THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MEANINGFUL TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS IN A CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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(ABSTRACT)

The process of teacher evaluation has often been less than satisfying for both teachers and administrators. Educational literature dealing with teacher evaluation shows that it is frequently a rote procedure with little or no benefit for the people involved. In this study, the researcher used the action research process to design, implement, and evaluate a new system of teacher evaluation and development in St. Anne's Catholic School. Twenty teachers of the twenty-two member faculty participated in the two-year study. Together, the teachers and administrator examined the original system of evaluation and then devised a new system. They put the new process into effect, critiqued it, and revised it. The administration and faculty learned that teacher evaluation can be more meaningful if teachers are involved in its planning, given a choice of evaluative methods, and evaluated consistently throughout the school year.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the members of my family who are essential parts of my life. I thank my father and mother, Judge and Catherine Robinette, who gave me life, sheltered and nurtured me, and instilled in me a delight in the quest for knowledge. My dad's death during the course of this study helped me place my work in its proper perspective, but also gave me strength to continue. My mother's on-going recovery from a debilitating stroke, which she suffered during the study, taught me to persevere under difficult conditions.

My three children -- David, Marie, and Alan -- were inspirational to me. Each encouraged me to continue with my work, even when it forced me to miss opportunities to see them shine as they finished high school and moved on to college or graduate school. They never complained about my work and they always told me they were proud of me.

Finally, I express the deepest appreciation to my husband John. Our roles in the family reversed during this study and he assumed a major portion of the household tasks. His understanding, patience, and constant encouragement were amazing. I am truly grateful to him.

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I also deeply appreciate the interest and enthusiasm shown by Dr. Jerry Niles, Dr. Jean Crockett, Dr. Tina Dawson, and Dr. Richard Fenchak. Each of them gave me encouragement and help when I needed it most. They supplied books, materials, wisdom, and, most importantly, a sense that the study was worthwhile.

The study would never have occurred without the support of the faculty of St. Anne's School. These dedicated, caring professionals walked with me through this two-year journey, sometimes willingly and other times uneasily, trying new techniques to help the study progress. I am indebted to them and to their trust which was vital to the success of the project.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Context

When this study began in the fall of 1999, I was serving as principal of St. Anne's Catholic School in Bristol, Virginia. I initiated the study in the beginning of the fourth year of my second term as principal. My first term lasted six years, from 1978 to 1984. I spent twelve years working on a master's degree, raising children, and teaching at St. Anne's before returning to the position of principal for a second time in 1996.

As an administrator, I thought that one of the most important facets of my job was supporting the faculty. I did this in many ways: working with our school board to increase salaries, scheduling break days in the yearly calendar, and being easily accessible to the teachers so they could discuss concerns with me. I tried to maintain good relationships with the faculty, responding to their professional and personal needs. I knew that strong, effective teachers formed the heart of a good school.

I viewed the teacher evaluation process as another way to support the faculty. I tried to use evaluations as a way to praise teachers for their good work and to encourage them to grow professionally. During the 1996-1997 school term, I continued the evaluation process that I inherited from my

predecessor. It consisted of a pre-conference, a classroom observation, and a post-conference. Evaluations usually occurred during a busy one-month period in February or March.

I personally enjoyed the pre-conferences because they gave me an opportunity to speak with the faculty about their students and their teaching style. During the pre-conference, I asked the teachers specifically how I could help them through the observation process. I was willing to focus my attention during the observation on any area that they requested. Sometimes I was asked to critique a certain method or subject, other times I was asked to focus on a specific student. I tried to provide feedback on the topic at the post-conference.

In spite of the basically positive relationship the teachers and I shared, many of them dreaded the actual observation. Even experienced and successful teachers frequently became nervous knowing that their supervisor was coming in the following day to spend 45 minutes critiquing their work. Interestingly, if I visited their rooms unannounced, the teachers did not seem to mind. The anticipation of the formal observation filled many of them with dread.

My predecessor devised the evaluation form that I used the first year of my principalship. It consisted of a checklist of skills, including classroom

management; instructional methods; parent, student, peer, and administrative relationships; and service on school committees. Each item was written in behavioral objectives and was either marked satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The form was carefully written, containing excellent behavioral objectives. However, I did not feel that it adequately involved the teachers in analyzing their own practice. I wanted something that probed more deeply into the teachers' overall effectiveness, encouraging them to become more active participants in the evaluation cycle.

During the 1996-1997 year, I called the central office of our diocesan system to ask what forms or methods they recommended for the evaluation process. The superintendent told me I could use whatever process and forms I liked as long as I produced a written evaluation each year for each teacher. If a teacher were not performing adequately, more careful documentation had to be maintained. I realized the necessity of evaluation in making personnel decisions, and knew that I had to keep careful records for that purpose. Even so, I still wanted an evaluation process that was more meaningful, and less stressful, to teachers.

At the beginning of my second year I devised a new format for teacher evaluation. First, I asked teachers to set goals early in the year and I scheduled a conference with each faculty member to discuss those goals. If

there were an area that I felt needed attention, based on previous performance, I added that to the list established by the teacher. Second, I introduced the concept of portfolios and asked the teachers simply to keep a file of things that they would like to share with one another. I repeated the same process of pre-conference, observation, and post-conference, but I added another dimension – peer evaluation.

For the peer evaluation I asked each teacher to fill out a form listing strengths and areas of improvement. Faculty members asked a peer to rate them using the form. The two teachers then met to talk over the information on their forms. Finally, each teacher met with me or with the assistant principal to discuss the results. These peer evaluations varied in their helpfulness to the teachers based on the selection of the peer. Some peers truly challenged their fellow teachers to grow and improve while others offered gentle, positive strokes. I hoped the peer evaluations would become more effective each year, but I was still dissatisfied with the overall evaluation process as a means for promoting teacher growth.

During the fall of my third year as principal, I experimented with a new process. A group of six teacher volunteers and I, facilitated by an educator who taught group interaction skills, established a weekly self-rating scale. We named it the Hanlon-Green form (see Appendix K). The teachers

created the scale during a four-week period and included such statements as: “I am positive,” “I take care of myself,” and “I work well with my peers.” Beneath each major heading were several specific objectives. The teachers were to rate themselves weekly and to discuss their progress monthly with each other. The forms were used all year and the teachers agreed that they became more aware of themselves and their work by using the forms.

I noticed that a very positive aspect of the process occurred during the weekly meetings when the teachers met to create the forms. They carried on lengthy discussions about what constituted good teaching and frequently digressed to discuss successes or failures that they were experiencing. Each seemed comfortable asking for and giving advice to the others.

As the Hanlon-Green group met during the year, I continued with the regular process of evaluation established the year before. I began to realize, however, that what I was seeking was not so much a new method of teacher evaluation as a process of teacher development. I wanted the teachers to reflect on their own practice, growing and improving as they identified their areas of strength and their areas needing improvement. I thought that teachers should be encouraged to meet and share their ideas with one another, their problems and their solutions. I hoped that through this sharing they would recommend helpful articles, books, and speakers to one another. Through

these recommendations we could plan more helpful and effective in-services for everyone. I envisioned the faculty engaged in a continuous process of communication that would shape not only their daily instruction but also our entire school program.

Purpose

My quest led to this study. The purpose of my work was to design, implement, and assess a system for teacher evaluation and development at St. Anne's Catholic School. Because I believed in participatory leadership, I wanted to involve the faculty in the planning of this new system from the beginning stages. I wanted the system to be fluid enough to change when necessary and to meet yearly goals set by the whole school or specific goals set by individual teachers. I used an action research model that allowed for continuous evaluation and revision.

