

Teacher Evaluation in a Virginia Urban School District:  
Perceptions of Elementary Teachers from a Quantitative Survey Study

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**ABSTRACT**

Teacher evaluation is mandated by state law and practiced in every public school district. The evaluation of teachers is a vital part of the work of school administrators and the evidence that aligns teacher supervision and its direct or indirect impact on student achievement is scant (Ebmeier, 2003). The researcher examined perceptions of elementary teachers in a southeastern Virginia school division regarding the teacher evaluation process. The goal was to determine how the teacher evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices at the elementary school level. In addition to identifying the overall perception of the evaluative practices employed in the school division, the researcher gleaned additional understandings of teacher perceptions on how a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, and reliability impact teacher behavior.

Perceptions of teachers from 20 elementary schools in an urban school division in Virginia were researched using a quantitative methodology. There were a total of 446 teachers in grades PreK through 5 in the 20 schools. Data were collected through an online teacher questionnaire. The revised Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP), created by Stiggins and Duke (1988), was used as the survey tool. The TEP was designed to elicit responses on a Likert scale using five attributes of a particular teacher evaluation experience.

Data from the TEP indicate that teacher perceptions of the overall quality of the evaluation process vary. While there was a consistent perception of neutrality, less than 50% of the teachers perceived the evaluation as a meaningful process. Furthermore, teachers reported that the evaluation process had minimal impact on their professional growth and professional practice. The results of this study may impact the professional development opportunities linked to the evaluation process.

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**GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and circle of friends who have encouraged me through this challenging journey.

First and foremost, I am so proud to dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my mother, Brenda Joyce Davis who passed away after completing one semester in the program. The unwavering encouragement and high expectations set by my mom gave me the courage and confidence to apply to the doctoral program. I am eternally grateful for her life lessons, guidance, and love! Completing this journey would have been one of the most memorable moments in her life and I can only imagine how proud she would be on the day of graduation.

Secondly, this dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of my uncle, Bruce Davis. Gone too soon, I owe my confidence and academic accomplishments to his love and belief in me during my entire life. He often told me how proud I made him, which was a driving force for me to set my bar high. Thank you for being the first man in my life.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my best girl, my daughter, Kennedy Renee Thomas. I dedicate this to you because I am confident that you will continue to put forth your best effort in everything you do, remain motivated, and make me the proudest mom on earth. I dedicate this to you because I see me...in you!

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of how the teacher evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices at the elementary school level. In addition to identifying an overall perception of the evaluative practices, the researcher gleaned additional understandings of teacher perceptions on a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and its impact on teacher behavior. This chapter introduces the study and the topic researched to the reader, states the research questions and provides preliminary information about the intended research design, site and the study's participants, data collection, and analysis procedures.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought new pressures for public school administrators and teachers as they are faced with the increased accountability mandated by state, local, and federal government (Hess, 2003). Teacher evaluation is at a critical stage in the United States. These mandates hold educators accountable for ensuring high academic achievement for all students and meeting the educational needs of a diverse student population (Tucker, Stronge, & Gareis, 2002). Since the Reagan Administration's release of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, educational policy has been evolving toward the goal of increased student achievement and a greater sense of accountability for all stakeholders. *A Nation at Risk* proposed the following recommendations to improve teacher evaluation practices in K-12 schools:

Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate an aptitude for teaching, and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline...salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that included peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984, p. 30).

The quest for researchers and statisticians to revise the method in which public schools determine adequate yearly progress began shortly after the inception of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) in 2002 (Amrein-Beardsley & Collins, 2012). *NCLB*, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, aimed to ensure a quality education for all children, delivered by a highly qualified teacher, and with students exhibiting adequate yearly

progress in our schools. The *NCLB Act* was a federal responsibility to ensure that children in the United States are afforded opportunities to achieve at optimal levels of aptitude. To be considered highly qualified, all teachers who teach core academic subjects and provide instruction to students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and disabilities are required to meet a set of specific standards set forth by the state. A notification to parents is required if the teacher fails to meet the requirements set forth by the act (NCLB, 2002).

A federally funded study conducted by RAND Corporation researchers reported that a disproportionate number of minority students, students with disabilities, and students living in poverty receive instruction from teachers who were not highly qualified as compared to low-minority and low-poverty schools (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984)). This report also noted that highly qualified teachers who taught in high-poverty and high-minority schools tend to have less teaching experience than those in low-poverty and low-minority schools. As urban school districts and districts with high levels of poverty struggle to meet the expectations of NCLB, states continue to set criteria for teacher quality with the goal of high academic achievement. NCLB contributed funding to states in an effort to assist with improving the credentials of teachers in many ways (NCLB, 2002). An emphasis on professional development for all teachers was also a primary function of the law (NCLB, 2002).

The federal government's commitment to improve student achievement continued in 2009. In conjunction with former Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, President Obama pledged over \$4 billion in a United States Department of Education contest called *Race to the Top*. This initiative was created to reform state and local district K-12 education by ensuring an equitable distribution of funding to effective teachers and principals, providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, providing effective support to teachers and principals, and improving the effective of teacher and principal preparation programs (United States Department of Education [USDOE], 2009). The purpose of *Race to the Top* was to turn around the lowest performing schools by improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance (USDOE, 2009).

Since the RAND study (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984) three decades ago, there have been several reform movements that have aimed to enhance evaluative practices in public schools. During the RAND study (Wise et al., 1984), results from a survey of stakeholders in over 30 school districts found that principals were unskilled at evaluating

teachers. This was based on the lack of adequate training for the principals and inconsistent evaluative practices within school districts (Wise et. al, 1984). Bill and Melinda Gates and other federal funding initiatives publicly supported revamping teacher evaluation practices to measure student achievement. These initiatives all stressed the critical imperative that principals should be trained to effectively evaluate teachers, offer consistent and beneficial feedback, and have knowledge of the curriculum and instructional strategies.

Researchers confirmed that teachers are the most influential factor in student success (Marzano et al., 2011; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Acquisition and allocation of resources, clear and consistent rules, and consequences for students, genuine suggestions for professional growth and development, and positive collegial relationships are administrative practices that have an indirect effect on instruction (Berends, Bodily, & Kirby, 2002). Teacher supervision and evaluation are administrative practices that also have a direct impact on instructional practices (Halverson, Kelley, & Kimball, 2004).

### **The Every Child Succeeds Act**

The federal government's role in elementary and secondary education has been redefined for the first time in 50 years since the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Act. On December 10, 2015, former President Obama signed the Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace the NCLB, the reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The act will be fully implemented during the 2017-2018 school year and withdraws the federal government's involvement from K-12 education. The new act emphasizes and shifts the accountability to the states to impact student achievement, low performing schools, and graduation rates. Most notably, teacher evaluations will no longer be based on student achievement and test scores as federally mandated under the NCLB. Also, "highly qualified" teachers, who hold a bachelor's degree, state certification, and demonstrate content knowledge, are no longer a requirement as outlined in NCLB.

Under ESSA, only teachers in Title I schools are required to meet state licensure guidelines. President Obama (2015) asserted, "with this bill, we reaffirm that fundamentally American ideal—that every child, regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live, deserves the chance to make their lives what they will"

(p. 1). Annual assessments, student performance and accountability measures are continued priorities under ESSA, keeping school principals at the center of creating school environments

conducive to ensuring success for all students (U.S Department of Education, 2015).

### **The Problem with Teacher Evaluation**

Teacher evaluation is mandated by state law and practiced in every public school district. When implemented effectively, the evaluation system can reveal serious deficiencies that would warrant teacher dismissal; however, research shows that dismissal is extremely rare (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Neill and Curtis (1978) and an extensive study conducted by Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009) revealed approximately 5 to 15% of teachers in our public schools could be described as incompetent. Unfortunately, over half of the districts plagued with retaining teachers report incompetent teachers on their staff. Educators may traditionally view the use of teacher evaluation as a tool to dismiss inadequate teachers who are incapable of performing the required duties in the classroom. In contrast, the purpose of improving teaching and learning is often overlooked. Ultimately, teacher evaluation is automatically linked to teacher dismissal. Danielson (2001) purported teacher evaluation has been historically the basis for the promotion, retention, or dismissal of teachers.

According to Danielson and McGreal (2000), the traditional approach to teacher evaluation is inadequate. The process by which we evaluate effective teachers in the United States has been the same for over four decades (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Unfortunately, evaluation systems in K-12 education share common characteristics such as failure to recognize effective teachers, impact teacher pedagogy, accurately account for learning taking place in the classroom, and reassure the public about teacher quality (Peterson, 2000). Decades of researchers and scholars have examined critical reasons to rethink the way in which principals evaluate or supervise teachers that failed to recognize either excellence or mediocrity in teaching (Hull, 2013). A good evaluation system should be used as a tool to improve the effectiveness of a teacher's practice (Joki, 1982), more specifically, the delivery of instruction. Stronge (2012) summarized the problem with the following testimony:

There is a shortage of highly capable, competent and committed teachers. However, until we can define an effective teacher's skills, practices, and dispositions and then be able to understand how those beliefs and behaviors impact student success, we can't possibly evaluate their effectiveness (p. 7).

## **Significance of Topic**

Darling-Hammond (2009) described teacher effectiveness as follows: as a teacher's intellect, communication skills, strong content knowledge, understanding of learning styles, adaptive expertise and the ability to respond to students' needs, willingness to support student learning and collaborate, as well as commitment to ongoing adult learning and professional development. Since effective teachers are crucial for student achievement, it would be difficult to dispute the fact that schools have not responded to adequate teacher supervision and useless evaluative practices that fail to provide data to improve instructional quality (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). The link between good teaching and student progress may cause principals to feel pressure by the public and parents to ensure that a school's teachers are effective. How do educators and stakeholders vested in school improvement address this dilemma and improve teacher quality?

The evaluation of teachers is a vital part of the work of school administrators and the evidence that aligns teacher supervision and its direct or indirect impact on student achievement is scant (Ebmeier, 2003). Additionally, most educators recognize that "teaching is an activity that a single, brief observation of a classroom does not adequately portray" (Danielson, 2001, p. 12). Therefore, an effective teacher evaluation system is the primary tool for ensuring that students are afforded quality instruction. A rigorous teacher evaluation system is one way to measure effectiveness, quality, and provide professional development and meaningful feedback to teachers. One obvious reason to evaluate teachers is because public schools are institutions that operate from public funding, entitling the public to a quality education system; Danielson (2001) added, "An evaluation system should be one that recognizes and cultivates quality teaching" (p. 12). Educational leaders have been consumed with determining the characteristics of good teachers for over fifty years (Walsh, 2012).

There is a vast amount of research that supports the idea that teachers and quality instruction have the greatest influence on student achievement (Dufour, 2004; Hattie, 2013; Marshall, 2005; Marzano et al., 2011; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Marks, Stoops, and King-Stoops (1978) wrote, "If civilization is to advance and our nation to develop, improvements in teaching are essential" (p. 289). Supervisors must stay abreast of best practices, current educational trends, and effectively evaluate teachers to determine if they are executing quality instructional practices (Marks et al., 1978). Goldrick (2002) of the Education Policy Division,

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices, defined teacher quality "as a necessary construct that must be defined as a part of developing purposeful evaluation" (p. 2). Goldrick (2002) also defines *teacher quality* as "what a highly qualified teacher needed to know and be able to do" (p. 2). Teacher quality impacts student achievement outcomes greater than any other factor within a school's control (Stronge, 2012). For example, results from a study conducted by Nye, Konstantopoulos, and Hedges (2004) reveal that teacher effects impacted more than 10% of the variance in mathematics achievement gains and approximately 7% of the variance in reading gains. Drastically changing teacher quality is a priority if we want to improve the quality of our schools.

According to research conducted by Sanders and Rivers (1996), student academic achievement is greatly influenced by a teacher's effectiveness. Sanders and Rivers (1996) report several key findings that support the impact of effective instruction. The findings indicate that ineffective teachers do not positively impact any of the students in their class irrespective of the student's present level of performance. Additionally, only an average teacher impacts the lower performing students. Finally, when taught by an ineffective teacher, the high achievers make no gains. Conversely, highly effective teachers are able to make gains with students on all academic levels.

Weisberg et al. (2009) further supported the findings that students demonstrate varied learning growth based on which teacher he or she is assigned. Unfortunately, some teachers have a detrimental impact on their students' growth. Chetty, Friedman, and Rockoff (2012) asserted that students who are not assigned to high value-added teachers are less likely to receive a postgraduate degree, have higher rates of teen pregnancy, earn a lower income, live in low socio-economic housing, and live in poverty during retirement. Stronge (2012) summed the teacher value-added premise with these words:

Although we can reform the curriculum, ultimately, it is teachers who implement it; although we can provide professional development on new instructional strategies, ultimately, it is teachers who deploy them; although we can focus on data analysis of student performance, ultimately, it is the teachers who produce the result we are analyzing (p. 4).

## **Conceptual Framework**

Marzano (2012) stated, "Teacher evaluation systems have not accurately measured teacher

quality and have not aided in developing a highly skilled teacher workforce (p.15). Therefore, the conceptual framework for this study is based on the work of Robert Goldhammer and Morris Cogan in 1960. In an effort to help novice teachers succeed at Harvard University, Goldhammer and Cogan adopted the medical term *clinical supervision*, which was used for perfecting the specialized knowledge and skills of practitioners in the medical field (Pajak, 2003). Clinical supervision was later used in education at the University of Pittsburgh and other American institutions for improve classroom instruction (Pajak, 2003). The five basic stages of supervision, which encompassed the roles of the teacher and supervisor and guiding questions are below (Pajak, 2003, pp. 5-8):

### **Stage 1—Pre-observation conference**

*Teacher's Task:* To mentally rehearse and orally describe the upcoming lesson, including the purpose and the content, what the teacher will do, and what students are expected to do and learn.

*Clinical Supervisor's Task:* To learn about and understand what the teacher has in mind for the lesson to be taught by asking probing and clarifying questions.

*Questions to Consider:* What type of data will be recorded (e.g., teacher questions, student behaviors, movement patterns)? How will data be recorded (e.g., video or audio recording, verbatim transcript, anecdotal notes, checklist)? Who will do what in the subsequent stages?

### **Stage 2—Classroom observation**

*Teacher's Task:* To teach the lesson as well as possible.

*Clinical Supervisor's Task:* To record events occurring during the lesson as accurately as possible.

### **Stage 3—Data analysis and strategy**

*Teacher's Task:* To help make sense of the data (if directly involved in this stage).

*Clinical Supervisor's Task:* To make some sense of the raw data and to develop a plan for the conference.

*Questions to Consider:* What patterns are evident in the data? Are any critical incidents or turning points obvious? What strengths did the teacher exhibit? Were any techniques



especially successful? Are there any concerns about the lesson? Which patterns, events, and concerns are most important to address? Which patterns, events, and concerns can be addressed in the time available? How will the conference begin? How will the conference end?

#### **Stage 4—Conference**

*Teacher's Task:* To critically examine his or her own teaching with an open mind and to tentatively plan for the next lesson.

*Clinical Supervisor's Task:* To help clarify and build upon the teacher's understanding of the behaviors and events that occurred in the classroom.

