

Remarks of Amy Lareau
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Before the State Dept. of Education and State Board of Education concerning
proposed changes to certification in Teacher Leader

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Good afternoon. My name is Amy Lareau and I'm a 6th grade teacher in Darien. I disagree with the concept of requiring credits/degrees for the team leader position. I have served for three years as team leader with a Master's in Education only. I do not feel it is a job requiring special coursework or classes, as it is usually done by experienced, tenured staff familiar with the general knowledge and requirements of the position and individual school policies, which can vary building to building within a district.

I took this position at the advice of an administrator who thought I might welcome the role and urged me to consider because he thought I would be good at it. While I have my Master's, I do not have any administrator experience or classes, and have I no interest in pursuing that area of certification. I have enjoyed the team leader position and feel I have been very successful without additional coursework. I would like to continue it because I truly enjoy it; it gives me a taste of administration without the full commitment, and it has helped me grow as an educator.

My school and I would be affected by this in many ways. If I were required to take additional courses, I would no longer be able to do the position. The cost of the

classes would take two years of team leader pay to pay back, and with three children (one about to head off to college), there is just no way I could handle the financial strain of paying for courses, not to mention the time away from family. I would make up the difference elsewhere and away from the building, probably during summer and not in a way positive to my school. Therefore, my school would lose me as a team leader and would have to find another, not to mention the internal changes the schools would have to make.

I can only imagine the headache this would create for principals who would have to create teams around teachers with the proper certification. This would lead to teams created solely for a leader, not for the benefit of the fit and balance of teachers on the team, which could affect student learning as well as staff morale. New teachers would be hesitant to fulfill the certification, especially if they are just coming off coursework they are still paying off. Team leadership is a position which should have some rotation for fresh ideas and outlooks, and if schools are committed to the same teacher leaders year after year, this wouldn't be possible either.

Requiring credits or certification for team leader positions is not an educationally sound idea and should be discouraged. Thank you.