Goals

I had several goals for this study. One was to provide an empowering opportunity for teachers to become reflective practitioners, capable of critiquing and improving their own performance. A second goal was to transform the traditional cycle of teacher evaluation into a continuous process of teacher development. The third was to develop an approach to measuring

and recording teacher growth through the new evaluation and development process.

Theoretical Model

I used Kemmis and McTaggart's model (Figure 1) of action research for this study (as cited in McKernan, 1996). I learned that action research was a method of research designed for practitioners in a specific field. It was carried out in-house, rather than in a laboratory or a library. It dealt with specific problems faced by practitioners and involved them in finding solutions to the problems. Action research typically involved four steps: creating a plan of action based on careful analysis of the problem, putting the plan into action, observing the consequences of the plan, and reflecting on the consequences. A revised plan was created based on the outcomes of the original plan, and the process began again. The four-step cycle could be repeated as often as necessary until a satisfactory solution was reached (McKernan, 1996).

The first step in the action research process in my model involved creating a plan, with the faculty, which would lead to their professional development. Together we developed a new plan that used several different methods. These included student, parent, peer, and self-evaluations, as well as audio and videotapes. I also decided to continue formal observations.

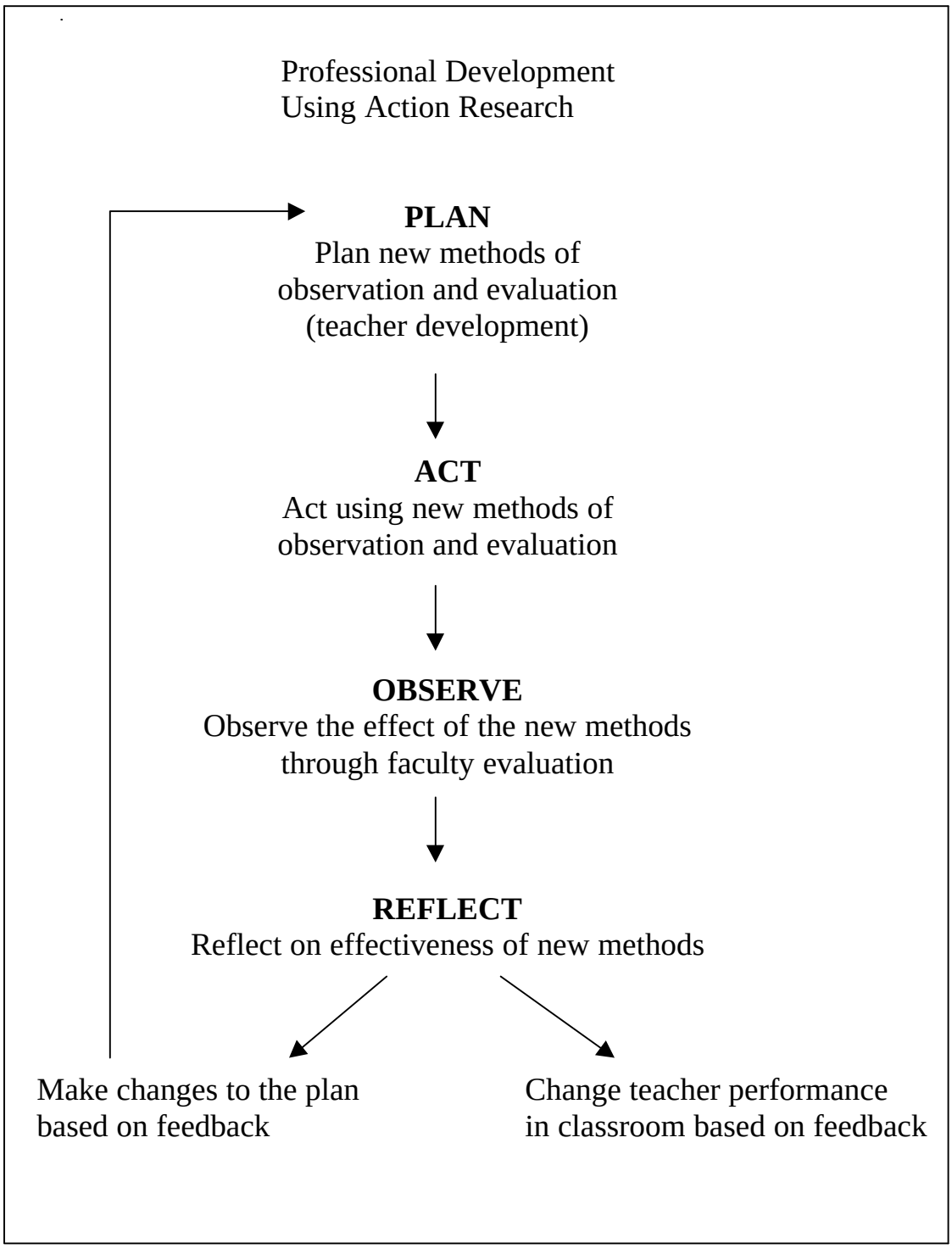

Figure 1. The theoretical framework for the study including the components of the action research process, adapted from Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited in McKernan, 1996).

The second step in our model was acting, using the new methods of evaluation and observation. After designing the plan, we agreed to put it into effect for a nine-week period. Teachers could choose any of the evaluative methods they wished. I encouraged them to try several different ones. They were asked to keep notes about the methods they were using.

The third step in the theoretical model was to observe the effect of the new methods we had used. We decided to meet as a faculty at the end of the first nine-week era to discuss the results of our new methods. Each teacher would participate in the discussion, sharing what he or she had experienced while using the new methods of observation and evaluation.

The fourth step in the model was to reflect on our observations. After the teachers and I had thoroughly discussed the results of using our new methods, we determined what changes, if any, needed to be made to the original plan. We put these changes into effect and then began the plan again. We continued the action research process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting until we were satisfied with our plan.

Setting: St. Anne's Catholic School

The study was designed to take place at St. Anne's Catholic School in Bristol, Virginia. When this study began, St. Anne's Catholic School was one of only two Catholic elementary schools in the far southwestern part of

Virginia. Founded in 1949, St. Anne's served students aged three to twelve in preschool through grade six. The students came from a wide geographical area, including two states, three cities, one town, and four counties.

St. Anne's operated under the guidelines of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Virginia. It had a school board that advised the principal and pastor in making many operational decisions. The school was open to families of all faiths and was locally recognized for its emphasis on the Catholic faith, Christian values, academic excellence, and firm discipline.

Enrollment

The students at St. Anne's accurately reflected the area's ethnic composition. Of the 251 students enrolled in preschool through grade six when the study began, ninety two percent were Caucasian. Hispanic, Asian, and African American students comprised the remaining eight percent. Forty-five percent were male, fifty-five percent female. Five percent met the requirements for free or reduced-price lunch, even though the school did not participate in the reduced-price lunch program.

St. Anne's was open to all families who shared a belief in the school's philosophy. There were no restrictions based on religion, race, gender, or physical handicap. Tuition was charged for all students, starting at $1500 per year for part-time preschool and increasing to $3050 per year for non-

parishioners in grades one through six. Tuition reductions were established for families with more than one child enrolled in the school.

Tuition Assistance

The school offered tuition assistance to qualifying families. The amount of assistance varied from a few hundred dollars to nearly full tuition. A committee, including the pastor, principal, and members of the parish, evaluated each request for assistance using tax forms and other pertinent information. In 1999-2000 a total of $43,719 in tuition assistance was granted to forty students, representing approximately fifteen percent of the student body. This money came from several sources, including donations, church collections, interest on investments, and fun-raising activities.