*Questions to Consider:* What patterns and critical incidents are evident in the data? What is the relationship between these events and student learning? Were any unanticipated or unintended outcomes evident? What will the teacher do differently for the next class meeting (e.g., new objectives, methods, content, materials, teacher behaviors, student activities, or assessments)?

#### **Stage 5—Post-conference analysis**

*Teacher's Task:* To provide honest feedback to the clinical supervisor about how well the clinical supervision cycle went.

*Clinical Supervisor's Task:* To critically examine his or her own performance during the clinical supervision cycle.

*Questions to Consider:* Generally, how well did the clinical supervision cycle go? What worked well? What did not work well? If you could do it again, what would you do differently? What will you do differently during the next clinical supervision cycle?

The teacher evaluation process involves behaviors that are purposeful and deliberate. Each step in the process has meaning and when they are not implemented effectively, the desired result of teacher growth and improvement is not maximized. This study intends to examine the current evaluation processes through the lens of teachers and examine how, if at all, they feel it facilitates professional growth.

## Clinical Supervision Cycle

Pre-Observation Conference- What are the students expected to learn and do?



Classroom Observation- Teach as well as possible



Data Analysis- Analyze evidence of student learning



Conference- Examine his or her teaching with an open mind



Post-Conference Analysis- Honest feedback about what worked well during the cycle



**Improved instructional practices and student outcomes**

*Figure 1.* Clinical supervision cycle. Adapted from Pajak, E., & Association for Supervision and Curriculum, D. (2003). *Honoring Diverse Teaching Styles: A Guide for Supervisors*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

### Research Questions

This study addressed the following six research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?
2. How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?
3. How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact on the teacher evaluation experience?

4. How do teachers perceive the quality of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?
5. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?
6. How do teachers describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in their classrooms?

### **Definition of Terms**

**Accredited with warning:** Accreditation rating given to a school prior to 2015 when students achieved adjusted pass rates below those required to meet the Fully Accredited rating (VDOE, n.d.).

**Attributes:** Stiggins and Duke (1988) identified six teacher attributes that possibly influence the outcome of the evaluation process: 1) instructional competence, 2) personal expectations, 3), openness to suggestion, 4) orientation to change, 5), subject knowledge, and 6) experience.

**Clinical supervision:** A model of supervision whereby the supervisor works collaboratively and collegially with a teacher to improve teacher practice. The collaborative process usually includes a pre-observation conference, observation and data collection, data analysis, a post-observation conference, and a post-observation conference evaluation report. The clinical supervision approach “is interactive rather than directive, democratic rather than authoritarian, teacher-centered rather than supervisor-centered” (Acheson & Gall, 1987, pp. 10-11).

**Effectiveness:** The attribute of a teacher who has the capacity or potential of having a positive impact on student learning, behavior, and attitudes.

**Formative evaluation:** A tool used to improve instruction by providing the teacher with data and feedback specific to teaching and student learning (Hellrung & Hartig, 2013).

**Highly qualified:** To be deemed highly qualified, teachers must have: 1) a bachelor's degree, 2) full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach (Virginia Department of Education).

**No Child Left Behind Act Of 2001 (NCLB):** A federal law that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed in 2001, which required 100% of students to be deemed grade-level proficient in English and mathematics by 2013 (NCLB, 2002).

**Performance-based teacher evaluation:** A systematic method of making professional judgments about teacher performance for the purposes of improving teacher instruction and personnel decision-making.

**Professional development:** A system that helps teachers to improve teaching strategies and skills on an ongoing basis.

**Professional growth:** Professional growth was defined as a change in teacher behavior that can result in increased student growth (Stronge, et al., 2011).

**Stakeholders:** Those who work within the school system on a daily basis and who largely control what goes on there. They include school staff, district staff, and, to some extent, school boards. External stakeholders are those outside the day-to-day work of the schools who have a strong interest in school outcomes, but who do not directly determine what goes into producing those outcomes (First, R. 2009).

**Summative evaluation:** A tool used to provide teachers with a value judgment as to the teacher's job performance; used to make personnel decisions (Hellrung & Hartig, 2013).

**SMART goal:** A goal that is strategic, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound (Dufour, 2004).

**Student growth percentile (SGP):** Measures how much progress a student has made relative to other students (Hull, 2013).

**Supervision:** The ongoing overseeing of all tasks at a school and includes both the day-to-day interactions between teacher and evaluator and the formal written evaluation of teachers, as legislated by law, policy, and contract. Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2001) have defined supervision as “the glue of a successful school... the function in schools that draws together the discrete elements of instructional effectiveness into whole school action” (p. 8).

**Teacher effectiveness:** The attribute of a teacher who has the capacity or potential of having a positive impact on student learning, behavior, and attitudes.

**Teacher portfolio:** A teaching portfolio is a collection of information about a teacher's practice. A teacher portfolio is a structured collection of selected artifacts that demonstrate a teacher's competence and growth (Tucker et al., 2002).

**Value added model (VAM):** Attempt to isolate the impact a teacher has on students' academic growth from other factors that impact student learning such as student's socioeconomic status or their achievement on prior tests (Hull, 2013).

### **Delimitations of the Study**

There are several delimitations the researcher has placed on this study. The sample for this study was limited to preschool through fifth-grade public school teachers located within one

school division in Virginia. Although secondary teachers in grades 6 through 12 are evaluated through the same system, this population is not included. The survey instrument used is a five-point Likert-scale. In this study, a rating of 1 and 2 reflect a negative perception, a rating of 3 denotes a neutral perception, and a rating of 4 and 5 indicate a more favorable or positive perception. This study used only quantitative methods, so the respondents were unable to elaborate on or explain their responses

### **Limitations of the Study**

The potential for generalizations from this study is limited to elementary school teachers in grades preschool through fifth. This study relied on the *Teacher Evaluation Profile* (TEP) (Stiggins & Duke, 1988) that was self-reporting and limited to 27% of the population who volunteered to participate. In terms of self-reported survey data for teachers, there are at least three potential threats to validity and reliability (Mayer, 1999):

- (a) The context and act of teaching and learning is so complex that it cannot be sufficiently distinguished by survey responses.
- (b) Survey items may include ambiguity or wording that skews responses.
- (c) Teachers may be sensitive due to experiences to particular items or concepts on the survey, which in turn leads to responses that are not accurate but are considered socially desirable.

Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) also noted the following precautions when soliciting data from self-reported tools as questionnaires:

Self-report instruments have notable limits. The researcher can never be sure that individuals are expressing their true attitudes, interest, values, or personalities. A common problem with studies that use self-report instruments is the existence of a response set, the tendency of an individual to respond in a particular way (p. 153).

The sample of participants was from elementary schools in one division located in Virginia. This limitation restricts the researcher's ability to make generalizations about the findings that would be applicable to all schools and districts in the state. Previous work experiences and evaluation history of the participants cannot be controlled. The perceptions towards teacher evaluation may positively or negatively impact the outcomes. Finally, respondents were not given the option to make comments or to provide explanations for their

ratings. This study focused solely on the teachers' perceptions reported in the survey and did not consider any additional objective data.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of the Literature**

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of how the teacher evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices at the elementary school level. In addition to identifying an overall perception of the evaluative practices, the researcher gleaned additional understandings of teacher perceptions on a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and its impact on teacher behavior.

A review of literature was conducted on teacher supervision and evaluative practices in America's public schools. The purpose of this study was to identify elementary school teachers' perceptions of the teacher evaluation system relative to its impact on professional growth and instructional practices. A review of the literature has revealed why teachers matter in school reform, flaws in traditional evaluative practices, and recommendations to enhance evaluative practices that will yield teacher growth and student achievement. In addition to supporting the fact that teachers matter, there are data that link student achievement to the quality of instruction provided by the classroom teacher (Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Hattie, 2013; Dufour, 2004; Marshall, 2005; Marzano et al., 2011). Beerens (2000) asserted that teacher evaluation plays a vital role in determining staff development and school improvement.

Several databases were searched to examine teacher evaluation systems, teacher effectiveness and its impact on student achievement. Peer-reviewed studies were located through the use of these electronic databases: Summon, ERIC, EBSCO Host, Google Scholar and Dissertation Abstracts. Professional magazines that focus on educational topics, books, and peer-reviewed journals were utilized to better understand traditional and standards-based evaluative practices.

#### **The Purpose of Teacher Evaluation**

Traditionally, teacher evaluation serves the purpose of performance improvement and accountability. Similarly, Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin and Bernstein (1984) identified four basic purposes: individual teacher development, school improvement, individual human resource decisions, and decisions about school ranking. In addition to the traditional purposes of the evaluation, Haefele (1993) added that the evaluation can be used to recognize exemplary teaching practices, as a method for receiving constructive feedback, and an

opportunity for bonding between the administrator and teacher. According to Marzano's study (2012), the majority of educators believe that the teacher evaluation should be used for both accountability and development, but performance development should be the most important purpose.

Principals are faced with the challenge of fulfilling dual roles. They are obligated to help teachers improve through formative practices, while also making personnel decisions at the end of the year through summative procedures. Beerens (2000) described the roles of the principal as the coach, instructional support, and a collaborator in the professional development of the teacher throughout the school year, but conversely the decision maker of teacher competence at the end of the year. While all of these responsibilities are important, the latter could adversely impact a teacher's continued employment. He further warned that a contentious relationship can likely develop between the teacher and administrator when summative performance data leads to personnel actions.

Effective teacher evaluation practices must have specific features. According to Wise et al (1984), these practices must be unbiased, standardized, and externally justifiable especially when teacher performance is used for making personnel decisions. Additionally, evaluative practices must outline a descriptive, feasible action plan for professional improvement when intended for teacher development and growth. The research further asserts that for individual improvement, the administrator should collaborate with the teacher as he or she progresses through each step of the action plan. There are two imperative variables that are crucial for individual improvement. The teacher should be in agreement with the performance plan and feel confident that the action steps prescribed are meaningful and feasible.

Marzano (2012) outlined three characteristics of an evaluation system aimed to improve teacher performance. For development to occur, a comprehensive and specific evaluation system should aim to assess the teacher's routine strategies, content strategies, and strategies that demonstrate teacher "withitness." "Withitness" is defined as the ability to effectively manage the current state of the classroom, while also preventing future disruptions (Marzano, Gaddy, Foseid, Foseid, & Marzano, 2005).

Teachers should have a clear understanding of the evaluation's purpose in order to impact their pedagogical skill set. Høglund's (2012) research clearly illustrates the critical nature of this perspective. He asserted that even though teacher dismissal due to poor performance rarely



occurs, teachers still perceive the evaluation process as a basis for this outcome. As such, teachers should view the evaluation as a continuous cycle for individual improvement. The principal should take an active role of posing reflective questions, assisting with the development of growth goals, and affording opportunities for professional development in an effort to be perceived as an advocate for teacher improvement and professional growth. Additionally, the evaluation will more likely impact instructional practices if the teacher deems the clearly defined expectations and evaluation itself as valuable (Hoglund, 2012). Marzano (2012) cautioned a distinct difference between an evaluation system that promotes teacher growth and one that aims to assess teacher proficiency.

Hoglund (2012) emphasized the importance of school leaders facilitating an understanding of expectations while clearly defining processes, policies, and procedures. The teacher must also have an extensive understanding of the evaluative tools, such as the rubrics or checklists to determine their level of performance and assist with evaluating their performance alignment to the expectations. He also affirmed, “If we hope to dramatically improve our schools, the fear of dismissal must be eliminated for the vast majority of teachers who are performing satisfactorily” (p. 1).

Hellrung and Hartig (2013) added that teachers must be highly knowledgeable and informed about the evaluation process in order to embrace the opportunities for growth as a result of the evaluative feedback. Additionally, being receptive to this information allows them to reflect on teaching and learning practices, and thus use the information to make instructional adjustments. Teachers who lack confidence in their performance are reluctant to ask for help from others or admit deficiencies to their administrators. Hoglund (2012) explained that this may hold true, as the teacher is usually unsure about expectations and a plan to accomplish them. Even teachers who are deemed effective have an uncertainty about expectations and an overwhelming sense that their best is not good enough.

### **Historical View of Supervision**

Starting in the 1600s during the Colonial Era, teacher supervision has been an important practice in K-12 education for over three centuries (Marzano, R., Frontier, T., and Livingston, D., 2011). Marks, Stoops, and King-Stoops (1978) stated, “In 1654, the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colonies passed a law that required the elders of a town, as well as the overseers of Harvard University, to insure that no teachers were hired who were “unsound in

faith or scandalous in their lives” (p. 8). Thus, teacher quality was based on religious beliefs and morals.

In the 1700s, states relied on government and religious leaders to make decisions regarding schools and their functions (Marzano et al., 2011). The inspection and approval of teachers’ behaviors and materials were the responsibilities of an appointed committee of clergymen (Marks et al., 1978). This panel of clergymen, with unlimited authority and inconsistent expectations, exercised many responsibilities such as personnel decisions, setting instructional standards, and providing varying levels of feedback to teachers (Marzano et al., 2011). This era is characterized by the requirement of the use of instructional guidelines created by the panel of clergymen, an emphasis on dismissing ineffective teachers, and dictatorial governance (Dickey, 1948). The appointed clergymen traveled among communities to supervise how teachers execute instructional standards and guidelines and the maintenance of school facilities (Burnham, 1976).

According to Marzano et al. (2011), the purpose of supervision should be the development of teachers’ pedagogical skills with a primary focus of positively impacting student outcomes. This emerged as important qualities for teachers in the 1800s and complex feedback from supervisors became a priority. Therefore, the progression of supervision shifted from an inspection of the school and classroom to shared leadership and cooperative efforts influenced by state and federal initiatives.

The superintendent and other positions such as the “school clerk” emerged to improve the craft of teachers (Lucio & McNeil, 1962). They also stated, “By 1870, there were twenty-nine superintendents of schools serving as executive officers, with the supervising of instruction as one of their duties in which the improvement of the weak teacher’s deficiency was sought more than his rejection” (p. 4). The role of the school supervisor focused on critiquing instructional practices through classroom observations and identifying areas in need of improvement (Burnham, 1976).

Scientific supervision, proposed by William Wetzel in the early 1900s, aimed to provide specific expectations for teachers and students, discover the best methods for effective teaching, and define clear roles of supervision for principals and superintendents (Lucio & McNeil, 1962). The use of aptitude tests to determine the ability level of each child and measurable objectives were also components of scientific supervision (Marzano et al., 2011). The following excerpt

established the precedent for scientific supervision.

At present, the chief difficulty is that there are no standards to work to. Schools are simply grinding away without any goal in view. They move in the right direction-they move in the wrong direction. Without a goal their efforts are relatively random, feeble, inefficient. The pupil does not know what to aim at; the teacher does not know how much to require, the principal does not know how high the teacher is aiming; the superintendent has no means of knowing the standards of either teacher or principal. The whole situation represents the jellyfish stage of organization and direction (Lucio & McNeil, 1962, p. 8).

