7140v)
- Do more research (7140v)
- Improve fundraising skills (7145s)
- Develop more patience with the slow rate of change (7204v)
- Help other develop their leadership skills (7530m)
- Delegate more/do less micro-managing (7530m)
- Practice leadership skills at a higher level (7540v)
- Spend more time developing a vision (7550s)
- Improve strategic planning skills (7550s)
- Do more facilitation training (7650v)

Hindrances:

- Lack of time (7100s, 7550s, 7600m, 7650v)
- No personal motivation to do what is needed (7136v, 7501s)
- Lack of budget for professional development (7100s)
- Near end of career (7506s)
- More comfortable working behind the scenes (7506s)
- Don't want to become less outspoken (7525v)

QUESTION 20: DO ED TECH LEADERS NEED SPECIAL SKILLS

Tech Leaders Skills

- Strong technical knowledge/credibility (7100s, 7105s, 7126v, 7136v, 7140v, 7204v, 7506s, 7510v, 7525v, 7540v, 7600m)
- Strong leadership skills (7100s, 7105s, 7140v, 7540v, 7650v)
- Strong pedagogical skills/practitioner experience (7126v, 7136v, 7501s, 7610s)
- Effectively model use of technology (7204v, 7501s, 7506s)
- Possess foresight/vision (7510v, 7530m, 7540v)
- Ability to keep up with constant change (7140v, 7525v, 7650v)
- Ability to influence people (7126v, 7540v, 7600m)
- Not be profit-driven (7145s, 7510v)
- Handle opportunities with agility (7145s, 7550s)
- Strong communication skills (7136v, 7600m)
- Have strong organizational/management skills (7204v, 7540v)
- Knowledge of professional development (7136v)
- Be a lifelong learner (7650v)
- Be both service and leadership-oriented (7145s)
- Open-minded (7545m)
- Creative (7545m)
- Broadly-focused (7545m)
- Enthusiastic (7545m)
- Energetic (7545m)
- Know how to make others feel valued (7204v)
- Strong interpersonal skills (7540v)
- Ability to inspire people to change (7126v)
- Curious (7126v)
- Passionate (7510v)
- Able to let go of what does not work (7530m)
- Does not take every failure personally (7530m)
- Generous with their expertise (7510v)
- Unselfish (7510v)
- Knows how to operate with limited funding (7126v)
- Be a change advocate (7550s)
- Patient with the slow rate of change (7550s)
- Flexible (7550s)

QUESTION 21: TECH LEADER SKILLS CHANGED

Skills Changed

- Pace of change has increased and need to know is greater (7550s, 7610s, 7650v)
- The membership base has changed and organizations have to change to keep up (7145s, 7204v, 7600m)
- As an organization matures, the skills needed to run it change (7145s, 7510v)
- Focus now is more on good teaching than on technology (7510v, 7600m)
- Associations must deal with more diverse membership (7204v, 7650v)
- Tech leaders now need great understanding of their association, its purpose, and their role within it (7100s)
- Leaders now need to help teachers envision what technology might do (7140v)
- Need to keep up with changes to education/student learning (7501s)
- Field of leadership itself has changed and leaders need to be more informed about strategic planning, security, management, and legal issues (7540v)
- Teachers now need more comprehensive technology skills (7545m)
- Pace of communication has increased (7650v)

Skills Not Changed:

- Need for good leadership skills is consistent (7125s, 7126v, 7530m)
- Technology has changed but the skills have not (7136v, 7506s, 7525v)
- Keeping pace with change (7125s, 7126v)
- Basic requirements still involves using the technology to engage learners (7100s)
- Still need to be willing to experiment with technology (7105s)
- Youthful inquisitiveness (7105s)
- Leadership skills (7125s)
- Vision (7125s)
- Need to understand how to impact the political system (7136v)

Notes:

- Importance of remaining relevant to the students (7105s)

QUESTION 22: TETA AS LEADER

ISTE As Leader: Yes

- Conference makes it a leader (7105s, 7126v, 7136v, 7204v, 7510v, 7525v, 7600m)
- Learning and Leading (publications) make it a leader (7136v, 7204v, 7501s, 7506s, 7600m)
- Influence of national standards make it a leader (7145s, 7506s, 7525v)
- A leader at providing professional development (7126v, 7501s)
- Ability to influence policy makes it a leader (7126v, 7145s)
- Its efforts to build collaborative relationships with other associations makes it a leader (7105s, 7550s)
- Its long history of strong volunteers with impressive accomplishments (7140v, 7650v)
- Its strong and knowledgeable staff (7204v, 7650v)
- Largest/ most well known association in the field (7530m, 7610s)
- TETA's impact on students' technology-related experience makes it a leader (7145s)
- Media attention it receives demonstrates it is a leader (7145s)
- Its focus on educational technology gives it a clearly defined leadership role (7100s)
- It research demonstrates it leadership (7501s)
- As a provider of member resources (7545m)
- Its increasing global presence (7550s)
- Its commitment to being mission-focused (7650v)

TETA As Leader: No

- Not reaching as many members as it should (7501s)
- Does not have the impact of industry stakeholders and post-secondary organizations (7540v)

Notes:

- TETA is slightly wounded leader (7100s)
- TETA is a leader but is challenged by the increasing need for focus, time, money, and energy (7125s)