An advantage of the tuition assistance program was that it broadened the socioeconomic mix of the school's population. St. Anne's tried to make its education available to all Catholic children, regardless of a family's ability to pay. In recent years it offered assistance to non-parishioners as well. St. Anne's did not participate in a free or reduced-price lunch program. Instead, the Parent Teacher Organization or Cafeteria Manger assisted families who needed help with meals, uniforms, or school supplies. St. Anne's did receive a small amount of Title money for Library funding.

Small Class Size

Small class size was one of the academic strengths of St. Anne's. The average class size was fourteen students. The range was from a low of eight students in preschool to a high of twenty-three students in the fifth grade. These class sizes increased slightly between 1994 and 1999, especially in the upper grades. A common trend was for enrollment to decline in grades four, five, and six. Thus, the three kindergarten classes for 1998-1999 merged into two classes by the time they reached grade six. The school board promoted increased enrollment in the preschool and primary grades to maintain sound numbers in the higher grades.

Small classes were looked upon favorably by both teachers and parents at St. Anne's. In fact, they were a main reason cited by parents for enrolling their children. However, the small classes created a problem for the school financially. Classes with fewer than fifteen children did not provide enough income to meet the expenses they incurred. The school board and administration had to carefully monitor increases, however, because of parental expectations and also because many of the local public schools had relatively small classes. Constituents questioned the value of paying tuition when local public schools offered the same class size at no charge. Teachers

were concerned about increasing class size because of the difficulty it posed in meeting the needs of individual students.

Because student tuition did not cover all of the expenses of running the school, supporters were constantly engaged in fund-raising activities. According to a 1996 study of all of the Catholic elementary schools in the diocese, St. Anne's had the lowest class size and the highest outside funding need per pupil. The Diocese recommended that the school take steps to solve this problem. The school board and its financial manager reduced the cost per student yearly from 1996 to 1999 by increasing enrollment slightly per grade and by carefully watching costs.

Faculty

When the study began, St. Anne's faculty was a very homogeneous group. Twenty-eight teachers worked full or part time at the school; all were Caucasian and all but two were female. Twelve faculty members were Catholic, fifteen were Protestant, and one was Jewish. The average age of the faculty was 41.4 and the average number of years taught was 6.82. The 1999-2000 year was a transition period for the faculty at St. Anne's. Three of our oldest and most experienced teachers retired, and several new, inexperienced teachers were hired. A total of eight new faculty members joined the staff that year in various full and part-time positions. To help these teachers adapt

readily to the school environment we established a mentor-protégé program for each new teacher.

Several sub-groups existed among the faculty. The five preschool teachers and their assistants formed one sub-group. Another sub-group consisted of the full-time teachers in grades Kindergarten through six. A third sub-group was composed of special area teachers who instructed children in physical education and health, art, music, library, computer, and foreign language. This group also included a school counselor. These special area teachers were all employed on a part-time basis except the physical education teacher who worked full time and performed administrative duties.

Several of the teachers had advanced degrees or were working towards them. Seven teachers had master's degrees and three were enrolled in master's degree programs through local colleges. Twenty-four of the teachers were certified by the state of Virginia in the area in which they taught. Four were working to earn state certification.

Governance

St. Anne's operated under a different type of governance than public or other non-public elementary schools. It was governed by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Virginia. This system was composed of twenty-three elementary schools and ten secondary schools

with total enrollment of 11,174 students. A superintendent, two assistant superintendents, and a school board headed the system. The superintendent reported directly to the Bishop of the diocese. These system-wide administrators provided guidelines and advice to all the diocesan schools.

St. Anne's followed the same organizational pattern on a local level. The pastor of St. Anne's Church was completely responsible for the school. He hired a principal who was directly answerable to him. The principal and pastor were assisted by a school board of parents who gave advice in areas of finance, development, building and grounds maintenance, and long-range planning.

All personnel decisions rested with the principal and pastor and were made in accordance with the diocesan personnel handbook. Teachers in the Catholic School system did not earn tenure but worked on a year to year contract. Non-renewal of a contract might be based on insufficient enrollment, unsatisfactory performance, or restructuring of a staff. School administrators had to provide complete documentation before an employee was let go. A grievance policy was outlined in the personnel handbook and schools were required to pay unemployment if appropriate.

Personnel decisions were also affected by the fact that St. Anne's was located in the state of Virginia and that it was accredited by the Southern

Association of Schools and Colleges (SACS). Teachers had to meet the certification guidelines required by the Virginia Department of Education and additional criteria established by SACS. Thus, teachers had to be certified in the areas in which they taught and had to work toward certificate renewal every five years. Adherence to the standards set by SACS and the state department of education helped St. Anne's maintain a high degree of professionalism among its faculty.

Philosophy

The school philosophy was written in 1986 by a committee of teachers, parents, administrators, and community members following the guidelines of the Diocesan school board and St. Anne's Parish Mission Statement. The document was revised in 1991 as part of the self-study for the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. The philosophy stated:

> St. Anne's School is committed to the values of Christian Education. The school strives to provide a stimulating learning environment that will meet the unique needs of each student while helping them develop spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically. To meet these unique individual needs St. Anne's offers a strong, balanced curriculum and instructors use a wide variety of teaching techniques. (St. Anne's School Self Study, 1991-1993)

Developing the spiritual nature of each child was one of the goals of St. Anne's philosophy and curriculum. It was also a significant factor in many parents' decision to enroll their children. Each class received religious

instruction at least three days a week from Catholic faculty members. The students used a Catholic textbook that covered the main beliefs of the faith. However, fifty percent of the school's student population was Protestant, so religious instruction took on a broader perspective. While Catholic doctrine was taught, the beliefs of other faiths were discussed, especially in upper-grade classes. Children of all faiths were encouraged to share their ideas in a respectful environment. Twice monthly the entire school celebrated Catholic Mass. A different class hosted the mass each month, and both Catholic and Protestant students were encouraged to participate. All parents were invited to attend these liturgies.

Religion also affected other curriculum areas. For example, the study of ecology in science was interwoven with the idea of stewardship of the earth. In social studies students were made aware of the development of religious beliefs along with the emergence of civilization. In areas of discipline, students were reminded of their obligation to be respectful of all of God's creations. When facing a difficult decision, children were encouraged to seek guidance through prayer and scripture.

Curriculum

Aside from religion classes, the core curriculum at St. Anne's was much like that of other schools. Reading, language, spelling, math, science,

social studies, physical education, and health were required subjects that made up the bulk of the curriculum. Diocesan guidelines specified how many minutes per day each subject must be taught during the six-hour instructional day. Classroom teachers usually taught a specific grade level with some team teaching occurring in grades four through six. During the past eight years teachers throughout the diocese worked together to formulate a consensus curriculum which provided the basis for instruction in all subject areas. The core curriculum at St. Anne's was supplemented by classes in art, foreign language, library, music, and computer.

In-service

In-service activities were scheduled on a regular basis at St. Anne's. In-service days were included in the school calendar at the beginning and end of each school year and several times during the year. Weekly faculty meetings could also be used for in-service activities. The Diocese offered several opportunities each year for system-wide in-service for teachers.

One consistent theme for in-service meetings was the promotion of individual personal growth for each faculty member. Two retreats were held each year to provide faculty members the opportunity to reflect on their personal and professional lives. Time was often set aside during these

retreats to write in a personal journal or to share thoughts, feelings, or ideas with other faculty members.

Another recurrent theme for faculty in-service was curriculum development. The Diocesan Office of Schools initiated a consensus curriculum program that involved all teachers in the creation of curriculum guides. Teachers throughout the diocese gathered in grade-level groups to determine what objectives should be included in the curriculum guides. Each faculty sent its results to a diocesan committee that compiled all the data and returned them to individual schools for further study. The final guide was a combination of ideas from every teacher in the school system. The process was on-going as a new subject area was covered each year.