Scientific supervision aimed to find the best instructional methods for teachers through discovery, measurement, and research (Lucio & McNeil, 1962). Post-World War II clearly categorized the role of school supervision in an endless list of domains such as human resources, management, curriculum, public relations, and fiscal resources (Marzano et al., 2011). They considered the responsibilities of these supervisors as counterproductive and added that a positive contribution from this era was the generally accepted belief that teacher observation was important. Marzano and colleagues (2011) examined an article titled “Teachers Look at Supervision” by Matthew Whitehead (1952) that summarized 115 teachers’ perceptions from North Carolina on six areas of supervision, which included their perceptions about the value of observing and receiving feedback. Classroom visits were meaningful to 80% of the respondents and there was a perceived purpose to improve instruction. Additionally, 70% were enthusiastic about the classroom visits and 100% felt that a classroom visit followed by an individual conference would impact their professional growth. They considered Whitehead’s findings to be extremely influential in the area of supervision.

Cogan, Goldhammer, and Anderson developed clinical supervision in the late 1950s at Harvard because they wanted to become more effective in supervising student teachers in the MAT program and realized that the traditional process wasn’t beneficial to the teachers in training or the evaluators (Reavis, 1976). Morris Cogan, secondary school program director, and Robert Anderson, supervisor of the elementary school preparation program, sought to find effective ways to supervise teachers through their student teaching experience. Robert Goldhammer was one of Cogan’s doctoral students who later became Cogan’s colleague at the

University of Pittsburgh (Anderson, Snyder, & Bahner, 1993). In an effort to improve the supervisory cycle of observing a lesson and discussing the results with a teacher, Cogan and his apprentices from Harvard University emphasized the power of “reflective dialogue” (Marzano, et al., 2011).

After years of experimentation and feedback for the interns in the program, Cogan and his colleagues confirmed that direct and specific feedback to the teacher on areas of concerns improves instruction (Reavis, 1976). He paralleled the supervisory practices used in teaching in the medical field known as the clinical supervision (Marzano, et al., 2011). The clinical supervision model has dominated teacher evaluation procedures for over forty years (Tucker et al., 2002). Clinical supervision yields optimal “growth and effectiveness” for both parties involved (Marzano, et al., 2011). The pre-observation conference, classroom observation, analysis of data from the observation, a supervision conference and the analysis clinical cycle are the five components of clinical supervision according to Marzano and his colleagues (2011). There must be a collegial relationship and mutual trust between the teacher and evaluator to improve instruction, not simply going through the five-step process (Reavis, 1978).

The clinical supervisory process emphasizes a laser focus on the continuation of professional growth and knowledge for the teacher (Marzano et al., 2011). Furthermore, the goal is to view the teacher as a practitioner seeking endless development in the field. Professional improvement and a quest for continuous growth for the teacher should not deem the teacher as unskilled or directed to develop in a derogatory manner (Marzano et al., 2011). Marzano and colleagues (2011) stated the concept of a “collegial, inquiry-driven quest for more effective instructional practices” in which the clinical supervision model was developed is now extinct in the evaluation process for teachers (p. 6).

Teacher attitudes towards clinical supervision were revealed in a study conducted in 1977 by Reavis (1977), a professor of education at Texas Tech University. During the study, teachers were exposed to three clinical and three traditional supervision cycles by the same evaluator. The traditional supervision consisted of a classroom observation and post conference dominated by the evaluator. Although there were some criticisms to this study, Reavis was confident that teachers preferred the clinical supervision approach.

### **Traditional Evaluation Systems**

The prologue to the book *Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice*

(Danielson and McGreal, 2000) presented the following scenario of the traditional evaluation process from the perspective of the teacher and principal: Initially, the teacher is unenthused as she plans a lesson that has been implemented several times to ensure that the students are quiet. The teacher also conveys feelings of frustration as she deems the evaluation exercise worthless and emphasizes her principal's lack of curricular competence. Simultaneously, the principal perceives the process as totally worthless, stresses over the hours it is going to take to observe all of his teachers and hold pre- and post- conferences. The principal plans to do the "safe thing" and rate everyone as satisfactory. Finally, the principal realizes that there are ineffective teachers, but is reluctant to address any concerns based on past experiences. The aforementioned scenario supports the research that the traditional annual teacher evaluation does not impact professional growth for teachers.

Similar to Danielson and McGreal (2000), Marshall (2009) presented several real-life scenarios that clearly demonstrate the lack of impact of the teacher evaluation on teacher performance:

- Principals visit and engage in the classroom environment on a consistent basis, but fails to provide feedback on what is observed.
- The principal rarely visits the classroom teacher who is obviously struggling with classroom management. However, the announced annual formal observation is satisfactory due to a carefully planned lesson and compliant students.
- Evaluations are placed in the teachers' mailboxes with the option for the teachers to request a conference. The teacher signs the evaluation and there is no further discussion.
- The veteran teacher who hasn't been evaluated in at least 5 years, yearns for the feedback on instructional practices and acknowledgement from the principal.

The aforementioned scenarios pose concerns about whether conventional supervision is an effective way to improve student achievement. Marshall (2009) further revealed the principals' responses when frequently asked to reflect on their experiences with teacher evaluation as a classroom teacher. Only a startling 5% admit that evaluation led them to make significant improvements in their instructional practices. Through Marshall's research he affirms that building principals are spending an inordinate amount of time on a process that is not proven to improve teaching and thus, impact student achievement.

The review of the literature supports the argument that traditional evaluation systems are outdated or ineffective. Dufour and Marzano (2009) affirm principal evaluation of teachers is a low-leverage strategy for improving schools, particularly in terms of the time it requires of principals (p. 63). Weisberg and his colleagues (2009) confirmed that little effort has been put forth in assessing the impact on instructional practices and student achievement. Peterson (2000) argued, empirical research on teacher evaluation indicates that current practices fail to improve instruction, citing that the teacher evaluation process usually includes a brief classroom visit by the administrator, a checklist for teacher behaviors, limited dialogue about the teacher's impact on student learning, and limited suggestions for instructional and professional improvement. Tucker and his colleagues (2002) added "the evaluator usually lacks specific content knowledge, visits the classroom once or twice a year, and writes a narrative about the teacher's enthusiasm and organization (p. 5).

After the evaluation, the teacher and the administrator are likely to return to business as usual (Peterson, 2000) and the written evaluation is more than likely filed and will serve no purpose unless there were some performance problems leading to a personnel decision (Tucker et al, 2004). The teacher evaluation process primarily defines teacher behaviors and fails to identify teaching standards as related to student achievement.

Traditional evaluation systems in the United States have been criticized and plagued with various unfavorable characteristics. The teacher evaluation system has been used for personnel *hire or fire* action, not as a tool for improving classroom instruction" (Goldrick, 2002, p. 1). Darling-Hammond (1999) inserted that evaluation systems rarely hold teachers accountable for student learning or professional growth, but rather, they are a process to identify the poorest teachers. Additionally, Peterson (2000) revealed flaws with current evaluative practices that go beyond revising the evaluation form, informing teachers of the criteria for evaluation, and training principals to evaluate effective lessons.

Peterson (2000) confirmed teachers and administrators in many schools quietly and commonly accept evaluative practices that identify incompetent and ineffective teachers. Furthermore, the study conducted by Weisberg and colleagues (2009) revealed that 81% of administrators and 57% of teachers confessed their knowledge of a veteran teacher who is unable to make a positive impact on student achievement, while 43% of teachers stated that there are ineffective veteran teachers who should be dismissed. (Finally, 49% of administrators reported

that they have never recommended nonrenewal for probationary teachers due to performance. Teacher effectiveness and quality are largely ignored as a result of inconsistent evaluation practices and implementation, which fail to differentiate performance among teachers.

In response to the series of articles on teacher quality and the teacher's impact on student learning, former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan aims to reveal student achievement data and evaluative practices. Proclaiming that a culture shift is needed to seriously examine quality teaching former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2010) stated,

Everyone agrees that teacher evaluation is broken. Ninety-nine percent of teachers are rated satisfactory in districts that only use satisfactory or unsatisfactory ratings and most evaluations ignore the most important measure of a teacher's success-which is how much their students have learned.

Also, results from a study conducted by Weisberg and his colleagues (2009), found that more than 50% of teachers and administrators admitted that school district fail to recognize or reward high performing teachers. These researchers proclaimed that our schools are unable to adequately assess instructional performance to dismiss ineffective teachers, nor highlight and acknowledge effective teachers who positively impact our students. Therefore by default, top performing teachers are similarly treated as are the ineffective teachers. While the evaluation system appears to provide information on the most flagrant teacher leading to dismissal, the research also reveals it fails to distinguish the different levels of performance among other teachers. According to Weisberg and his colleagues, school administrators should be trained and held accountable for determining the variances in teacher effectiveness. Failures to address ineffective instruction, recommend professional development for growth, recognize excellent or high performing teachers, and accurately rate novice teachers are examples in which teacher evaluation systems demonstrate indifference in teacher performance. "The failure of evaluation system to provide accurate and credible information about individual teachers' instructional performance sustains and reinforces a phenomenon that we have come to call the Widget Effect" (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 2).

For over half a century, educators seem to have failed to adequately answer the question of why ineffective teachers are allowed to remain in the classroom (Weisberg et al., 2009). This question was asked almost 80 years ago in a 1936 *New York Times* article titled "Security of the

Teacher in his Job” (Bernstein, 1936). Bernstein quoted the assistant superintendent’s concern about the number of incompetent teachers in the New York school system. Bernstein added that approximately 60 teacher dismissals were due to disability retirement, while only four or five were dismissed annually due to incompetence. Some educators suggest that tenure and due process procedures protect ineffective teachers. Others argue that administrators are responsible, because of his or her failure to take action on poor performance. During a speech presented to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C. on March 10, 2009, former President Obama (2009) stated,

If a teacher is given a chance or two chances or three chances but still does not improve, there is no excuse for that person to continue teaching. I reject a system that rewards failure and protects a person from its consequences. The stakes are too high. We can afford nothing but the best when it comes to our children’s teachers and the schools where they teach.

Principals fail to offer professional development for teachers who need improvement (Weisberg et al., 2009). A more recent study conducted in 2010 disclosed that there is no focus on improving practice and ways to improve the quality of instruction is often omitted from the follow-up conversations in the evaluation cycle (ACT, 2010). Additionally, standards in the evaluation system fail to elaborate what constitutes evidence of effective practices that rarely consider the professional development needs of the teacher or a personalized plan to evaluate them (ACT, 2010)

A survey of over 1,000 teachers across the nation conducted by Duffett, Farkas, Rothertham, and Silva (2008) reported that teachers perceive the evaluation process as useless with only 26% reporting their most recent formal evaluation had a positive impact on their professional development. Almost half of the respondents reported that it was procedural, while 32% realized the intentions, but shared the evaluation was not helpful to their instructional practices. Almost 70% of the teachers stated that tenure is awarded through common practice and not based on the effectiveness of the teacher or the quality of their instruction. There are contrasting attempts to explain negligence in allowing incompetent teachers to remain in our schools (Weisberg et al., 2009).

Teacher evaluation reform advocates proclaim significant student achievement in the



United States comparable to Finland if only districts would eliminate the bottom 5 to 10% of its ineffective teachers (Hanushek, 2011). Darling-Hammond (2014) stated that there is no data to support this proclamation, and asserted that the United States will strengthen student learning outcomes by supporting teachers' cooperative learning.

Findings of the New Teacher Project's Widget Effect suggest that current evaluations are "infrequent, unfocused, undifferentiated, unhelpful, and inconsequential" (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 1). A distinction between all levels of performance ranging from great to poor, while especially tackling ineffectiveness, should be evident in evaluative practices. The researchers referred to the aforementioned characteristics as a "slew of design flaws" that plague traditional teacher evaluation systems. Toch and Rothman (2008) critiqued the traditional evaluation systems as "superficial, capricious, and often don't even directly address the quality of instruction, much less measure students' learning" (p. 1).

A study conducted in 2010 by the ACT network added that most evaluations has little to no focus on student outcomes and provides limited guidance to support student learning. Toch and Rothman (2008) described the evaluation of teachers as being "at the center of the educational enterprise" and as holding great potential for the improvement of teaching, but they also state, "that the potential is being squandered" (p.1). The 2012 Gates Foundation report, *Gathering Feedback for Teaching*, described teacher evaluation systems as follows:

The nation's collective failure to invest in high-quality professional feedback to teachers is inconsistent with decades of research reporting disparities in student learning gains in different teachers' classrooms (even within the same school). The quality of instruction matter and schools pay little attention to it (p. 3).

### **New Standards Based Systems**

Despite the problems and criticisms, policymakers and stakeholders are confident that the teacher evaluation system can benefit all parties involved in the process, such as teachers, schools, students, and the community. In order for the newly implemented teacher evaluation systems to yield the desired results of improved teacher effectiveness, districts should ensure that individualized professional development and support are essential components (Mashburn, Meyer, Allen, & Pianta, 2014). Darling-Hammond (2013) proposed that a "system must ensure that teacher evaluation is connected to - not isolated from -preparation and induction, daily practice, and a productive instructional context" (p.7). She further added that a useful

evaluation system should consider teacher practice in terms of curriculum alignment and student needs. The evaluation systems should also consider multifaceted data to prove the teachers' impact on student learning and contributions to the school as a whole.

New standards based teacher evaluation policies seek to improve teaching and learning in the classroom, while positively impacting student achievement (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Teachers should be evaluated using a comprehensive system that is fair, consistent, and one that differentiates a teacher's ability to promote student learning and progress (Weisberg et al., 2009). An evaluation system must conquer indifferences among teacher performance and gain accurate knowledge about instructional quality that can be used to ensure that our students are afforded effective instruction. Darling-Hammond (2013) added that a comprehensive system must also address the initial and continuing teacher licensing process, granting tenure, supervision and professional learning support, and recognizing these expert teachers can contribute to the learning of their peers, both informally or formally as mentors, coaches, and teacher leaders.

Danielson (2001) revealed school districts are now aware that creating an effective evaluation system promotes teacher quality. According to Weisberg and his colleagues, evaluation systems must explicitly define performance expectations, offer variance in performance ratings, and monitor administrative practices. Moreover, teachers must be provided with consistent feedback targeted to meet individual needs and maximize effectiveness (Weisberg et al., 2009). However, a comprehensive system must also allow for the fair and timely removal of teachers who do not improve with feedback and assistance (Darling-Hammond, 2013). The New Teacher Project (2010) sought to provide six key principles for the evaluation system to be effective: 1) An annual process of evaluation for teachers, 2) clear and rigorous expectations based on standards, 3) multiple measures of evaluation, 4) multiple ratings to describe differences in teacher effectiveness, 5) consistent constructive feedback based on frequent observations, and 6) significance of the evaluation process (TNTP, 2010).

When teachers continue to grow in their discipline, students will receive quality instruction and schools will experience improvement. With purposeful practices, teacher evaluation systems can identify quality instruction, measure student growth, reassure teachers that continuous improvement is made in his or her craft, as well as reassure the public that every child is afforded a quality education. Davis, Ellett, and Annunziata (2002) confirmed "meaningful teacher evaluation can be an important catalyst for organizational learning and

school improvement when it is linked to broader conceptions of leadership in schools” (p. 289).