QUESTION 23: IMPROVE TETA'S LEADER CAPABILITUES**TETA As Leader: Yes**

- Work more effectively with other organizations (7140v, 7510v, 7550s, 7610s, 7650v)
- Be more supportive of/ accessible to volunteer leaders (7126v, 7136v)
- Improve its ability to operate as a sustainable business (7105s, 7125s)
- Better job of balancing opportunities and revenues (7105s, 7506s)
- Pay more attention to supporting diversity at leadership levels (7540v, 7550s)
- Improve its ability to attract new members (7100s)
- Improve data collection on members needs to ensure relevance (7501s)
- Improve its use of technology (7506s)
- Improve the volunteer structure (7125s)
- Be better at recognizing volunteers for their efforts (7125s)
- Closer coupling of operations and strategic goals (7125s)
- Better engage members (7125s)
- Increase engagement in policy issues at the state level (7140v)
- Provide more resources at the local level (7530m)
- Increase regional representation at leadership level (7600m)
- Increase turn-over in top leadership positions (7600m)
- Make conference more accessible (move it around more) (7600m)
- Pay more attention to leadership development (7540v)
- Improve international presence/leadership role (7140v)
- Conduct more and better research (7145s)
- Improve outreach to general public (7145s)

QUESTION 24: MEETING MEMBER NEEDS

TETA Meets Member Needs

- Professional development (conference, forums, symposia) (7100s, 7105s, 7125s, 7136v, 7140v, 7145s, 7510v, 7530m)
- Provides professional community (7204v, 7506s)
- Leadership development (7510v, 7540v)
- Learning and Leading meetings need for information (7126v, 7136v)
- Provides national standards (7140v, 7506s, 7530m)
- Advocacy at the federal level (7140v)
- Assisting schools with systemic improvement (7145s)
- Opportunities for volunteers (7105s)

Improvements Needed:

- Needs to devote more effort to leadership development (7540v, 7650v)
- PD should extend beyond its current focus on supporting TETA initiatives (7145s, 7525v)
- Need to find more ways to engage members and allow them to contribute (7105s)
- Needs to do better market research, especially as it related to professional development (7501s)
- Need to reach a broader audience (7105s)
- Need to provide a useful forum for researchers at conference (7136v)
- Does not serve as a central repository of information (7510v)
- Needs to provide more careers information (7510v)
- Lack of understanding of teaching and learning (7525v)
- Needs to more effectively harness the power of technology for delivery of professional development (7540v)
- Need to make professional development more accessible at the local level (7600m)
- Needs to do more in partnership with other organizations (7650v)

Notes:

- Tries to meet the needs of a very diverse membership (7204v)
- Need to be responsive to member needs (7545m)

QUESTION 25: CONNECTION TO TETA

Personal Connections:

- Connection to a social community/network (7126v, 7146, 7204v, 7610s)
- All encompassing connection (7506s)
- Generated friendships across the country and across the globe (7510v)

Professional Connections:

- Connected as a volunteer (7136v, 7145s, 7204v, 7600m, 7650v)
- Connect through publications/member communications (7136v, 7530m, 7540v)
- Connected to the mission (7100s, 7525v, 7550s, 7610s)
- Connected to a professional community/network (7100s, 7204v, 7510v)
- Historical connection (7136v)
- Connected as a member (7136v)
- Connected through career choice (7100s, 7145s)
- Connected to a department (7501s)
- Connected through conference (7510v)
- Connected by national standards (7525v)
- Connected through access to resources (7545m)
- Connected by perception of professional benefit (7545m)

Notes:

- Connection to a caring and compassionate community (7126v)
- Possibility of being too connected (7145s)
- Importance of having relationships that are both professionally and personally fulfilling (7204v)
- Professional connections can be tenuous and job-based (7525v)
- Volunteer has a sense of seasonal connection based upon conference preparations (7540v)
- Connection ad volunteer is mitigated by the lack of appreciation/recognition (7600m)

QUESTION 26: DOES TETA SUPPORT/PROMOTE CHANGE

Change Vehicle:

- Learning and Leading (Publications) (7126v, 7136v, 7530m, 7545m, 7600m, 7650v)
- Advocacy (7126v, 7136v, 7530m, 7650v)
- Conference (7126v, 7510v, 7600m, 7650v)
- National standards (7506s, 7525v, 7550s)
- Symposia and forums (7510v, 7550s)
- Professional development (7136v, 7530m)
- Support for research (7136v, 7550s)
- Surveys (7550s)
- Resources (7126v)
- Website messaging (7136v)
- Support for the SIGs (7136v)
- Fundraising (7530m)
- Members' activities (7545m)

Hindrances:

- Writing about and focusing on the status quo (7510v)
- Lack of follow-through (7510v)
- Connected by perception of professional benefit (7545m)
- Supports incremental rather than fundamental change (7540v)
- Provides reactive rather than proactive leadership (7540v)
- Does not promote high-risk innovation (7540v)
- Lack of vision about the future (7540v)

Change Goals:

- Reforming schools for the 21st century (7610s)
- Improving the learning experience for students (7650v)
- Promoting student-teacher partnership (7650v)

Notes:

- Schools must have a vision and a plan or change will never happen (7506s)
- Need to move beyond promoting change to sustaining and supporting change (7510v)
- Importance of a continual feedback process (7550s)
- It is important to support new ways of teaching and not just new tools for teaching (7650v)

- **QUESTION 27: QUESTIONS NOT ASKED**

Notes:

- Need for better collaboration and less competition among ed tech organizations (7145s, 7650v)
- What knowledge/experience do people bring to the organization (7204v, 7540v)
- Lack of collaboration is likely a product of competition for funding (7145s)
- Why people become involved as members (7204v)
- How does the organization maximize its member contribution (7540v, 7650v)
- Uncertainty about qualifications to participate (7501s)
- Concern about the organization setting too many objectives and losing its ability to set goals and accomplish them (7506s)
- The organization tries to be all things to all people (7506s)
- Study participation helped participant focus on organizational leadership questions (7550s)
- Wants the study to inform the organization and the field (7550s)
- Organization needs to do a better job of professional development for its staff (7610s)
- Organization needs to improve its staff's mastery of the technology so staff can advocate more effectively (7610s)