The preschool teachers engaged in additional staff development activities. Guided by the preschool director, these teachers met weekly to discuss topics pertaining specifically to their part of the program. They scheduled in-services covering areas of interest or need. They created a special bond among themselves that existed within the larger faculty.

Staff development was an area where St. Anne's showed its strengths in the shared decision-making process. The in-service committee worked with the principal in planning weekly and monthly in-service opportunities. Members of the religion committee organized school-wide prayer services

during the year, using input from the entire faculty. Additional committees dealt with other important areas, including textbook selection and technology needs. Every teacher was involved in the development of the consensus curriculum.

Summary

Interestingly, even though teachers had served on committees dealing with many aspects of the school program, they had never been involved in the planning or critiquing of the evaluation process. This aspect of the school dealing directly with teachers and their performance was left completely in the hands of the principal. Our new system of evaluation and development opened many new doors for teacher involvement and challenged all of us to grow and learn professionally.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Teacher Evaluation: An Overview of the Literature

As I studied the concepts of teacher evaluation and development, I discovered several themes that were repeated throughout the literature. First, many problems existed in current teacher evaluation practices, including the fact that such practices seldom improved teacher performance (Arredondo, brody, Zimmerman, and Moffett, 1995; Boyd, 1989; Brogan, 1997). Second, researchers called for more involvement by teachers in the evaluation process, especially through various types of self-evaluation (Kennedy, 1983; Danielson, 1996; Schon, 1987; Newman, 1998). Third, as teachers began to reflect on their practice, they also began to engage in action research in their own classrooms (Taggert and Wilson, 1998). Fourth, researchers discovered that even though teachers experienced some difficulties using the action research process initially, they ultimately benefited from its use. (Patterson, Santa, Short, and Smith, 1993; Berman, 1981; McKernan, 1996; Guskey, 1986; Burnaford, Fischer, and Hobdon, 1996; Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

Problems with Traditional Teacher Evaluation

As I looked closely at the present system of teacher evaluation most often used in American schools today, I found several common problems.

The first problem stemmed from the hierarchical nature of evaluation. Traditionally, evaluation was a one-sided process dominated by administrators. They scheduled single observations at times convenient for them, completed the required forms, and decided whether or not to provide feedback. Teachers had little or no involvement in the process. This one-sided approach often caused evaluation to become a stressful and isolating experience for teachers (Arredondo et al., 1995). In addition, since many administrators assumed full responsibility for teacher evaluation, they faced major constraints in scheduling. They simply did not have enough time to observe, gather data, and provide feedback to an entire faculty. This frequently led to a flawed system in which teachers were not evaluated regularly or thoroughly. Further complicating the evaluation process was the fact that many administrators had never received training in the art of evaluation. Because of these various problems, the process of teacher evaluation frequently became nothing more than an “empty exercise” (Boyd, 1989, p. 3).

A second problem with teacher evaluation, related closely to the first, was the lack of teacher involvement with the process. Teachers today have often worked side by side with supervisors in many areas, implementing new trends in curriculum, instructional methods, in-service programs, and

community relations. However, when the time arrived for evaluation, supervisors often reverted to a less participatory, more traditional approach. Because teachers were not involved in its development, they had little or no sense of ownership of the process. This lack of involvement led many teachers to distrust the process and to question the validity of the results (Boyd, 1989). It also led to high levels of stress and to a sense of frustration and isolation. All of these factors resulted in "an unauthentic context for professional growth and collaboration – often wrought with compromise or . . . confrontation" (Brogan, 1997, p. 25).

A third problem with teacher evaluation was its failure to fully promote professional growth. Traditional evaluation was frequently a "dead end" (Boyd, 1989, p. 2) offering no opportunity for teacher development. Indeed, few school districts recognized the potential connection between teacher evaluation and development. One observation during the course of a school year was insufficient to thoroughly analyze a teacher's strengths and weaknesses. With little or no analysis of the teacher's overall performance, and with minimal feedback from administrators, professional growth was kept to a minimum (Boyd, 1989, Ellis, 1984, Raudenbush, Eamsukkawat, Di-Ibor, Kamall, and Taoklam, 1993).

As a teacher and as an administrator, I experienced all of the above named difficulties in the evaluation process. As a teacher, I found administrative observations to be stressful experiences, causing me to feel as if I were putting on a performance rather than following my daily routine. I realized that administrators' comments were seldom helpful. Periodically, a principal gave harmful advice, notably when insisting on my using a strategy with a certain student that I had already tried and rejected.

As an administrator I found it extremely stressful to ensure that each step of the observation cycle -- pre-conference, observation, and post conference -- was meaningful and productive for each teacher. I struggled with scheduling, with evaluating effectively, and with making helpful recommendations. I always breathed a sigh of relief when the "formal" evaluation process was completed.

I discovered over the last three years that the more involved the teachers were in the process of evaluation, the less stressful it became for them and for me. Members of the trial group using the Hanlon-Green form during the 1998-1999 school year, for example, were far more relaxed about their observation because they had been critiquing themselves regularly all year. We were more comfortable in our interactions with each other because

we had spent so much time together creating the form and designing the process.

Teachers as Reflective Practitioners

As I continued to study the research dealing with teacher evaluation, I began to see the emergence of common threads. Time and again researchers called for more involvement by teachers in the evaluation process (Kennedy, 1983; Danielson, 1996). Planning the process was not enough; the experts wanted teachers involved in critiquing their own work. Researchers stated repeatedly that teachers should be encouraged to think about their practice and to analyze their actions. They believed that through a continuous process of self-critique educators could reach their fullest potential. Kennedy (1983) called this concept "critical analysis" (p. 146). She wrote that teachers are active thinkers who can and should examine and interpret various situations arising in their practice. Because of their knowledge and experience they are very capable of arriving at possible solutions. They are not dependent on administrators to supply answers for them.

The idea of teacher self-analysis was also promoted by Danielson (1996). In creating a new framework for developing teaching expertise, she included a section called reflecting on teaching. She hoped that reflection would lead to increased communication among teachers. Teachers who used

her system would begin to speak a common language and would have many opportunities to share their classroom experiences. She thought that this sharing of ideas, beliefs, successes, and failures would lead to improved practice by all members of a school community.

Schon (1987) believed that teacher reflection was a natural process for experienced educators. According to him, events occurred daily in a school setting that caused teachers to stop and wonder. Reflection in action was what Schon called the process of teachers “thinking about what they are doing while they are doing it” (p. xi). He said this was what all professionals in any field did when they faced problem situations. He said that only recently had this process been considered a valid source of teacher growth and improvement.

Critical reflection was the term used by Newman (1998) to define the thought process engaged in by teachers. He said that teachers who faced real problems dealing directly with their work and who created solutions based on themselves, their students, and their classrooms were using reflective practice. He discovered that once they started this process of questioning and experimenting, they found it very difficult to stop. For them, “ongoing critical reflection is a powerful means through which teachers transform their beliefs and practices” (Newman, p. xi).

Reflective practice was a critical element in my plan for teacher evaluation and development. I thought that by using their experience, their training, and their wisdom, teachers could solve many of the problems that faced them daily in the classroom. I planned to arrange time for them to share their ideas with one another in discussion groups. Thus, the wisdom gained from years of experience by many teachers could be shared and increased. I thought that new teachers to the staff would benefit greatly from the opportunity to talk with mature educators who would also provide new insights and creative ideas for the entire faculty.