In the midst of rigorous new standards, many states are reevaluating their teacher evaluation models’ capacity to promote student learning, increase the use of best practices, and enhance professional development of its teachers (Marzano & Toth, 2013). Many studies have been conducted that provide recommendations to a new direction for teacher evaluations in the United States. Weisberg et al. (2009) posits that an evaluation system that includes district policies and produces consequences will ensure that teachers and administrators are committed to credible practices. Furthermore, they suggest that decisions such as which teachers earn tenure, how teachers are assigned and retained, how teachers are compensated or promoted, and what professional development teachers receive, and when and how teachers are dismissed should be determined from a rigorous evaluation system. Finally, it is argued that school districts should exercise dismissal policies and procedures within an evaluation system that expedites due process hearings or allows the ineffective teacher to resign without being banished from the professional arena.

According to Peterson (2000), a shift in the purposes for evaluating teachers should include assessing for leadership opportunities, determining advancement criteria, and justifying the productive work in our schools. The teacher should self-direct the evaluation process by analyzing the observation data, determining the areas of strength and improvement, and making conclusions based on the results. He further noted that teachers should also be involved in peer observations and discussions about recognizing quality work and teachers should receive an impartial evaluation and accurate accounts of the teacher’s performance. Employing a comprehensive evaluation product that includes parent and student surveys, professional development, community involvement, student growth data, and achievement will provide a more accurate measurement of teacher quality while involving them in determining student data in order to set student growth goals that take into account the student’s present level of performance (Peterson, 2000).

Teacher portfolios should be maintained as documentation of the teacher’s contribution to the field of education. According to Peterson (2000), the portfolio can provide stakeholders with proof of dedication and defensible work each year. Accumulated artifacts can be presented at city council and parent meetings, to the media, legislative events, and other public arenas. This practice can provide evidence to reassure stakeholders of the teacher’s impact on student

learning.

For decades researchers and scholars have made contributions to what constitutes qualities of an effective and purposeful evaluation system. In an effort to change the current mindset for evaluated teachers, researchers recommended a long-range plan to implement the effective shift in which we evaluate teachers. According to Danielson (2010), it is critical that a good evaluation system promotes teaching and learning, provides opportunities for rich dialogue between the teacher and evaluator, and ensure that the evaluator is trained in the system. An empowerment of self-growth and self-development are the key elements in an effective teacher evaluation system (Walsh, 2010).

### **Trends in Teacher Evaluation**

A study of effective teacher evaluation practices in 32 districts conducted by Wise and his colleagues (1984) over 30 years ago revealed teacher evaluation practices differed substantially. School officials among the 32 districts were not in agreement in regard to the utilization of evaluation tools, frequency of evaluations, the role of the teacher in the process. Conversely, mutual problems with the evaluative practices permeated among all 32 districts. Principal competence and ability to effectively evaluate instruction due to inadequate training, consistent evaluative practices within a school district, and an unfavorable teacher perception of the evaluation process were among the commonalities noted by Weis and his colleagues. Larger schools or schools with limited resources that serve challenging student populations impact principal training and the ability to offer teacher support (ACT, 2010). On the other hand, two constructive results of teacher evaluation were reported. These were enhanced communication between the teacher and administrator and increased professional knowledge for the teacher (Wise et al., 1984).

According to Hull (2013), the evaluation systems across the United States share common characteristics such as stakeholder input and meaningful feedback from administrators to enhance professional growth after classroom observations. There is evidence of the teacher's impact on student learning evaluated through multiple measures in over half of the states. Hull's research also revealed evaluations are used primarily to improve teacher performance and the state's involvement in the development of the evaluation system can be described as high, medium, or low.

Virginia was among the 21 states that played a minimal part in the implementation of a

new teacher evaluation system. In Virginia, each district was allowed to create their own system while adhering to set guidelines (Hull, 2013). Additionally, thirty-three states were moderately involved and proposed evaluation systems with specific guidelines. Lastly, school districts in only thirteen states were given little flexibility in the adopted evaluation system with required mandates

Teachers must have customized resource support as part of the evaluation process to improve instructional practices and promote professional growth (Meyer, 2014). Culver and Hayes (2014) examined state policies on teacher professional development related to evaluations in an effort to assist districts with implementing policies to promote teacher effectiveness. Key findings reveal there was little professional development opportunities, support, or funding to implement as a result of the teacher evaluation. Connecticut, Kentucky, New Jersey, and South Dakota are the only states that have made a significant effort to implement individualized development as a result of the teacher evaluation process. Culver and Hayes (2014) further noted that less than 20% of the states provided assurance that local districts were developing and implementing targeted professional learning plans related to teacher evaluations. Thirty percent of states offer little or no funding for professional development and 8% of the states fail to consider professional learning provisions for teachers as a part of the teacher evaluation system.

### **Multiple Measures**

An abundance of research supports the use of multiple data sources to ensure teacher performance evaluations are fair, comprehensive, and provides accurate account for the teacher's ability (Tucker et al., 2002). States have the option to calculate multiple measures with each equally weighted. For example, student surveys, classroom observations, and student achievement would each be weighted at 33%. Some states, however, place a higher emphasis on a single measure such as student achievement (Hull, 2013). Too much weight on one measure can alter a teacher's emphasis according to the researchers at MET. Fifty percent of the teacher's evaluation is determined by student achievement in 23 states, excluding Virginia , where Hull (2013) noted that student achievement accounts for 40% of the teacher evaluation.

### **Teacher Portfolios**

Although used for centuries in the fields of art and architecture, teacher portfolios were discussed in literature over 45 years ago as an authentic method to capture student writing

(Tucker et al, 2002). In the evaluation process, teacher portfolios are constructed to collect, analyze, and reflect on the teacher's work in an effort to improve teaching and learning. Teacher portfolios capture the learning environment, evidence of student outcomes and achievement, peer observation feedback, and other relevant artifacts that will afford the teacher the ability to self assesses and reflect on instructional practices (Gelfer, O'Hara, Krasch, & Nguyen, 2015). Tucker and his colleagues (2002) believed a teacher portfolio is a valuable tool to analyze and monitor daily instructional practices, but cautioned that portfolios over emphasis on a collection of talents or artifacts would not provide a practical basis for improvement or evaluation. While providing a more personal and reflective approach to evaluating the teacher, portfolios promote careful thoughts about teaching practices and could help teachers make adjustments to instructional strategies, improve lesson delivery, and monitor students learning. A teacher portfolio is a structured collection of selected artifacts that demonstrate a teacher's competence and growth" (p. 3). Doolittle (1994) compared an artist's collection of work to showcase his talents to a teacher's portfolio. According to Gelfer et al (2015), the portfolio documents the teacher's expertise over a period of time that portrays the teacher's skill set as well as effectiveness of teaching.

Danielson (2001) provided an example of how a teacher may use the portfolio to illustrate effective communication skills by collecting, examining and reflecting on letters to parents, handouts prepared for open house, course syllabus and grading guidelines. A teacher would be required to explain the artifacts in the portfolio, describe their practices, and finally verbalize their understanding of quality teaching practices. Portfolios are deemed meaningful if the collection of artifacts is ongoing as waiting until the last minute can be daunting and overwhelming (Danielson, 2001). According to Tucker and his colleagues, the portfolio should be aligned with clear performance objectives and begin with what teachers should know and be expected to do.

Ninety percent of the states either require or recommend measuring a teacher's' impact on student learning. Solely relying on test scores cannot provide an accurate measure of what a student knows and understands. This further validates the use of multiple measures to evaluate teachers. The value-added model (VAM) and student growth percentiles (SGP) are the statistical methods used when determining the teacher's' impact on his or her students' achievement (Hull, 2013). "The VAM model attempts to isolate the impact a teacher has on students' academic

growth from other factors that impact student learning such as a student's socioeconomic status or their achievement on prior tests" (p. 14).

On the other hand, "the student growth percentile or (SGP) measures how much progress a student has made relative to other students" (Hull, 2013, p.14). There are identified pros and cons with each model when considering the best method to determine the student's growth after a school year. Unlike student growth percentiles, the teacher is the only factor considered in the value-added model. Stakeholders usually prefer the use of student growth percentiles for several reasons to include easier formulas to interpret and student growth within a school year is easier to measure. Most researchers do not recommend evaluating individual teachers based on the value-added model because these measures are flawed (Braun, 2005).

According to Darling-Hammond and colleagues (2012), "Reviews by the National Research Council, the RAND Corp., and the Educational Testing Service have all concluded that value-added estimates of teacher effectiveness should not used to make high-stakes decisions" (p. 12). They also concluded "research indicates that value-added measures of student achievement tied to individual teachers should not be used for high-stakes, individual level decisions, or comparisons across highly dissimilar schools or student populations" (p. 7). Virginia is among the 16 states that opted to use the student growth percentile model, although differentiation among student growth is not recognized in this model, and thirteen states use the value-added model to link teachers and student achievement (Hull, 2013). Additional student achievement data are used in teacher evaluation systems in non-standardized testing grade levels such as formative assessments, district created or common assessments, national aptitude tests, and student learning objectives or (SLO).

Teachers in all disciplines can develop student learning objectives and monitor progress towards the objectives to reflect on individual student progress. Conversely, the inability to compare results and fear of less challenging goals for particular students are cautionary factors when using SLO as an accurate method to measure student progress.

### **Virginia Teacher Performance Evaluation System**

*The Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers and the Virginia Standards for the Professional Practice of Teachers* were approved by the Virginia Board of Education in 2011 (Virginia Department of Education, 2011). The revision to the aforementioned documents was a requirement to establish performance standards

and evaluation criteria for teachers, principals, and superintendents. Virginia Statute 22.1 - 253.13:5, Quality of classroom instruction and educational leadership, mandate the following for educators:

- Teacher evaluations shall include regular observation and evidence that instruction is aligned with the school's curriculum.
- Evaluations shall include identification of areas of individual strengths and weaknesses and recommendations for appropriate professional activities.
- Each local school board shall provide a program of high-quality professional development in the use and documentation of performance standards and evaluation criteria based on student academic progress and skills for teachers and administrators to clarify roles and performance expectations and to facilitate the successful implementation of instructional programs that promote student achievement at the school and classroom levels.

The document functions as a blueprint for Virginia schools to implement the educator evaluation system. The school district included in this study implemented the Virginia Teacher Performance Evaluation System created by James H. Stronge in August 2012 with two sessions of administrator training. There are seven performance standards, which are accompanied by performance indicators and a performance appraisal rubric for each standard: professional knowledge, instructional planning, instructional delivery, assessment of and for student learning, learning environment, professionalism, and student academic progress. Four performance ratings in the evaluation system include exemplary, proficient, developing/needs improvement, and unacceptable. Proficient is the performance standard and is the expected level of performance for a district.

The school district documents teacher performance using multiple data measures such as observations, artifact logs, student surveys, self-evaluation, and measures of academic progress (student growth percentiles, student achievement goal setting, and other valid measures). Teachers are observed in three ways: formal, informal, or walk-through observations. Formal observations focus directly on the performance standards outlined in the Teacher Evaluation System. The formal observation may be announced or unannounced and may occur throughout the year.

On the other hand, informal observations provide more frequent information about the



teaching and learning. These also occur throughout the year, however there is usually not a post conference after the informal observation is completed. Unlike the formal and informal observation, the walk-through observation is usually a 3 to 5 minute visit and is not included in the individual teacher evaluation.

Several student surveys were created to meet the needs of the different age groups within the PreK-12 school district. Only the classroom teacher reviews the results from the anonymous surveys to provide a guide for self-assessment and goal setting. There are suggested performance artifacts for each of the seven performance standards such as an annotated list of instructional activities for each unit, lesson plans, instructional materials that meet different learning styles and needs, samples of communication with stakeholders, and an analysis of grades for the marking period. Next, the performance evaluation system employs a self-evaluation to allow teachers to assess their competence for the purpose of self-improvement for each standard. The self-evaluation process allows teachers to identify their areas of strengths, as well as the areas in need of improvement. Finally, the teacher sets a student achievement goal, also referred to as a SMART goal to focus on student growth, connect teaching and learning, and to improve instructional practices and teacher performance.

Fifty percent of the student growth percentile and fifty percent from multiple alternative measures are used to measure student progress for teachers of reading and mathematics where student growth percentiles are available. All multiple alternative measures are used to determine student progress for teachers without student growth percentiles. Teacher performance standards 1 through 6 carry a recommended weight of 10% for each standard, which equates to 60% in the final summative rating. Standard 7 or student academic progress is 40% of the final summative rating. All non-tenured teachers receive a summative evaluation by the end of the academic year. Thereafter, they are on a 3-year continuing contract cycle for a summative evaluation.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

There is a wealth of research that directly links teacher effectiveness to student achievement (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Therefore, the process in which we evaluate teachers is critical to a school's academic success. Teacher evaluation has been a practice in schools for centuries and unfortunately, have been the same for decades. The current evaluation system was characterized as system of flaws (Weisberg et al., 2009). Additionally, the primary purpose of the evaluation was used for personnel decisions and usually resulted in minimal teacher

dismissals. However, recent legislature has aroused an immediate need to shift our evaluative practices and hold teachers accountable for student achievement and evidence of academic growth.

Research outlined fundamental characteristics needed in an evaluation system proven to impact teacher performance and instructional outcomes. Studies revealed that teachers should be evaluated frequently and rated on district standards and expectations. According to the research, the evaluator should be knowledgeable and able to demonstrate an understanding of best practices and content pedagogy. Finally, feedback as a result of the evaluation should be specific, meaningful, and directly related to professional development opportunities.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify elementary teachers' perceptions of the teacher evaluation process. In addition to identifying an overall perception of the evaluative practices, the researcher gleaned additional understandings of teachers' perceptions on a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and on its use by the evaluator. This chapter restates the research questions, in addition to some preliminary information about the research design, site and study participants, data collection, gathering, and analysis procedures. The answers to the following questions may be used to enhance the evaluation process and provide insight to the division leadership's quest to improve student achievement.

#### **Research Questions**

The answers to these questions could serve as a blueprint for division leaders and building leaders:

1. How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?
2. How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?
3. How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact on the teacher evaluation experience?
4. How do teachers perceive the quality of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?
5. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?
6. How do teachers describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in their classrooms?

In order to examine teachers' perceptions of the teacher evaluation experience in an urban school district in southeastern Virginia, the researcher employed a quantitative methodology. This research design provided valuable data about teachers' perceptions of the evaluation system and process currently used in his or her school division. A Web-based survey was administered to elementary school teachers in the division to glean the perspectives from a large population. The data collected could be used to inform division leadership about current evaluative practices and make suggestions on how to improve the instructional experiences for

the students and professional growth opportunities for the teachers.

### **Setting and Population**

The school system selected was an urban school division in southeastern Virginia that serves approximately 21,000 students in grades preK through 12. There are four high schools, five middle schools, two preK8 schools, one gifted center, which serves grades 3 through 8, and 20 elementary schools. The student population consists of 55% Black, 26% White, 11% Hispanic, 3.5% Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific islander, 4% two or more races, and .5% American Indian/Alaskan native. The currently utilized teacher evaluation system, was implemented during the 2012 school year.