Teachers as Researchers

As I continued my research, I discovered a second theme concerning new methods of teacher evaluation and development that flowed naturally from critical reflection. This was the idea of teachers as researchers. Each time teachers tried a new technique based on their reflection, they engaged in a process called action research. They continued to behave as researchers as they refined the process based on further analysis, as they discussed the problem with other educators, and as they sought additional information from books or journals. In fact, the two processes of critical reflection and teacher research were difficult to separate from each other. As Taggart and Wilson (1998) wrote, "Action research provides a focus and a systematic element to

their reflection in order to help the …practitioners work through or work within the 'problem' they experience" (p. 218).

Bolstered by the findings of these educational researchers, I realized that what I wanted to try at St. Anne's was a new system of teacher development. The idea of teachers reflecting on their practice and sharing their concerns and ideas with others was immensely appealing to me. I knew that both experienced and inexperienced members of the faculty could benefit from an exchange of ideas. I also thought that such sharing would help eliminate the feeling of isolation that affected many teachers. I thought that by critiquing their own work, seeking input from others, and constantly trying new methods teachers would experience much more professional growth than they would by using traditional evaluation methods.

Therefore, I planned to work with the faculty to build their reflection and research skills. I decided to encourage them to observe carefully the events occurring in their classrooms, and to seek input from other sources, such as peers, students, parents, and administrators. I asked them to journal about their practice taking particular notice of troublesome areas. Finally, I planned to provide two additional things; time for them to discuss their work with one another, and guidance on how to improve professionally.

Action Research Models

Before I could begin to use action research at St. Anne's, I had to understand it fully. I learned that, historically, action research was used in many fields, including industry, health, education, and social settings. I traced its origins to the late 1800's when it was first discussed in education circles. The goal of action research, then and now, was simply to understand practice to solve problems. Proponents of action research thought that as practitioners began to fully understand a process, they would naturally move towards improving it (McKernan, 1996). I also learned that action research dealt with process instead of end products. It attempted to influence how people behaved, and how they thought and felt (McKernan).

I discovered two interesting definitions of action research. Halsey (as cited in McKernan, 1996) defined it as "small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world… and the close examination of such intervention" (McKernan, p. 4). Bogdan and Bilkin, 1982, called action research the "systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change" (p. 215). Each of these descriptions seemed pertinent to the work of the classroom teacher. Educators frequently applied "small scale interventions" as they attempted to solve learning or behavior problems in their classes. These interventions, especially behavioral ones, were clearly

designed to bring about social change.

Scientific Action Research

Continuing my study of action research, I found that it was often divided into three main types: scientific action research, practical deliberative action research, and critical emancipatory action research (McKernan, 1996). The scientific action research models were the earliest to be designed and were closely related to the scientific method of problem solving. In these models certain steps were followed which flowed "logically from an orderly research process" (McKernan, p. 16). These steps began to spiral in repeated cycles that were typical of all action research models. In Lewin's model the steps in each spiral included analysis, reconnaissance, problem reconceptualization, planning, implementation of social action, evaluation of effectiveness of action, and decision making. With each new decision the spiral began again (McKernan). The scientific technical model was concerned with the product of action research while the other two methods were more concerned with the process of action research.

Practical Deliberative Action Research

The second model of action research, the practical deliberative model, differed from scientific technical research in several ways. First, the practical deliberative model, as the name suggests, was less scientific in its approach

and more practical. It had less measurement and control than the scientific model and relied more on human interpretation, collaboration, and communication (McKernan, 1996). It was more concerned with process than product and had as its main goal understanding practice. The practical deliberative model also followed a spiral pattern. According to Elliott (as cited in McKernan, 1996) the new information uncovered with each turn of the spiral must be studied and examined carefully. It must not be rigidly controlled, as in the scientific method, but allowed to unfold naturally, (McKernan). Schon, 1987, was another follower of this model, noting that its deliberative component required teachers to reflect deeply about their practice.

Critical Emancipatory Action Research

The third type of action research was the critical emancipatory model. This model was more action oriented than the first two and was more concerned with providing practitioners with skills necessary to make sound decisions. It was often a politically empowering process for practitioners, freeing them to make decisions and judgements regarding the educational process. Kemmis and McTaggart, (as cited in McKernan, 1996) exemplified this group with their simple model of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The reflection led to a revised plan which caused the spiral to

begin again (McKernan, 1996).

My Model

I combined aspects of two action research models in my study. I chose the critical emancipatory design by Kemmis and McTaggart (as cited by McKernan, 1996) as my primary model because of its simplicity. I thought it would be easy for teachers to use and would help them quickly learn the process of action research. In addition, I incorporated the reflective teaching component of the practical deliberative model in my study. I thought that this component, which included the teachers' thoughtful consideration of their practice and the communication of their thoughts with one another, would be vital to their growth and development. I decided that the combination of the two models would foster the best results for this study.

Basic Premises of Action Research in Education

As I learned more about the various types of action research used in education, I discovered several important premises. These ideas appeared to be sound, logical, and directly applicable to my study.

Teachers Should be Researchers

The first premise was that teachers could and should be researchers. For example, Patterson, et al. (1993) noted that a classroom was a natural laboratory where teachers faced various problems every day. They were

intimately involved with the problems and were capable of using their training and expertise to design possible solutions. In questioning the learning process in their classrooms, designing strategies to solve the problems, and revising the strategies based on their success or failure, teachers were informally practicing action research. Experienced teachers questioned many things: teacher manuals, standardized tests, and curriculum kits (Patterson et al., 1993). McKernan (1996) expanded on this idea, noting that teachers adjusted the ideas in manuals or the activities in curriculum kits to meet the needs of their own students. Through this process teachers contributed to knowledge in the field of education in their own schools. They did not need to rely on outside experts; they had become the experts themselves.

Berman (1981) found that teachers served as researchers when they adapted findings from educational studies to fit the needs of their own classrooms. The very act of implementing a new process in a school resulted immediately in changes to the process as teachers and administrators adapted it to fit their particular environment. This phenomenon was called mutation. Since studies were rarely generalizable, and because they were likely to be changed by each setting, Berman thought that teachers might be more successful designing action research projects specifically for their own

students and schools.

Action Research Is Practical

A second premise I discovered was that action research was very practical. Teachers used it to find solutions to their everyday problems, not to write reports or publish documents (McKernan, 1996). As teachers used the action research process to identify a problem and to create possible solutions, they increased their teaching skills and often became more effective. The hypotheses in action research were proved or disproved quickly in the classroom; they were not subjected to the publishing process and applied to practice at a later date (McKernan, 1996; Patterson et al. 1993).

Action research remained practical because it was flexible. As teacher researchers studied a problem and attempted to solve it, they gathered information leading to new ideas and, perhaps, to new problems. In action research these new ideas were readily addressed in the next cycle of the spiral, thus creating an on-going process of improvement.

Action Research Is a Scientific Process

A third premise was that action research was a scientific process. Teachers using action research followed specific steps and tried to be observant and unbiased. They used journals or notebooks to record notes about the procedures they followed and about the student behavior or

learning that resulted. The teachers then analyzed this qualitative data to determined the validity of the results. The teacher served as both a participant and an observer, becoming fully immersed in the process and developing a strong sense of ownership (McKernan, 1996).

Some members of the educational community questioned the scientific nature of action research (Patterson, et al. 1993). They were accustomed to traditional research that appeared to be well planned, clear and organized. By contrast, teacher research was seen as "organic, messy, unpredictable, and generative, just like teachers' lives in and out of school" (Patterson, et al. p. 9). These critics said that action research was not rigorous and was not based on theory. Patterson et al. found that, in reality, the rigor in teacher research came from teachers carefully testing and re-testing another practitioner's ideas – especially those presented in manuals or guides. Teacher researchers carefully reflected on their own problems and their own data. They creatively developed solutions and refined them with great care. When teacher researchers learned of a new idea or practice, they used it skeptically until they proved its effectiveness in their own classrooms with their own students (Patterson, et al.).