All Pre-K through five teachers (n=446) in 20 elementary schools, 1 gifted center, and two Pre through 8 schools were invited to participate in the study. Of the 446 potential respondents qualified to respond to the online questionnaire, 117 actually responded after an email reminder was sent asking potential participants to complete the survey.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher employed the modified Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) (see Appendix A) after written permission was received to address research questions about the teacher evaluation experience. Data from the questionnaire were used to establish an understanding of elementary teachers' perceptions about the teacher evaluation system.

Stiggins and Duke (1988) developed the TEP in 1988 after research suggested that the evaluation process failed to promote the development of teachers. The 40-item questionnaire attempted to capture the evaluative experience based on “the relationships among components of the evaluation process and the relationships between key attributes and various perceived outcomes of the evaluation” (p. 93). Stiggins & Duke highlighted five attributes in the TEP that are essential to the “quality and impact of any particular teacher evaluation experience” (p. 80): attributes of the teacher, characteristics of the evaluator, teacher performance data process, feedback and communication, and characteristics of the setting where the evaluation takes place.

The modified TEP uses a Likert scale response of one to five instead of the original “A B C D E” response scale. This simplifies the data collection process; the TEP has been found to be reliable and dependable (Towe, 2012). The TEP is an instrument of high reliability and has an internal consistency reliability as a whole of .94 (Stiggins & Nickel, 1989).

## **Data Collection and Gathering Procedures**

After receiving IRB training, the researcher obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Tech (see Appendix B). After approval was granted, the researcher obtained written permission from the division Research Team to conduct research on teachers' perceptions of the Virginia evaluation practices (see Appendix C). Additionally, the researcher obtained permission to use the revised TEP from author Dr. Daniel L. Duke @dld7g@eservices.virginia.edu. (see Appendix D).

On February 17, 2016, elementary school teachers were sent an email introducing the purpose and significance of the study with a link to the revised TEP questionnaire. On February 24, 2016, a reminder email was sent to increase the response rate. One hundred seventeen teachers completed the questionnaire, which yielded a 27% response rate. The voluntary responses to the survey were kept anonymous throughout and beyond the study. Respondents were given two weeks to respond to the survey.

All of the data collected were stored electronically on a password-protected secure drive and only accessible to the researcher and the dissertation committee.

## **Data Analysis**

The responses to the survey were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). SPSS was used to assist with the analysis of descriptive statistics and determine the degree of variance, if present, among respondents. A descriptive analysis of the survey was conducted and data were organized into frequency totals, mean scores, median, and standard deviation for each of the sections and for each of survey questions.

## **Summary**

This chapter outlined the methodology for examining elementary teachers' perceptions of the evaluation system in an urban school division in southeastern Virginia. The researcher employed a quantitative study among a population of 446 elementary school teachers within the selected school division. Web-based responses were obtained from these elementary teachers at traditional K through 5 schools, in addition to teachers employed at a gifted center and two preK8 schools within the school division. This study contributed to the literature on teacher evaluations and provided insight on current evaluative practices intended to improve teacher growth and instructional practices in the division.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Presentation and Analysis of Data**

This study investigated elementary teachers' perceptions of how the teacher evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices at the elementary school level in an urban Southeastern public school division. The researcher investigated the understandings of teachers' perceptions on a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and impact on teacher behavior.

The answers to the research questions that follow have the potential to impact school improvement and teacher growth, yielding a direct impact on student achievement.

1. How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation process?
2. How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?
3. How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact the teacher evaluation experience?
4. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the feedback received during the
5. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?
6. How do teachers describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in their classrooms?

Quantitative data were collected through the use of a modified Teacher Evaluation Profile Questionnaire (TEP). Stiggins and Duke (1988) developed the TEP in 1988 after research suggested that the evaluation process failed to promote the development of teachers. An invitation to participate in the study was sent to all 446 elementary teachers in the urban school division on February 17, 2016 and a reminder email was sent via email on February 24, 2016. There were seventy respondents after the initial invitation to participate in the study. After the first reminder invitation was sent on February 24, 2016, the survey yielded 117 responses. The final response rate was 27% after the second reminder.

The results of teachers' responses to a modified TEP questionnaire are analyzed in this chapter. All elementary level teachers in an urban public school division in southeastern Virginia received the survey electronically through Qualtrics. Teachers were invited to rate 40 items on TEP, using a five-point Likert scale, to evaluate their perceptions of the teacher evaluation process, the evaluator, opportunities for professional development, and intended role of the evaluation tool. The Likert scale responses ranged from 1-5 with 1 being the lowest/least

favorable and 5 the highest/most favorable on the 40- item questionnaire. Data rated as a three were considered to be as neutral in the respondents' perceptions.

Items one through three collected general demographic information about the participant such as current teaching assignment (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten through grade 2, and grade 3 through grade 5, years of teaching experience, and school accreditation status (fully accredited or accredited with warning). Frequency distributions were computed for each of the demographic items on the survey. These data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Participants' Demographics*

Item #	Demographics	Responses	Frequency	Percent
1	Teaching Assignment	Pre-K	2	02
		Kindergarten-Gr. 2	54	47
		Gr. 3 – Gr. 5	60	52
2	Years of Experience	1 year	6	05
		2-3 years	18	16
		4-10 years	38	33
		Greater than 10 years	54	47
3	Accreditation Status	Fully Accredited	49	42
		Warning Status	67	58

*Current teaching assignment.* Participants were asked to provide information regarding their current teaching assignment on the elementary school level. Analysis of responses revealed that 2% (n=2) of the participants taught pre-kindergarten, 47% (n=54) taught in grades kindergarten, first, or second grade, with 52% (n=60) teaching in the testing grades 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup>.

*Years of teaching experience.* Experience level of the participants varied with 5% (n=6) being first year teachers, 16% (n=18) had 2-3 years of experiences, 33% (n=38) taught between four and ten years, and 47% (n=54) with more than ten years of experience.

*Accreditation status.* Forty-nine (42%) of the teachers taught in a fully accredited elementary school, while 67 of the teachers (58%) taught in an elementary school accredited with warning.

The survey items were reviewed and aligned with the research questions, as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

*Survey Items Alignment to the Research Questions*

Research Questions	TEP Survey Items
1. How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?	4, 5, 6, 14
2. How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,
3. How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact the teacher evaluation experience?	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25
4. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?	29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36
5. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?	37, 38, 39, 40
6. Describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in your classrooms.	26, 27, 28

**Research Question 1: How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?**

Survey questions 4, 5, 6, and 14 gleaned the teachers' perceptions of the overall quality of the evaluation process and its impact on professional practices and professional growth. The mean scores ranged from 3.28 to 3.58, with the lowest mean score on question 4 "Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practice" and the highest mean score question 14 "What was your experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience." The evaluation process consists of goal-setting, formal and informal evaluations, other procedures, and feedback. An analysis of the responses for questions 4, 5, 6, and 14, revealed a neutral perception of the evaluation process's quality and impact on professional growth and professional practices. The data analysis revealed that teachers perceive the evaluation process in the division as intended for neither teacher accountability nor teacher growth. The mean and standard deviation for each question are captured in Table 3. The distribution of responses for survey results regarding overall quality is found in Table 4.



Table 3

*Overall Rating of the Evaluation Process*

Quality of the Evaluation Process	N	M	SD
Quality/Value	117	3.34	.99
Impact on Professional Practices	117	3.29	1.00
Impact on Professional Development	117	3.28	1.09
Prior Experience with Evaluation	116	3.37	1.20

Table 4

*Survey Percentage Results Regarding Overall Quality*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
4. Overall quality of the evaluation process <i>Note. 1= Very poor quality; 5=Very high quality</i>	04	12	42	29	13
5. Overall impact on professional practice <i>Note. 1=No impact; 5=Strong impact</i>	06	13	36	37	09
6. Overall impact on professional growth <i>Note. 1=No impact; 5=Strong impact</i>	09	14	28	40	09
14. Previous experience with evaluation <i>Note. 1=Waste of time; 5=Very helpful</i>	09	14	29	29	20

**Question 4.** *Rate the overall quality of the evaluation process.* Of the respondents, 42% (n= 49) perceived the evaluation process as neutral in quality. Conversely, 42% (n=49) perceived the evaluation process as a valuable experience, with a rating of high or very high quality. Nineteen (16%) respondents perceived the quality of the evaluation process as having little to very poor quality.

**Question 5.** *Rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on your professional practices.* Forty-six percent (n= 53) of the respondents perceived the evaluation to have a strong impact on their professional practices. Thirty-six percent (n=42) reported a moderate impact on their professional practices, while 19% (n=22) felt the evaluation process has little to no impact on their professional practices.

**Question 6.** *Rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on your professional growth as an educator.* The evaluation process had a neutral impact on the professional growth of 28% (n=33) of the respondents. To a larger degree, approximately half the respondents (49%) reported the evaluation process as having a strong to very strong impact on their professional growth as an educator. Twenty-three percent of the respondents rated the evaluation process as having little to no impact on professional growth.

**Question 14.** *Describe your experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience.* Twenty percent (n=23) of the respondents described the previous evaluation as very helpful. Equally, 28% (n=33) reported it to be helpful, while 29% (n=34) described the previous evaluation as neither helpful nor a waste of time. Twenty-three percent (n=26) reported their previous evaluation as not being helpful and considered it a waste of time.

### **Summary of Research Question One: How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?**

About 50% of the respondents perceived the overall evaluation experience as both impactful and meaningful as compared to having little to no value to their profession. The evaluative process, which includes the classroom observation, post-observation feedback, instructional suggestions, and teacher input, had an impact on the teachers' professional practices. Participation in professional development opportunities was also impacted as a result of the evaluative process. The most recent evaluation was also received as helpful to the classroom teacher.

In contrast, an equal amount of respondents considered the evaluation process as neutral and having neither poor nor high quality when compared to those who considered the process as having high quality. Additionally, a consistent amount of respondents perceived the overall evaluation process as neutral regarding its impact on professional practices and professional growth.

### **Research Question 2: How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?**

Respondents were asked to rate themselves on characteristics such as instructional competence, professional expectations, openness to suggestion, orientation to change, and subject knowledge. The mean for questions 7 through 13 ranged from 4.08 to 4.56, with the lowest mean score attributed to "*Your orientation to risk taking*" and the highest mean score for

“*The strength of your professional expectations of yourself.*” Respondents scored teacher attributes consistently higher than other themes on the questionnaire. Ninety-five percent of the respondents have high expectations for themselves according the survey. These teachers experiment in the classroom, are open to constructive feedback, demonstrate an understanding curricular content, and support organizational change. Teacher attributes means are displayed in Table 5. The distribution of responses regarding teacher attributes is found in Table 6.

Table 5

*Frequency Table of Means for Teacher Attributes*

Teacher Attributes	N	M	SD
Professional Expectations	117	4.56	.68
Orientation to Risks	116	3.84	.91
Orientation to Change	117	4.18	.91
Orientation to Experiment	117	4.22	.87
Openness to Criticism	116	4.22	.83
Technical Aspects	117	4.08	.78
Curriculum Content	117	4.38	.70

Table 6

*Survey Percentage Results Regarding Teacher Attributes in Percent*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
7. Professional Expectations of yourself <i>Note. 1=I demand little; 5= I demand a great deal</i>	00	03	03	32	63
8. Your orientation to risk taking <i>Note. 1=I avoid risks; 5= I take risks</i>	01	05	30	37	27
9. Your orientation to change <i>Note. 1=I am slow to change; 5=I am flexible</i>	00	03	23	26	48
10. Your orientation to experimentation <i>Note. 1=I don't experiment; 5=I experiment</i>	01	03	16	34	46
11. Your openness to criticism <i>Note. 1=I am relatively closed; 5=I am relatively open</i>	00	03	18	34	45
12. Your knowledge of technical aspects <i>Note. 1=I know little; 5=I know a great deal</i>	00	01	24	42	33
13. Your knowledge of curriculum content <i>Note. 1=I know little; 5=I know a great deal</i>	00	00	13	37	50

**Question 7.** *Rate the strength of your professional expectations of yourself.* Ninety-five percent (n=111) of the respondents have high professional expectations for themselves. Only 3% reported moderate to little professional demands and 3% were neutral about their personal expectations.

**Question 8.** *Rate your orientation to risk taking.* Sixty-four percent (n=74) reported taking risks in their profession. Thirty percent (n=35) are neutral in their orientation to risk taking and 6% (n=7) avoid taking risks.

**Question 9.** *Rate your orientation to change.* Three-fourths of the respondents (n=86) rated themselves as flexible in their willingness change. Furthermore, 23% (n=27) of the respondents were neutral to change, while only 3% of the respondents are slow to change.

**Question 10.** *Rate your orientation to experimentation in your classroom.* Eighty percent of the respondents (n=94) reported that they experiment in the classroom. However, only 16% (n=19) are neutral about experimentation and less than 5% (n=4) reported no frequent experiments in the classroom.

**Question 11.** *Rate your openness to criticism.* Seventy-nine percent of the respondents (n=92) are relatively open to criticism. Eighteen percent (n=21) rated themselves as neither open nor closed to criticism. Three percent (n=3) of the respondents rated themselves as somewhat closed to criticism, while no respondents rated themselves as totally closed to criticism.

**Question 12.** *Rate your knowledge of technical aspects of teaching.* Seventy-five percent (n=88) of the respondents know a great deal about the technical aspects of teaching. While, 24% (n=28) of the respondents were neutral about their knowledge of technical aspects of teaching. Only 1% (n=1) reported less than average knowledge of technical aspects of teaching.

**Question 13.** *Rate your knowledge of curriculum content.* Eighty-seven percent (n=102) of the respondents have more than basic knowledge of the curriculum content. Thirteen percent (n=15) of the respondents reported a neutral perception pertaining to their knowledge of the curriculum content. None rated themselves as having little to no knowledge of curriculum content.

### **Summary of Research Question Two: How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?**

Teacher attributes of the respondents were deemed very high. With the exception of their likelihood to take risks, most of the respondents possessed favorable attributes that may positively impact the teacher evaluation process. More respondents had a neutral perception about their orientation to take risks, which meant that they neither avoided nor took risks in the classroom as compared to their other attributes in the survey tool. Almost all of the respondents demanded a great deal of themselves professionally. Furthermore, respondents were flexible and embraced organizational change, relatively open to constructive feedback, and knew a great deal about the curriculum content and technical aspects of teaching.

### **Research Question 3: How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact the teacher evaluation experience?**

Attributes of the supervisor that have an impact on the evaluation process developed from case studies conducted by Stiggins and Duke (1988) were investigated. Therefore, survey items 15 through 25 provided an overview of the evaluator's characteristics that may influence the effectiveness of the evaluation. Respondents were asked to rate the evaluator's knowledge of the content and the collegial relationship between the respondent and evaluator. The mean scores for questions 15 to 25 ranged from 3.63 to 4.32, with the lowest mean given when asked to

*describe the evaluator's knowledge of technical aspects of teaching* and the highest mean score for *describe the evaluator's temperament based on your most recent experience*. The evaluator's attributes that contribute to the usefulness of the evaluation process are displayed in Table 7. The distribution of responses for each question regarding the evaluator's attributes is found in Table 8.