Guskey (1986) added further proof to the scientific nature of action research through his studies. He discovered that teachers moved through a

very orderly, four-step scientific process when they were learning new educational processes. The first step was the actual staff development that occurred through course work or in-service opportunities. This was followed by the second step, a change in teachers' classroom practices. The third step was a change in student learning outcomes. The final step was the revision of ideas and beliefs by the teachers. Guskey found that teachers demanded scientific, factual evidence of student improvement, in their own classrooms, before they were willing to alter their strongly held beliefs regarding the teaching process.

The Classroom Is the Action Research Laboratory

A fourth premise of action research was that the school or classroom was the research facility. Action research could not take place effectively in a laboratory because each classroom had inherent qualities that affected the problem. To study a classroom problem in a laboratory setting created a false set of surroundings, which altered both the problem and the solution. One of the many strengths of action research was that neither the setting nor the participant was artificially manipulated. Thus, the results could be applied immediately to the problem with confidence that they were completely applicable (McKernan, 1996).

Applying the Premises to St. Anne's

As I thought about each of the premises regarding action research, I decided that it would be possible to use the process in my own school. Thinking about the first premise, that teachers should be researchers, I realized that St. Anne's faculty members had "done" research for years. They had analyzed new textbook series, created the consensus curriculum, evaluated test scores, and tried various methods of instruction or discipline. The teachers simply did not think of their analysis in terms of scientific research.

Secondly, the "studies" enacted by the faculty were always practical because they sprang from the daily questions the teachers faced in their classrooms. For example, recognizing that a certain child was not grasping math concepts, a teacher re-taught the lesson using different methods and materials. The re-teaching continued until the child grasped the idea. The teachers remained flexible as they tried various methods to successfully meet the individual needs of their students.

The teachers followed the third premise, using the scientific process, when they kept careful records of student behavior and achievement. They recorded their observations, noting how a child responded in various situations, documenting techniques that worked and that did not. They

analyzed their results, determining why a certain method succeeded or failed.

Finally, teachers adhered to the fourth premise by researching in their own classrooms. By using their own students in their own rooms, teachers created a living laboratory where results had meaning and validity. Teachers did not have to adjust other educators' strategies to fit the special needs of their settings. Their hypotheses were carefully thought out to fit the students they taught.

Teacher Skills Needed for Action Research

I realized that before the teachers and I were ready to begin the action research process, we needed to acquire several skills. According to McKernan (1996), we first had to think of ourselves as researchers. We were already using many components of the action research process without realizing it. During the study we would have to acknowledge that our work was truly scientifically based. We had to stop referring to ourselves as "just teachers" and had to realize that we were actively engaged in scientific research. Together, we had to learn how to implement, analyze, and revise the evaluation and development plan effectively.

Second, we needed to develop a willingness to change our practices when action research led us in a new direction. We needed to encourage one another to try new ideas and to retain traditional ones that were already

working. We had to be courageous enough to make changes – modifying the curriculum, altering teaching methods, changing daily schedules – if we believed it would improve our practice.

Third, we had to develop an attitude of openness as we realized that there were no completely right or wrong solutions to our problems. We had to understand that several possible solutions could exist to solve a problem and that none of us had the one, perfect answer. We had to accept each other's ideas and we had to be willing to try them.

Fourth, we had to think of ourselves as seekers of knowledge, not just distributors. We had to present ourselves to parents, students, and each other as professionals who knew a great deal about education, but who were still searching for answers. We had to give ourselves the freedom *not* to know everything and the courage to continue to seek the best answers for our students (McKernan, 1996).

Institutional Problems in Action Research

As I was almost ready to initiate the action research process, I realized that we would have to solve some institutional difficulties. McKernan (1996) pointed out two serious problems with action research, both of which existed at St. Anne's. The first and most serious problem was a lack of time to pursue the study. This time factor was complicated by a tightly structured

daily schedule which did not allow enough flexibility for action research to occur (McKernan). In many schools it was very common for teachers and administrators to become so rigidly scheduled in the day-to-day operation of the school that they could not find time to discuss problems, or to design, implement, and reflect on plans of evaluation and development.

For action research to be successful, the teachers and I had to build in time for the process to occur. We achieved this by carefully scheduling our Tuesday faculty meetings and our monthly planning days to include time for discussion of action research. Periodically, we planned release time during the day to enable teachers to meet with one another.

Another problem in action research was a lack of resources (McKernan, 1996). These resources covered a wide range of needs. We had to locate enough physical space for various meetings to occur simultaneously. We had to procure funds for substitute teachers who provided release time for teachers in the mentor and protégé program. We had to train teachers to use our video camera for self-observation. I encouraged the teachers to ask for what they needed and I tried to provide the resources they requested. This required me to make commitments of the school's money and for all of us to make commitments of time and energy as we employed the process.

Advantages of Action Research

In spite of the difficulties inherent in the action research process, I still wanted to use it in our school. In my preliminary research, I discovered several advantages for practitioners willing to use the process. Guskey (1986) found that an immediate benefit was improved instruction for students. As teachers studied problems in their classrooms and attempted to solve them they ultimately improved both classroom management and instruction. Student learning increased, leading to a greater sense of satisfaction among teachers, parents, and administrators. Indeed, it was ultimately the positive change in student outcomes that encouraged teachers to continue to change their beliefs and practices (Guskey).

Another benefit of action research was increased communication and cooperation among faculty members. Burnaford et al. (1996) and McKernan (1996) found that teachers who worked together in study groups or peer observation teams developed a strong sense of support and camaraderie with one another. In some schools, the sense of isolation that is so prevalent among educators began to diminish while new relationships, ideas, and knowledge flourished. These new ideas led to in-service activities that flowed from classroom needs. Year-long teacher development became the norm, replacing isolated bits of in-service scattered randomly throughout the

year (Burnaford et al., McKernan).

A third benefit of action research was its empowering effect on teachers. According to McKernan (1996), educators began the process by questioning practices in their own classrooms. Eventually, however, they generalized the process to include school-wide and system-wide practices. As they learned more about the inner workings of educational systems they also discovered how to make changes in the system. Such knowledge was powerfully liberating to teachers (McKernan).

Perhaps the most important benefit of action research was teachers' own personal and professional growth (Oja & Smulyan, 1989). As teachers reflected on their practice they increased their awareness and knowledge. These increases led to changes in instructional techniques and to improvement in student outcomes. Ultimately the teacher's own self-esteem and job satisfaction improved. As they became adept in changing the practices of education within their own classrooms, they began to venture into broader environments. Ultimately, these teachers positively impacted the educational process at the school and district level.

Summary

Reflecting on the literature dealing with teacher evaluation and development and with action research, I realized several things. First, I was

not alone with the problems I was facing at St. Anne's when I evaluated teachers. Many educators understood that the traditional practice of teacher evaluation was an empty exercise that did little to promote real teacher reflection and growth. Many educators called for more active involvement by teachers in the evaluation process, including self-reflection.

Second, I discovered several models of action research and was able to combine two of them to create a prototype to use at St. Anne's. Components of the practical deliberative method, along with the critical emancipatory method, seemed best suited for our school. I discovered that teachers could and should be researchers in their own schools, using the problems they faced daily as catalysts to promote change and improve their teaching. Using the classroom as their laboratory and documenting their work carefully enabled these teachers to perform meaningful research.

Third, I learned that the teachers and I would need certain skills to perform our work successfully. We would need to think scientifically, carefully posing the questions we wished to research. We would need to take careful notes and to analyze them clearly. We would have to work together to create a plan, use it, evaluate it, and revise it. Fourth, I realized that we would have to overcome some problems. The two major ones were the lack of time to conduct research and the lack of resources clearly marked for the action

research process.