Table 7

*Frequency Table and Means for Evaluator Attributes*

Evaluator Attributes	N	M	SD
Credibility	117	3.98	1.07
Working Relationship	117	4.08	1.02
Level of Trust	117	4.12	1.05
Interpersonal Skills	117	4.31	.93
Temperament	117	4.32	.91
Flexibility	117	4.19	1.06
Technical Knowledge	116	4.18	1.01
Model/Demonstrate	117	3.63	1.16
Familiarity with grade level	116	3.81	1.09
Usefulness of suggestions	117	3.81	1.11
Rationale for suggestions	117	3.69	1.06

Table 8

*Survey Results Regarding Evaluator Attributes*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
15. Evaluator's credibility <i>Note. 1=Not credible; 5=Very Credible</i>	01	11	19	27	42
16. Working relationship with evaluator <i>Note. 1=Adversary; 5= Helper</i>	02	06	20	28	44
17. Level of trust for the evaluator <i>Note. 1=Not trustworthy; 5=Trustworthy</i>	03	05	14	32	46
18. Evaluator's interpersonal demeanor <i>Note. 1=Threatening; 5=Not threatening</i>	01	06	09	29	55
19. Evaluator's temperament <i>Note. 1=Impatient; 5=Patient</i>	01	03	15	26	56
20. Evaluator's flexibility <i>Note. 1=Rigid; 5=Flexible</i>	03	04	15	26	52
21. Evaluator's knowledge of technical aspects of teaching <i>Note. 1=Not knowledgeable; 5=Very knowledgeable</i>	02	06	15	28	50
22. Evaluator's capacity to model needed improvement <i>Note. 1=Low; 5=High</i>	04	15	22	31	28
23. Evaluator's familiarity with your grade level or assignment <i>Note. 1=Unfamiliar; 5=Very familiar</i>	03	10	23	31	33
24. Usefulness of suggestions <i>Note. 1=Useless; 5=Very useful</i>	03	13	19	32	33
25. Persuasiveness of rationale for suggestions <i>Note. 1=Not persuasive; 5=Very persuasive</i>	05	09	20	45	21

**Question 15.** *Describe the evaluator's credibility as a source of feedback based on your most recent experience.* Sixty-nine percent (n=81) of the respondents perceived the evaluator as credible or very credible as a source of feedback during the evaluation experience. Nineteen percent of the respondents (n=22) were neutral about the evaluator's credibility. However, the

evaluator has little to no credibility as a source for feedback according to 12% (n=14) of the respondents.

**Question 16.** *Describe the evaluator's working relationship with you based on your most recent experience.* Approximately 3/4 (n=85) of the respondents described a helpful and supportive working relationship with their evaluator. Twenty percent (n=23) were neutral about their relationship with the evaluator. However, 8% (n=9) of the respondents reported an adversarial working relationship with the evaluator.

**Question 17.** *Describe your level of trust for the evaluator based on your most recent experience.* The mean score for this question was 4.18, which indicated that over 75% (n=91) of the respondents considered the evaluator to be trustworthy. Fourteen percent (n=16) of the respondents described the trust level for the evaluator as neutral, neither trustworthy nor unethical. Eight percent (n=10) of the respondents perceived the trust level for the evaluator to be less than average or not trustworthy based on the most recent experience.

**Question 18.** *Describe the evaluator's interpersonal demeanor based on your most recent experience.* For 84% (n=98) of the respondents, described the evaluator's interpersonal demeanor as supportive and encouraging. Nine percent (n=11) of the respondents described the evaluator's interpersonal demeanor as neither intimidating nor supportive.

**Question 19.** *Describe the evaluator's temperament based on your most recent experience.* Based on the most recent experience, 82% (n=95) described the evaluator's temperament as patient. On the other hand, 4% (n=5) considered the evaluator's temperament to be impatient. Fifteen percent (n=17) were neutral about the evaluator's temperament based on the most recent experience.

**Question 20.** *Describe the evaluator's flexibility based on your most recent experience.* Seventy-eight percent of the respondents (n=91) described the evaluator as flexible during the most recent experience. Fifteen percent of the respondents (n=17) were neutral about the evaluator's flexibility. Seven percent (n=9) rated the evaluator as rigid based on the most recent experience.

**Question 21.** *Describe the evaluator's knowledge of technical aspects of teaching based on your most recent experience.* Based on the most recent experience, 78% (n=90) considered the evaluator to be knowledgeable of technical aspects of teaching. Fifteen percent (n=17) were neutral about the evaluator's knowledge of technical aspects of teaching. Nine respondents



(8%) rated the evaluator as not knowledgeable of technical aspects of teaching based on the most recent experience.

**Question 22.** *Describe the evaluator's capacity to model or demonstrate needed improvements based on your most recent experience.* The mean score for question 22 was among lowest of the evaluator's attributes according the respondents (n=117). Fifty-nine percent of the respondents (n=68) believe the evaluator has the capacity to model or demonstrate needed improvements. Twenty-two percent (n=26) were neutral about the evaluator's capacity to model or demonstrate needed improvements. Nineteen percent of the respondents (n=22) reported that the evaluator has little to no capacity to model needed improvements based on the most recent experience.

**Question 23.** *Describe the evaluator's familiarity with your particular teaching assignment or grade level.* The evaluator is familiar or very familiar with the respondents' teaching assignment or grade level according to 64% of the respondents (n=74). Twenty-three percent of the respondents (n=27) were neutral about the evaluator's familiarity with their particular grade level or teaching assignment. Ten percent of the respondents perceived the evaluator to be somewhat unfamiliar, while 3% of the respondents (n=15) rated the evaluator as being unfamiliar with the particular teaching assignment or grade level.

**Question 24.** *Describe the evaluator's usefulness of suggestions for improvement.* The evaluator's suggestions were useful according to 65% of the respondents (n=77). Twenty-two respondents (19%) were neutral about the usefulness of suggestions for improvement. Eighteen respondents (16%) perceived the evaluator's suggestions for improvement to be useless.

**Question 25.** *Describe the evaluator's persuasiveness of rationale for suggestions.* Seventy-eight respondents (66%) considered the rationale for suggestions to be persuasive. Twenty-three respondents (20%) were neutral about the persuasiveness of the suggestions' rationale. The evaluator's rationale for suggestions was not persuasive according to sixteen respondents (14%).

### **Summary for Research Question 3: How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact on the teacher evaluation experience?**

Most of the respondents perceived their evaluator's attributes as favorable and satisfactory. According to the survey results, evaluators in this school division had cooperative working relationships with the respondent and were considered as flexible during the evaluative

process. The respondents also described majority to the evaluators as reassuring, trustworthy, and patient. While the respondents considered the evaluator as knowledgeable of technical aspects of teaching, there was a decline in their perception of the evaluator’s credibility. The perception was also evident in the evaluator’s capacity to model instructional strategies, the usefulness of suggestions after an observation, and the ability to provide a rationale for the feedback or suggestions provided to the respondent.

**Research Question 4: How do teachers perceive the attributes of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?**

Perceptions of feedback attributes were investigated in questions 29-36 with the lowest mean being 3.04, *frequency of formal feedback* and *feedback focused on teaching standards* had the highest mean score of 4.17. Table 9 captured the attributes of the feedback received during the evaluation experience. The distribution of responses regarding feedback for each question is found in Table 10.

Table 9

*Frequency Table*

Feedback Attributes	N	M	SD
Amount of feedback	117	3.53	.96
Formal feedback frequency	117	3.04	1.23
Depth of information	117	3.44	1.23
Quality of ideas/suggestions	117	3.44	1.22
Specificity of feedback	117	3.60	1.23
Nature of feedback	117	3.94	1.02
Timing of feedback	116	3.55	1.25
Focus on teaching standards	115	4.17	.91

Table 10

*Survey Results Regarding Feedback*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
29. Amount of feedback received <i>Note. 1=None; 5=Great deal</i>	03	09	34	39	15
30. Frequency of formal feedback <i>Note. 1=Infrequent; 5=Frequent</i>	16	11	38	22	13
31. Depth of information provided <i>Note. 1=Shallow; 5=In-depth</i>	09	15	24	30	23
32. Quality of the ideas and suggestions <i>Note. 1=Low; 5=High</i>	09	15	22	34	21
33. Specificity of feedback <i>Note. 1=General; 5=Specific</i>	08	11	22	31	28
34. Nature of feedback <i>Note. 1=Judgmental; 5=Descriptive</i>	03	06	22	34	35
35. Timing of feedback <i>Note. 1=Delayed; 5=Immediate</i>	09	14	16	36	25
36. Feedback focused on standards <i>Note. 1=Ignored the standards; 5=Reflected the teaching standards</i>	00	03	23	26	47

**Question 29.** *Amount of feedback received.* Over 50% of the respondents (n=63) reported receiving a great deal of feedback during the last evaluation experience. Thirty-four percent of the respondents (n=40) were neutral about the amount of feedback received during the last evaluation. Of the respondents, nine percent (n=10) reported very little feedback and three percent (4) were not given feedback during the last evaluation.

**Question 30.** *Frequency of formal feedback.* The frequency of formal feedback had the lowest mean among the attributes of feedback (M=3.04, SD=1.23). Thirty-five percent of the respondents (N=41) received frequent formal feedback. Thirty-eight percent perceived the formal feedback as neither frequent nor infrequent. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents (n=32) considered the formal feedback to be infrequent.

**Question 31.** *Depth of information provided during the feedback.* Twenty-four percent of the respondents (n=27) described the depth of information provided during the feedback as

somewhat shallow-to-shallow. Equally, 24% of the respondents (n=28) were neutral about the depth of information provided during the feedback. Fifty-three percent of the respondents (n=62) received in-depth information during the feedback.

**Question 32.** *Quality of the idea and suggestions contained in the feedback.* Fifty-five percent of the respondents (n=64) received quality ideas and suggestions during the feedback. Twenty-two percent of the respondents (n=25) reported the ideas and suggestions to be neither high nor low in quality. However, 24% (n=27) rated the quality of ideas and suggestions as low contained in the feedback.

**Question 33.** *Specificity of feedback provided.* Sixty-eight respondents (59%) reported the evaluator provided specific feedback. Twenty-five respondents (22%) were neutral about the specificity of the feedback provided during the evaluation experience. Twenty-three respondents (19%) perceived general feedback that lacked details.

**Question 34.** *Nature of feedback provided.* Eighty-one respondents (69%) were provided descriptive feedback during the most recent evaluation experience. Twenty-five respondents (22%) considered the feedback to be neither judgmental nor descriptive in nature. Ten respondents (9%) received judgmental feedback during the most recent evaluation experience.

**Question 35.** *Timing of the feedback.* Seventy-one respondents (61%) received timely or immediate feedback from the evaluator. Nineteen respondents (16%) were neutral about the timeliness of the feedback received during the evaluation experience. Twenty-six respondents (23%) considered the evaluator's feedback to be delayed or not timely.

**Question 36.** *Feedback focused on teaching standards.* Question 36 had the highest mean score among the feedback attributes (M=4.17, SD= .91). According to the respondents, feedback focused on the teaching standards. Four respondents (3%) reported that the feedback slightly ignored the teaching standards. Twenty-seven respondents (23%) were neutral about the feedback's focus on teaching standards. Thirty respondents (26%) received feedback that slightly focused on teaching standards. Feedback that reflected the teaching standard was given to 54 respondents (47%) during the evaluation experience.

#### **Summary for Research Question 4: How do teachers perceive the quality of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?**

The respondent's perceptions of the feedback provided during the observation reflected

improvement needed in this area of the evaluation process. The most positive attribute regarding feedback was the evaluator's focus on the adopted teaching standards. Most of the respondents perceived that the feedback was aligned to the expectations in the division's evaluation tool. The remaining seven feedback attributes were not rated a favorable. The respondents perceived the feedback as limited, low in quality and depth, somewhat delayed, and general. The infrequency of the feedback received the lowest rating among the respondents. Equally, there was a consistent amount of respondents who had a neutral response regarding all of the attributes of the feedback.

**Research Question 5: How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?**

Survey questions 37, 38, 39, and 40 gleaned the teachers' perception of the attributes of the evaluation context. The mean scores ranged from 3.57 to 3.76, with the lowest mean score being the clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of the evaluation the teacher is receiving. The mean and standard deviation for each question are captured in Table 11. The distribution of responses for each question is found in Table 12.

Table 11

*Frequency Table*

Evaluation Contexts Attributes	N	M	SD
PD opportunities	116	3.76	1.05
Best practice training	116	3.61	1.04
District values and policies	116	3.57	1.14
Intended role of evaluation	116	3.58	1.37

Table 12

*Survey Results Regarding Evaluation Context Attributes*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
37. Time allotted during the semester for professional development <i>Note. 1=None; 5=Great deal</i>	02	09	34	24	32
38. Availability of training programs and models of best practices <i>Note. 1=None; 5= Great deal</i>	01	14	34	27	25
39. Policy purpose statement clarity <i>Note. 1=Vague; 5= Very clear</i>	05	11	31	27	26
40. Intended role of evaluation <i>Note. 1=Accountability; 5=Growth</i>	13	07	26	18	36

**Question 37.** *Professional development opportunities for teachers in the urban school district as a result of the feedback received from the evaluation.* An analysis of data revealed average time allotted during the semester for professional development with the school and at the district level (N=39, M=3.76, SD=1.05). However, 11% of the respondent reported little to no time allotted for professional development opportunities. Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported a great deal of time allotted for professional development.

**Question 38.** *Availability of training programs and models of good practices.* Respondents reported the availability of training programs as neutral (M=3.61, SD=1.04). Twenty-five percent of the respondents perceived a great deal of training programs that models best practices available in the school district. On the other hand, 15% of the respondents

perceived little to no training programs available to them as a result of the feedback from the evaluation.

**Question 39.** *Clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of evaluation.* Fifty-three percent of the respondents reported that the district policy on teacher evaluation was clear or very clear. Teachers' perceptions on the district values and policies regarding the purpose of the evaluation were neither vague nor clear to 31% of the respondents (n=36, M=3.57, SD=1.14). Five percent of the respondents (n=6) perceived the values and policies pertaining the purpose of the evaluation as vague and unclear.

**Question 40.** *Intended role of evaluation.* Although 36% of the respondents reported the intended role of the evaluation as teacher growth, the mean score of 3.58 indicated respondents perceived the intended role to be neither for teacher accountability nor teacher growth. Teacher accountability was the intended role of the evaluation for 13% of the respondents. Seven percent (n=8) perceived the intended role as somewhat intended for teacher accountability than teacher growth.

**Summary for Research Question 5: How do teachers perceive the quality of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?**

Results from the survey revealed that only 50% of the respondents are favorable of the evaluation contexts. Only half of the respondents perceived the amount of time for professional development sufficient during the semester in which the observation was conducted.

Additionally, training programs and opportunities where respondents were afforded models of best practices were available to 50% of the respondents. The school division's ability to communicate the purpose of the evaluation was clear to half of the respondents. Over half of the respondents perceived the intended role of the evaluation as growth, while 20% perceived accountability as the intended role. Twenty-six percent of the respondents perceived the intended role as neither for accountability nor growth.

**Research Question 6: How do teachers describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in their classrooms?**

An analysis of the respondents' description of the extent of the informal and formal observation was gleaned from survey questions 26-28. Respondents were asked to describe the extent of the observations for formal evaluations and informal evaluations. Formal evaluations were characterized as pre-announced by the evaluator and/or accompanied by a pre- or post

conference with the evaluator. On the other hand, the informal observation refers to drop-in visits by the evaluator that are usually unannounced. Table 13 displays the mean and standard deviation for each question. The distribution of responses for questions 26-28 is found in Table 14.

Table 13

*Frequency Table*

Extent of Formal and Informal Observations	N	M	SD
Number of yearly formal observations	116	3.19	.97
Frequency of informal observations	117	2.17	.58
Length of formal observation	117	3.79	1.14

Table 14

*Survey Results Regarding the Extent of Formal and Informal Observations*

Survey Items	1	2	3	4	5
26. Number of yearly formal observations Note. 1=None; 2=1 observation; 3=2 observations; 4=3 observations; 5= 4 or more	01	26	37	26	10
27. Frequency of informal observations Note. 1=None; 2=Less than 1 per month; 3=weekly; 4=daily	07	72	19	03	
28. Average length of formal observation Note. 1=Brief; 5=Extended (40 minutes or more)	05	06	28	26	34

**Question 26.** *Number of formal observations per year.* Only 10% of the respondents received four or more formal observations. Twenty-six percent of the respondents were observed either once or three times per year. Data indicated that formal observations were conducted twice per year for most respondents.

**Question 27.** *Approximate frequency of informal observations per year.* Data analysis indicated that informal observations were conducted less than 1 per month according to 72% of the respondents. Nineteen percent of the respondents were informally observed weekly. Only 3% of the respondents reported receiving an informal observation daily, while 7% were not informally observed.

**Question 28.** *Average length of formal observation.* This survey item investigated the



average length of time the evaluator spent observing the lesson. Data indicated that respondents reported the average length of the formal observation as neither brief or extended ( $M=3.79$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ). Thirty-four percent of the respondents reported the evaluation lasted for at least 40 minutes. Eleven percent of the respondents described the formal observation as brief.

### **Summary for Research Question Six: How do teachers describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in their classrooms?**

Equally, the respondents in the division either received 3 or more or only 2 evaluations during the school year. However, 25% received only one observation during the school year. Informal observations can be described as infrequent occurring about monthly. A small percentage of respondents reported an informal observation at least weekly, while an even smaller portion reported an observation daily. Evaluator's spent at least 40 minutes conducting formal observations and 28% considered the length of the formal observation as neither brief nor extended.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter analyzed the Teacher Evaluation Profile data gleaned from elementary school teachers in an urban district. While approximately 40% of the respondents perceived the overall evaluation experience as valuable and impacting professional practices and growth, many respondents were neutral in their perceptions of the overall evaluation experience. Teacher attributes were favorable especially the respondents perceptions of their professional expectations, knowledge of the curriculum content, and experimentation in the classroom. Respondents reported an avoidance of risk taking.

The evaluation experience appeared helpful to about 50% of the respondents, while a small percentage of the respondents described the experience as a waste of time. Many of the respondents described the experiences as neither helpful nor a waste of time. Respondents' answers were favorable when describing the evaluators' interpersonal demeanor, their working relationship, level of trust, and temperament. More respondents disagreed when asked to rate the evaluator's ability to model suggested improvements, familiarity of their grade level or subject, and usefulness and rationale for feedback during the most recent evaluation.

Feedback during the last evaluation experience was perceived as favorable as compared to the respondents who indicated a neutral perception of the feedback provided. Respondents received a great deal of specific, useful, and timely feedback. Although feedback was timely,

many respondents received infrequent feedback or considered the feedback as neither infrequent nor frequent.

At least half of the Prek through 8 teachers understood the intended role of the evaluation and describe the district's policy as clear regarding the purpose of the evaluation. Conversely, there were many respondents that perceived teacher accountability as the intended role of the evaluation and consider the district policy statements regarding the purpose of the evaluation as vague.

Chapter 5 elaborates on the findings and discusses implications that were identified as a result of the findings related to the evaluation process, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Findings**

The purpose of this study was to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of how the teacher evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices at the elementary school level. In addition to identifying an overall perception of the evaluative practices, the researcher gleaned additional understandings of teacher perceptions on a particular evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and its impact on teacher behavior.

A summary of the research findings along with a discussion of how these findings relate to other studies in an effort to improve the evaluation experience are presented in this chapter. The chapter outlines implications, recommendations for future research, and conclusions. The purpose of this study was an attempt to answer six research questions examined elementary teachers' perceptions of the teacher evaluation experiences' influence on professional growth and instructional practices. As a result of the evaluation experience, this study sought to determine how teachers perceive the effectiveness, purpose, reliability, and impact on their teacher practices.

Elementary school teachers in an urban public school district in the Commonwealth of Virginia were surveyed for this study. All 432 teachers among the 20 elementary schools were invited to participate in the study in the school district. From those invited, 117 teachers participated in the research yielding a 27% response rate. This research will provide policymakers and division leaders a guideline as they work to modify and implement an effective teacher evaluation process that promotes teacher professional growth and impact instructional practices. Six major research questions were addressed:

1. How do teachers perceive the overall evaluation experience?
2. How do teacher attributes influence the outcome of the evaluation process?
3. How do teachers perceive the administrators' attributes impact on the teacher evaluation experience?
4. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the feedback received during the evaluation experience?
5. How do teachers perceive the attributes of the evaluation context?
6. Describe the extent of the informal and formal observations in your classroom.

The Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP), a questionnaire first developed by Stiggins and

Duke in 1986, was used to glean respondents' perceptions of their evaluation experience. According to Stiggins and Duke (1988), the TEP has an internal consistency reliability of .94 and has been used in an immeasurable amount of research. The first three items on the questionnaire collected basic demographic data on the respondents, which were not used in the analysis of the data. Following the three demographical questions, 37 questions using a 5-point Likert scale captured the respondents' perceptions to the evaluation experience. A descriptive rating scale was developed for each item.

**Finding 1: While there was a consistent perception of neutrality, less than half of the teachers perceived the evaluation as a meaningful process.**

Data from the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) indicate that teachers' perceptions of the overall quality of the evaluation process vary. For example, 42% were equally neutral or agreed that the school district has an overall high quality evaluation process, with only 13% perceiving the quality as very high. Teachers perceived the most recent evaluation as helpful and having a positive impact on their professional practice and professional growth. The impact on professional practices, professional growth, and the most recent evaluation experience were captured from 4 survey questions. The mean scores for the 4 survey questions ranged from 3.28 to 3.37, closely aligned with a range of 9. The results also revealed that approximately 30% were neutral about the impact on professional practice, professional growth, and their most recent evaluation experience. While there was a consistent perception of neutrality, less than half of the teachers perceived the evaluation as a meaningful process.

The finding supports the results of two dissertation studies, Towe (2012) results revealed that teacher evaluation has some degree of impact on teaching. Additionally, similar to the results from Case (2016) that approximately 50% of the teachers indicated that the evaluation system impacted the teacher effectiveness by encouraging reflection, accountability, and clarification of standards and expectations. There was a contradiction to the results of Duffet et al. (2008) study of 1,000 teachers across the nation. The outcomes revealed that teachers perceive the evaluation process as useless with only 26% reporting their most recent formal evaluation had a positive impact on their professional development. Furthermore, almost half of the respondents reported that it was procedural, while 32% realized the intentions, but shared the evaluation was not helpful to their instructional practices. Teachers studied in Towe (2012) and Case (2016) perceived the teacher evaluation process as having little impact on their

professional growth. In the Case study (2016), teachers frequently noted that their professional growth was influenced by factors beyond the evaluation process and 14% of the teachers indicated no impact on their effectiveness.

**Finding 2: The teachers in this study possess six of the seven attributes that enhance professional growth as a result of the evaluation experience.** According to Stiggins and Duke (1988), the teacher is a crucial component in the success of teacher evaluation process. Stiggins and Duke (1988) identified teacher attributes that contribute to an effective evaluation system intended for student growth and achievement. Teacher attributes were defined by six survey questions as part of the modified version of the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP). The six questions asked teachers to rate their professional expectations of themselves, willingness to take risk, embrace change, experiment in their classroom, and accept criticism. Teachers in this district perceived themselves as possessing all of those attributes with mean scores ranging 3.84 to 4.56. Ninety-five percent of the respondents indicate having high expectations for themselves. Teachers were less likely to take risks as compared to the other attributes on the survey instrument with only 64% reporting that they take risks. Over seventy-five percent of the respondents agreed with the other personal attributes on the survey.

Teachers in this district share the same attributes as the teachers studied in 1988 by Stiggins and Duke, therefore, will more than likely grow as a result of the evaluation. According to research conducted, the evaluation process will have an impact on professional growth for teachers who are flexible, innovative, receptive to constructive criticism, and have high expectations for themselves.

**Finding 3: Aspects of the evaluator attributes statement indicate a more favorable impression of interpersonal relationships than the evaluator's credibility.** Answers to eleven of the 14 questions defining the evaluator's attributes indicated a positive interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the evaluator with a mean score of 4.08 to 4.32. Teachers rated their working relationship with evaluator, their level of trust for the evaluator, the evaluator's interpersonal demeanor, temperament, and flexibility higher than the evaluator's credibility, the evaluation's ability to model needed improvement, familiarity with grade level assignment, usefulness of suggestions, and persuasiveness of rationale for suggestions. The evaluator's ability to demonstrate or model needed improvement had the lowest mean score of 3.63, which may be aligned to the teachers' perception that the evaluator is not familiar with

grade level content and lacks the ability to provide suggestions or feedback that is justifiable or beneficial.

Darling-Hammond (2013) suggests that the administrator should have an extensive or thorough knowledge of the curriculum and teaching pedagogy in an effective evaluation system. According to Danielson (2012), a competent and proficient evaluator must be able to demonstrate their knowledge to effectively collect and interpret classroom evidence based on levels of performance outlined in the evaluation systems. He or she should also be able to conduct professional conversations with teachers about their performance. Evaluator training and competence is required in order for the evaluation system to be effective and improve instructional practices. Evaluating teachers and having extensive content knowledge in all areas, especially in larger schools, is an unmanageable task according to Darling-Hammond (2014). Darling-Hammond (2014) also emphasizes the deficiency in professional development opportunities for principals in the area of teaching and learning.

According to a 2013 study, “there were just 13 states and DCPS that require a certification process for their evaluators” (Doherty & Jacobs, 2013, p. v.). Some administrators in Chicago, Illinois are engaged in additional practice with data collection and distinguishing levels of performance during a classroom observation (Hart, Healey, & Sporte, 2014). Thus, administrators in Chicago Public Schools reported confidence in their ability to evaluate teachers as a result of the extensive and concentrated training and practice provided by the school district (Hart, Healey, & Sporte, 2014).

Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton (2003) confirmed that a positive and trusting collegial relationship between the teachers and principal impact the lines of communication and reception to feedback. McGreal (1983) added that a positive, supportive relationship between a knowledgeable supervisor and a committed teacher is still the most effective way to produce improved instruction. Therefore, the district must provide all members of the school with appropriate training and guided practice in the skills and knowledge necessary to implement and effectively maintain the evaluation system (McGreal, 1983, p. ix.).

**Finding 4: The teachers agreed that feedback is aligned with the teaching standards in addition to being non-judgmental in nature.** Survey question 36 had a mean score of 4.17, which indicates that evaluators used the seven performance standards when making evaluative decisions. The implementation the Uniform Performance Standards clearly articulates and

defines seven performance standards for teachers in the district studied (Virginia Department of Education, 2011). During their most recent evaluation experience, the data reflect some teachers received a great deal of specific and meaningful feedback. Findings from this study are aligned to recommendations outlined in the MET project (2012) and with a study conducted in Virginia by Nabors (2015).

According to Archer, Cantrell, Holtzman, Joe, Tocci, and Wood (2016), feedback should clearly explain how what happened in the lesson aligns with the performance levels that are outlined in the district's observation instrument, which embodies the district's expectations for teaching. They also suggested extensive training for understanding bias when conducting observations. The researchers recommended making it clear from the beginning that bias is normal for everyone due to each individual's unique set of experiences. Training for the observer should describe common ways in which the observer preferences may affect observation ratings called "observer effects".

**Finding 5: Teachers perceived the evaluation feedback as somewhat limited, low in quality and depth, delayed, and general.** While more than half of the respondents (69%) perceived the feedback as more immediate than delayed, only 50% of the respondents perceived the feedback to be frequent, specific, valuable, and appropriately delivered. Six of the eight survey questions that defined the attributes of feedback had a mean range 3.04 to 3.55. The frequency of formal feedback had a mean score of 3.04, which indicates feedback is not given often from the evaluator. Similarly, Nabors (2015) reported that teachers and administrators perceived feedback to be more immediate than delayed. Teachers welcome and appreciate the opportunity to reflect, receive targeted feedback and suggestions for professional development as a result of a robust and effective evaluation system (Darling-Hammond, 2014).

Findings from this study also similar to the perceptions from teachers in a study conducted by Ovando (2005), which revealed the feedback from the evaluation lacked specificity, suggestions for improvement, and was considered general in nature. Similarly, improvement was identified with providing specific and meaningful feedback in a study conducted by Kimball and Milanowski (2009). Findings also supported the suggestions from the New Teacher Project (2010) that teachers should receive quality feedback and there is evidence of teacher growth when quality feedback is provided (Taylor & Tyler, 2011).

**Finding 6: Teachers perceived that there were few professional development opportunities as a result of the evaluation.** This finding was also aligned with the results from a study conducted by Nabors in an urban Virginia school division (2015). Only 50% of the teachers indicated they received an appropriate amount of time allotted during the semester for professional development with training programs available to demonstrate best practices. This finding supports a statement from Darling-Hammond (2014, p.5): “This country needs a conception of teacher evaluation as a part of teaching and learning system that supports continuous improvement.” Minnici (2014) added that when teacher evaluation systems are executed, there should be a premeditated connection between evaluation data and professional learning opportunities. Furthermore, professional learning opportunities should be accessible and aligned to specific feedback provided to the teacher.

**Finding 7: Teachers reported fewer than four evaluations per year.** Fifty percent of the participants report their most recent teacher evaluation experience was valuable with about 40% formally observed at least twice per year. The data from this study were aligned with the Widget Effect findings that two observations or less is the standard requirement for most evaluation systems or cumulative time spent conducting an observation averages a little more than an hour (Weisberg et al, 2009). Finding from The Widget Effect also revealed less than 60% of the tenured and novice teachers were observed one to two times during the school year. Since the administrator announces the intended visit, four yearly formal evaluations are not sufficient to capture an authentic daily experience for students (Marshall, 2012). Student achievement occurs as a result of daily instructional practices, therefore, an evaluator’s inability to witness these practices invalidates the quality of the evaluation (Marshall, 2012).

**Finding 8: Respondents also reported that informal observations were conducted less than once monthly.** Marshall (2012) suggests conducting at least 10 brief informal observations for up to 15 minutes proceeded by timely and specific feedback to the teacher. In an effort to increase rater reliability and decrease bias by multiple evaluators, he suggested the same administrator conduct the 10 brief observations. He further states, school divisions that adopted this model for evaluating teacher performance witnessed an increase in student achievement.