Finally, I learned that the benefits of the action research process could outweigh all of the problems. Improved instruction and student learning, increased faculty communication and cooperation, empowerment of the faculty to make needed changes in the school, and the personal and professional growth of the faculty could be valuable products of the study. I was excited to begin the study, foreseeing wonderful changes in our school.

CHAPTER THREE

PLAN OF ACTION

Getting Teachers on Board

As the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year approached, I wondered how best to share my excitement about the new evaluation and development plan with the teachers. I decided to use our teacher retreat day to set the stage for the work we would do all year. This day-long retreat was an annual event planned by a team of teachers, religious educators, and myself. The team and I selected a site away from school. We used music, scripture, other inspirational writings, and various symbols to enflesh a theme that would inspire us to do our best for the entire school year. We allowed time for private meditation as well as for group sharing. We came together for a meal and enjoyed socializing and fun.

While searching for a theme for the retreat that year, I was reading McKernan's (1996) book on action research. As I read "…for we are all seekers rather that knowers," (p. 39), I knew I had found my theme. That small phrase embodied my hopes for the teacher retreat day and for the entire project. I wanted to enable teachers to become seekers of professional excellence, not just dispensers of knowledge.

On the day of the retreat we began with warm up activities designed to help us get to know each other a little better. With eight new faculty members, this was a very important part of our day. After a period of quiet reflection, we then shared our interpretation of various inspirational passages. After lunch we engaged in a series of Group Initiative Activities designed to help us learn about each other as we solved physical problems as a group. After the solution was reached, staff members from the retreat center led the group in a debriefing session stressing characteristics of teamwork and cooperation. I hoped the skills used in these sessions would help the teachers work effectively in small study groups during the school year. We ended the retreat day with a strong sense of camaraderie and excitement for the new school year.

During the busy workdays that followed, I did not formally mention the concept of teacher evaluation and development again. I did mention it informally when I engaged with teachers in casual conversations. As we talked about our summer vacations, I would mention my days at Virginia Tech and my plans to begin a new process of teacher development. By planting these seeds I hoped to make the teachers more aware of the task we would soon undertake.

Planning a New System With the Faculty

A full month passed before I began the next stage of the process. At the September 17 faculty meeting I shared with the faculty my desire to create a new system of evaluation and development. I briefly explained my reasons and added that I hoped they would be willing to work with me on the process. I explained that we would use faculty meetings and in-service days to do the bulk of our work and that I believed it would be a worthwhile project for everyone. I stressed that I would appreciate everyone's involvement, but that no one was required to participate and no negative repercussions would ensue. I told them that those who did not wish to participate would be evaluated using last year's system.

We then moved into the working part of the session. I distributed pads of paper and pencils to all faculty members and asked them to consider the strengths of the current evaluation system. Working independently at first, the teachers wrote the strengths of the current system. New faculty members were asked to consider ways in which they had been evaluated in other schools and to consider strengths of those systems. New faculty members had been given a copy of the evaluation form used last year.

After approximately five minutes, I asked the teachers to discuss their responses in small groups of four or five. I then invited the groups to share

their ideas one at a time with the entire faculty. As the ideas were mentioned and discussed, a recorder wrote the responses on a chart for all to see. The process continued until all ideas were recorded (see Appendix A).

At this time, I mentioned to the faculty several dimensions of a teacher evaluation and development system that we were not currently using. These included student, parent, and self-evaluations; informal administrative observations; skill checklists; video or audio taping of lessons; and peer observations and evaluations. I then asked the faculty to consider ways of improving our current evaluation system. We repeated the process of individual reflection, small group and large group sharing, and recording all responses on chart paper (see Appendix B). As each idea was mentioned teachers asked questions or added clarifying comments. Once again the process continued until all responses were recorded.

As the meeting concluded, I thanked the teachers for their time and participation. I asked them to consider the ideas that had been presented, and to begin thinking of a model evaluation process. I was pleased with the response from the entire group. Each teacher participated fully and discussion at each table was focused and thoughtful. No one complained or asked to leave during the process.

I used the ideas gathered at this meeting to create a survey for the faculty (see Appendix C). The survey focused on the same topics of strengths and areas of improvement for our current evaluation system. The teachers were asked to fill it out anonymously. This survey gave the faculty another opportunity to express their opinions on our current system without experiencing any group or administrative pressure. I repeated the survey at the end of this project to detect changes in teachers' ideas and opinions concerning evaluation (see Appendix D).

Thinking of a Model Evaluation and Development System

Three weeks later, at the October 5 faculty meeting, I asked the teachers what elements they would include in a model system of evaluation and development. They wrote their ideas individually at first, then shared them with small and large groups. All ideas were discussed by the group and recorded on chart paper (see Appendix E). Once again the faculty worked thoughtfully and carefully as they discussed their ideas. They shared thoughts among the entire group and frequently asked clarifying questions of one another. I presented them with three ring binders, pens, post-it notes and note cards to use as they began work on the project. I thanked them for their input and closed the meeting.

At this time, all of the faculty members were involved in the discussion of the evaluation and development system. I purposely kept them all a part of the process so that they would have a general understanding of the scope of the project. However, at the next meeting I formally asked who wished to make a commitment to continue to work on the project. Those who did not wish to continue were excused from further meetings on the topic and were evaluated using the current system. Those who wished to continue were given an informed consent form to complete and were evaluated using the new system.

Developing Goals for the New System

At our next meeting on November 3, I submitted a form to all faculty members asking them to list their goals for the new evaluation and development system (see Appendix F). This goal-setting process was important because it helped the teachers focus on the actual purpose of evaluation and development and it ensured their ownership of the process. I believed that goal setting would also energize the teachers as they began to set concrete tasks for themselves. According to Locke and Latham (1984), goal setting encourages people to continue with a process as they see a definite end, and it helps them devise means of achieving their goals.

As we began the process of goal setting, I asked the teachers to include ways of measuring each goal. This assignment gave them some difficulty at first, and I had to give several examples before they clearly understood the task. One teacher assured me that goals could not be measured, only objectives. I suggested that she think in terms of objectives if that would help her and she said it would. Interestingly, Locke and Latham (1984) stress that terminology is not critical in the goal setting process; they do not distinguish between goals and objectives. The final result is what is important to them.

In a final effort to clarify the process I gave the following example: “If a goal for our new system is lowering teacher stress during evaluation, how could we measure the results?” The physical education teacher said, “Check our blood pressure before and after the observation.” The teachers laughed at such a seemingly odd measurement, but they did seem to understand the idea of measurement a little better. I gave other examples of measurement, such as counting the number of times a group meets or analyzing journal entries or group discussions. The amount of time spent on evaluation and development processes could also be used as a measure (Locke & Latham, 1984). The teachers seemed to have a clearer understanding because they began to work industriously.

When the teachers finished working individually, I asked them to share their ideas in small groups. In an effort to save time, I asked them to share goals first, not measurements. We recorded the goals on a large chart for all faculty members to see. The discussion was quite open. As one group presented a goal, other groups spoke out noting similarities or additions. Teachers seemed comfortable making comments and asking questions. When the discussion was completed, we had a list of eleven goals. They were:

1. To strengthen grade-area communication and planning.
2. To increase teacher involvement in the evaluation and development process.
3. To develop a stronger mentor and protégé program.
4. To develop a more authentic evaluation process.
5. To reduce stress in evaluation.
6. To collaborate with other teachers.
7. To stimulate growth and change for the better.
8. To plan meaningful in-service opportunities.
9. To continue to re-evaluate the process.
10. To strengthen communication within the school community.
11. To simplify the process.