Marshall (2013) added that a skillful implementation of mini-observations rectify problems with conventional supervision and evaluation:



- Frequent and unannounced samplings of everyday instruction will allow principals to see what's really going on in the classroom and give feedback that most teachers will accept as credible.
- Frequent and unannounced visits will avoid the “dog-and-pony show” act
- Frequent and unannounced visits will allow the students and teachers the opportunity to grow accustomed to the principals’ presence

Adult learning will most likely occur because teachers are getting specific feedback on real events in their classrooms every two or three weeks in a low-stakes approach.

## **Implications**

The findings of this study provide opportunities for practitioners in the field of education that could impact the effectiveness of the teacher evaluation process. These implications for practitioners are shared below.

**Implication 1. School administrators should consider an increased number of informal classroom visits.** Finding 7 indicated that administrators conducted fewer than four formal evaluations per year and finding 8 revealed informal observations were conducted less than once monthly. Marshall’s (2012) suggests that 10 brief unannounced classroom visits by the same administrator increases the rater’s reliability. The visits should last no more than 15 minutes and occur at multiples stages of the instruction to capture a more accurate picture of the teacher’s performance. “The 10 brief visits must be followed by a timely face-to-face coaching conversation and a brief write-up” (Marshall, 2005, 2009).

On the other hand, finding 8 indicated that teachers reported fewer than four formal evaluations per year.

**Implication 2. Professional development opportunities for administrators should focus on providing effective feedback and best practices to teachers.** This implication responds to findings 3, 4 and 5. Although teachers agreed that feedback from the evaluation was aligned with the Virginia performance standards, additional professional development would sustain this practice. Administrators are familiar with the seven performance standards and conducts observations accordingly.

On the other hand, data revealed that teachers did not receive the evaluation feedback as beneficial or useful. Since evaluators’ credibility and ability to model suggested feedback were less favorable, providing professional development for administrators on curriculum

knowledge, pedagogy, and best practices would be beneficial. Research suggests that effective feedback is critical to the teacher evaluation. The findings of this study indicate that teachers rated the feedback attributes of the frequency, the specificity, and quality of the suggestions as ineffective. Since the reformed evaluation systems outlines a shift in the evaluator's skill set, many principals have not received adequate training to carry out this new role (Minnici, 2014). Professional development for administrators should focus on providing specific and individualized feedback with suggestions based on best practices for that content area.

**Implication 3. School districts should analyze their current professional development opportunities for teachers to ensure sustainability alignment to evaluation data and that training programs are available to model best practices.** This implication is a result of finding 6, which revealed teachers perceived few professional development opportunities as a result of the evaluation. “This country needs a conception of teacher evaluation as part of a *teaching and learning system* that supports continuous improvement” (Darling-Hammond, 2014, p. 5). Teachers should be part of a system that fosters expertise and promotes continuous improvement in order to improve teaching and learning. Minnici (2014) asserts that when teacher evaluation systems are executed, there should be a premeditated connection between evaluation data and professional learning opportunities. Professional learning opportunities should be accessible and aligned to specific feedback provided to the teacher (Minnici, 2014).

**Implication 4. The education field should continue to improve the supply of effective teachers who are prepared to sustain a career of continuous professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2014).** According to Minnici (2014), the teacher evaluation system cannot solely improve instructional quality and positively impact student achievement. To be successful, there should be a comprehensive plan aligned with the teacher's initial training and preparation and extending to continuous support and evaluation of the teacher's practices. This implication is aligned with finding 2, which characterizes teachers in the study as possessing six of the seven attributes that enhance professional growth as a result of the evaluation experience. Therefore, education programs should ensure that teachers are prepared with all the necessary attributes before entering the field of education.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Possible studies and their findings can provide the urban school district with information that

will enhance the evaluation experience for teachers and ultimately impact student achievement. These research suggestions are listed as follows:

- Through focus groups and interviews, a qualitative study in the same Virginia urban school district could better understand and elaborate on the elementary teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process.
- A mixed-method study, in the same Virginia urban school district, could be conducted to analyze the differences in evaluation experiences among elementary, middle, and high teachers.
- A mixed-method study, in the same Virginia urban school district, could be conducted to analyze the differences in evaluation experiences between novice and veteran teachers.
- A comparison between novice (less than 3 years) and veteran (more than 8 years) teachers' responses on the measures in the TEP (such as perception of effectiveness, frequency of administrative visits, and teacher response to feedback) could provide additional insight on the evaluation tool.
- A qualitative study could be conducted to identify factors educators recognize as a measure of their own teaching effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

This quantitative study sought to investigate elementary teachers' perceptions of how the evaluation process influences professional growth and instructional practices. The researcher sought to investigate the understanding of teachers' perceptions on evaluation tool's effectiveness, purposes, reliability, and impact on their behavior. The findings from this study are significant when analyzing the newly implemented teacher evaluation system and determining its impact on student achievement. As suggested by the findings, the overall quality of the evaluation process should be improved, as a way to increase the overall impact on teachers' professional growth and instructional practices. In order to positively impact student achievement, the evaluator's content knowledge should be deepened, the ability to provide useful and relevant feedback should be strengthened, and evaluators should be able to model instructional practices. These steps would increase the teachers' perceptions of the evaluator's credibility. Additionally, providing professional development opportunities for teachers will improve effectiveness and thus, increase student achievement. By implementing an effective

teacher evaluation process to improve classroom practice, students will ultimately be the beneficiaries—quality instruction enhances quality learning.

### **Personal Reflection**

This study was relevant and significant to my work as a principal. During my eleven years as a principal, evaluating teachers has been one of the most important tasks. Ensuring that teachers are given consistent feedback that is specific and relevant, has made an impact on student achievement in every school where I have served as the instructional leader. As principal of four Title I schools, I can attribute significant gains in student achievement due to my evaluative practices. Therefore, the opportunity to read and reflect on a plethora of research was valuable.

Now, I can expand my expertise by ensuring that the feedback provided to my teachers is directly linked to professional development opportunities for growth. According to Marshall (2015), conducting several mini-observations as opposed to minimal annual observations following by immediate feedback will also impact instructional practices and student achievement.

I was not surprised to discover teacher perceptions of the evaluation process revealed from the wealth of research. However, the findings from my study were not as unfavorable when compared to the countless studies conducted over the past 30 years. The evaluator and teacher attributes' role in the evaluation process were enlightening. School districts and building leaders must be aware of the commonalities in an effective teacher evaluation system in order to ensure that teachers are making an impact on our students.

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## Appendix A

### Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP)

#### Section 1: Demographic Information

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Including the current year, how many years of teaching experience? | 1. 1 year<br>2. 2 to 3 years<br>3. 4-10 years<br>4. 11 to 15 years<br>5. 16 or more years |
| 2. School Accreditation Status  | 1. Fully accredited<br>2. Accredited with warning<br>3. Don't know                        |
| 3. Your current teaching assignment?                                  | 1. Pre-K<br>2. Kindergarten-2nd<br>3. 3 <sup>rd</sup> -5th                                |

#### Section 2: Overall Rating

Please reflect on your most recent experience with the evaluation process in your school district. Consider the entire evaluation process including goal setting, meetings with the evaluator, planning for the evaluation, formal and informal observations, or other procedures and feedback.

4. Rate the overall quality of the evaluation:

Very poor quality    1    2    3    4    5    Very high quality

5. Rate the overall impact of the evaluation on your professional practices. (Note: A rating of 5 would reflect a strong impact leading to profound changes in your teacher practices, attitudes about teaching, and/or understanding of the teaching profession. A rating of 1 would reflect no impact at all and no changes in your practices, attitudes, and/or understanding.)

No impact                    1    2    3    4    5    Strong impact

6. Rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on your professional growth as an educator. (Note: a rating of 5 would reflect a strong impact on your professional growth. A rating of 1 would reflect no impact at all on your professional growth.)

No impact                    1    2    3    4    5    Strong impact

### Section 3: Rating Attributes of Evaluation

A. Describe yourself in relation to the following attributes:

7. The strength of your professional expectations of yourself

I demand little	1	2	3	4	5	I demand a great deal
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8. Orientation to risk taking

I avoid risks	1	2	3	4	5	I take risks
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9. Orientation to change

I am slow to change	1	2	3	4	5	I am flexible
---------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

10. Orientation to experimentation in your classroom

I don't experiment	1	2	3	4	5	I experiment frequently
--------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------------

11. Openness to criticism

I am relatively closed	1	2	3	4	5	I am relatively open
------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	----------------------

12. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching

I know little	1	2	3	4	5	I know a great deal
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------

13. Knowledge of curriculum content

I know little	1	2	3	4	5	I know a great deal
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------

14. Experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience

Waste of time	1	2	3	4	5	Very helpful
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------

B. Describe your perceptions of the person who most recently evaluated your performance:

15. Credibility as a source of feedback:

Not credible	1	2	3	4	5	Very credible
--------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

16. Working relationship with you

Adversary	1	2	3	4	5	Helper
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	--------

17. Level of trust

Not trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	Trustworthy
-----------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

18. Interpersonal manner

Threatening	1	2	3	4	5	Not Threatening
-------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------

19. Temperament

Impatient	1	2	3	4	5	Patient
-----------	---	---	---	---	---	---------

20. Flexibility

Rigid	1	2	3	4	5	Flexible
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21. Knowledge of technical aspects of teaching

Not knowledgeable	1	2	3	4	5	Very knowledgeable
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------

22. Capacity to model or demonstrate needed improvements

Low	1	2	3	4	5	High
-----	---	---	---	---	---	------

23. Familiarity with your particular teaching assignment (grade level)

Unfamiliar	1	2	3	4	5	Very familiar
------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

24. Usefulness of suggestions for improvement

Useless	1	2	3	4	5	Very useful
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25. Persuasiveness of rationale for suggestion

Not persuasive	1	2	3	4	5	Very persuasive
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Describe the extent of the observations of your classroom, based on your most recent evaluation experience in your school district. (Note: In these items, formal refers to observations that were pre-announced and/or were accompanied by a pre- or post-conference with the evaluator; informal refers to unannounced drop-in visits.)



26. Number of formal observations per year

1. 0 observations
2. 1 Observation
3. 2 Observations
4. 3 Observations
5. 4 Observations

27. Approximate frequency of informal observations per year

1. None
2. Less than 1 per month
3. Once per month
4. Once per week
5. Daily

28. Average length of formal observations

Brief (few minutes)	1	2	3	4	5	Extended (40 minutes or more)
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*C. Please describe the attributes of the feedback you received during the last evaluation experience:*

29. Amount of information received

None	1	2	3	4	5	Great deal
------	---	---	---	---	---	------------

30. Frequency of formal feedback

Infrequent	1	2	3	4	5	Frequent
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31. Depth of information provided

Shallow	1	2	3	4	5	In-depth
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32. Quality of the ideas and suggestions contained in the feedback

Low	1	2	3	4	5	High
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33. Specificity of information provided

General	1	2	3	4	5	Specific
---------	---	---	---	---	---	----------

34. Nature of information provided

Judgmental	1	2	3	4	5	Descriptive
------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

35. Timing of feedback

Delayed	1	2	3	4	5	Immediate
---------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------

36. Feedback focused on

Ignored the standards	1	2	3	4	5	Reflected the teaching Standards
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37. Time allotted during the semester for professional development

None	1	2	3	4	5	Great deal
------	---	---	---	---	---	------------

38. Availability of training programs and models of good practices

None	1	2	3	4	5	Great deal
------	---	---	---	---	---	------------

39. Clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of evaluation

Vague	1	2	3	4	5	Very clear
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40. Intended role of evaluation

Teacher accountability	1	2	3	4	5	Teacher growth
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## Appendix B

### Virginia Tech's IRB Approval Memo



Office of Research Compliance  
Institutional Review Board  
North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech  
300 Turner Street NW  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061  
540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959  
email [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu)  
website <http://www.irb.vt.edu>

#### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** January 7, 2016  
**TO:** Carol S Cash, Chevese Renee Thomas  
**FROM:** Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires July 29, 2020)  
**PROTOCOL TITLE:** Elementary School Teachers' Perceptions of the Teacher Evaluation Process  
**IRB NUMBER:** 15-1139

Effective January 7, 2016, the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

<http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm>

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

#### PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As: **Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 2,4**  
Protocol Approval Date: **January 7, 2016**  
Protocol Expiration Date: **N/A**  
Continuing Review Due Date\*: **N/A**

\*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

#### FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

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## Appendix C

### Permission to Conduct Survey's Letter



Hampton City Schools Administrative Center  
ONE FRANKLIN STREET  
Hampton, Virginia 23669-3570

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February 8, 2016

Ms. Chevese Thomas  
3919 Guildford Lane  
Williamsburg, VA 23188

Dear Ms. Thomas,

Thank you for your request to conduct research in Hampton City Schools. The Research Committee has granted approval of your proposal on "Teacher Evaluation in a Virginia Urban School District – the Perceptions of Elementary Teachers". We are in receipt of all required documentation. You may now proceed with conducting surveys as outlined in your application/proposal. You are authorized to use the HCS email system to send your survey link to teachers. Please use the following verbiage in your email:

"This research initiative has been approved by the HCS Research Committee, but your participation is *voluntary*."

Please be advised that your approval will expire on February 8, 2017. If you are unable to complete your research within this time frame, please contact me. An extension will need to be requested and granted by the Research Committee in order to proceed with the research.

It is our expectation to receive a copy of your findings once the research has been completed. We wish you success in your research.

Sincerely,

Cynthia L. Cooper, Ph.D.  
Executive Director of Research, Planning and Evaluation

"The First Choice"  
[www.sbo.hampton.k12.va.us](http://www.sbo.hampton.k12.va.us)


## Appendix D

### Email of Consent to use Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP)

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Permission to use the TEP Inbox x 📧 🖨 📎

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 **Chevese Thomas** <crthomas@hampton.k12.va.us> 3/13/16 ☆ ↩ ▾  
to dld7g ▾


Good afternoon Dr. Duke,

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D. Program at Virginia Tech. My dissertation title is-Teacher Evaluation in a Virginia Urban School District- the Perceptions of Elementary Teachers. I would like to use the revised *Teacher Evaluation Profile* (TEP) as an instrument in my research. Are you able to grant permission for my use of the TEP? Thank you in advance for your assistance as I continue my research and dissertation journey.

Sincerely,

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 **Duke, Daniel L. (dld7g)** <dld7g@eservices.virginia.edu> 3/13/16 ☆ ↩ ▾  
to me ▾

Dear Chevese: Thank you for your inquiry. You have my permission to use the revised TEP for your dissertation. I wish you well as you embark on your study. Daniel L. Duke, Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Virginia

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**From:** Chevese Thomas [[crthomas@hampton.k12.va.us](mailto:crthomas@hampton.k12.va.us)]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 13, 2016 12:51 PM  
**To:** [dld7g@cms.mail.virginia.edu](mailto:dld7g@cms.mail.virginia.edu)  
**Subject:** Permission to use the TEP

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