Before the meeting adjourned, I collected the teachers' papers so that I would have a list of their measurements. I thanked the teachers for their work and asked them to continue to consider the elements they would include in a model teacher evaluation and development plan.

Later that night, as I looked over the list of goals, I added the measurements suggested by each faculty member (see Appendix G). I then used the goals and measurements to create dividers for the teachers' notebooks. As teachers tried to reach each goal they could record data in the appropriate section.

Developing the Official Plan

At last we were ready to create our first plan of teacher evaluation and development. At the November 9 faculty meeting we conducted a brief business meeting. I then announced to the faculty that the rest of the meeting would be spent creating our evaluation and development plan. Once again I explained that teachers who did not wish to participate could leave without any negative repercussions. One teacher left. Twenty-one teachers remained; two others had been previously excused from the meeting.

I asked the teachers to gather in groups of four or five and distributed copies of the goals we established the previous week and the aspects they wished to include in an evaluation and development plan. I distributed chart

paper and markers. I asked the teachers to discuss among themselves their ideas of a model plan. Following the discussion, they were to record their thoughts on chart paper to present to the entire group. We would then consolidate the ideas from the five groups into one plan upon which we all could agree. The teachers asked no clarifying questions and immediately began to work.

Interestingly, several of the teachers came to the meeting with ideas already written down. This expedited the group's work. In fact, the first group to complete the task simply adapted the plan that one teacher brought to the meeting. They assured me that each teacher approved of it.

The teachers worked for approximately 30 minutes without interruption. Each group seemed focused on the task and interested in the project. As I wandered about the room I heard discussions about teachers' previous experiences with evaluation, concerns about time constraints, and the fairness of student and parent evaluations. After 30 minutes I reminded them of the time and suggested that they should begin to record their ideas on chart paper. Fifty minutes after we began, each group had completed its plan. All the plans were posted so that everyone could read them.

The groups then presented their ideas. One group member explained the ideas on their chart while the rest of the teachers listened. Several times

presenters were asked clarifying questions. At one point several teachers in the audience began to tell a presenting teacher why one aspect of her group's plan would not work. I interrupted the discussion and said that we wanted to present everyone's ideas before we began to critique them. I was primarily concerned that we would not be able to hear all of the groups' ideas before we had to end the meeting. Even moving quickly, we still had two groups to hear at 5:00 o'clock, the time we usually end our meetings. I asked the teachers if they wished to stop or continue, and they asked to finish the presentations.

At 5:10 I asked the teachers how they wished to proceed. Did they want to meet the following week to consolidate the ideas themselves, or did they want me to present a consolidated plan for their approval. They suggested that I put their ideas together into one plan and present it for their approval. We noted that there were many similarities in the plans; the main difference seemed to be the timing of various elements. As we prepared to leave, one teacher said that she had worked at St. Anne's for thirteen years and that she had never felt such a sense of ownership as she did now.

After the meeting several teachers gathered in the office and were discussing the project. One teacher said to me that an evaluation and development process should really be tailored to each individual teacher. I

agreed with her. On my way home I though about the fact that if teachers were beginning to realize that they need individual evaluation and development, they might begin to apply the same concepts to their students' assessment and evaluation.

Using the ideas from each of the teacher groups, I devised a first draft of a plan for teacher evaluation and development. The process was more difficult than I imagined. Each teacher group submitted a draft that was based on a ten-month school schedule. All of the drafts contained similar elements: mission, philosophy, and goals; grade-level meetings; mentor and protégé meetings; teacher evaluation and development (see Appendix H). The difficulty occurred in the scheduling; each draft had a unique timetable for completing various components of the plan. The harder I tried to adapt the various drafts into one cohesive schedule, the more difficult the process became. At last I decided to concentrate on the components of the plan, not on the timing. This idea worked and I was able to devise a plan that combined all of the elements from the teachers' drafts. The plan was organized around the six common elements rather than on a monthly schedule (see Appendix I).

Since the action research process required a spiraling schedule of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, I had to create a time frame for us

to follow. The school calendar is divided into four grading periods of nine weeks each. I decided it would be logical to follow these nine-week periods in our research. Thus, I established a series of eras during which we would act on the plan. At the beginning of each era we would plan our action. At the end of each era we would reflect on our actions and revise the plan for the next era. In reality, our eras lasted approximately twelve weeks each. The first era began in November, 1999, continuing through February 2000. Era two lasted from February 200 through May 2000. The final era began in August 2000 and concluded in October 2000.

Acting on the New Plan During the First Era

I submitted the consolidated plan to the teachers during the week of November 15. I asked them to look at the plan and tell me if they wished to revise it in any way. Two teachers responded with suggestions for minor changes that should be implemented at the beginning of the school year. I made note of the changes and then sent a memo to all of the involved teachers stating that we were ready to initiate our new plan for teacher evaluation and development.

Holding Our First Grade-Level Meeting

Two weeks later, on November 30, a regular faculty meeting day, we held our first grade-level meetings. Since the teachers had only begun to use the plan, I was not sure how prepared they would be with journal entries and other data, so I gave them a topic to discuss in their groups. I asked them to reflect on their day or week and to think about an educational topic or issue that had been raised in the course of their work. I asked them to share the idea with the group and to select a recorder and facilitator to make sure the discussion flowed.

Several faculty members were excused from this meeting, so we divided into three groups. Teachers from grades 4, 5, and 6 were in group one; teachers in grades 2 and 3 were in group two, and teachers in Preschool, Kindergarten, and first grade were in group three. Special-area teachers were asked to divide themselves evenly among the groups, picking whichever grade level they wished.

The topics of discussion varied. All of the groups discussed parent issues and student discipline. Other topics discussed were various methods of reward and punishment for students, how to handle children's work when families go on trips, how to meet the needs of immature students, and how

long to keep working on a project. One teacher told the group that she felt untrained to teach her subject area. She asked for advice and input.

As the groups met, I worked on some papers at a separate table in the room. I wanted them to see that I was present, but I did not want to intrude on their conversations.

After thirty minutes of discussion, I checked to see if all groups were finished. Then I asked them to share the value of this session, if any, with each other. The recorders wrote down their remarks. When I analyzed the notes later, I found that each group had one similar feeling: They realized they were not alone in the educational process. They said the meeting was "comforting and consoling" to them. They wrote that sharing ideas with their colleagues was helpful and that there were several curricular topics that were discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30. I asked teachers to keep a list of concerns in their notebooks so that they would have topics ready for discussion the next time we met. They said they would also like to use grade-level meetings to plan future activities.

Clarifying Goals and Measurements

During the busy weeks of December, we did not discuss the plan formally. I hoped the teachers were working on it, but neither they nor I had

very much to say to each other about it. Finally, on January 11 we discussed the plan briefly at a faculty meeting. At this meeting I distributed a revised copy of our goals and measurements (see Appendix J). This revision included more concrete methods of measuring our goals. I also gave out copies of the Hanlon-Green form (see Appendix K) a few faculty members had requested. I encouraged the teachers to try a new type of self-evaluation, such as the Hanlon-Green form, a parent evaluation, student evaluation, or peer evaluation. I asked them to continue to add to their journals. The looks and comments they shared with one another indicated to me that they were not making much progress in the area of journaling. I made a mental note to address the topic at our next meeting.

One week later, again at a regular faculty meeting, I distributed dividers and labels to the teachers to help them keep their notebooks organized. The dividers included sections for Goals, Evaluation Forms, Articles, and Journals. I reminded them of the importance of journaling and reassured a teacher that the journals were confidential.

Scheduling Pre-conferences

Immediately following Christmas vacation, I began to schedule formal observations with the faculty. The first step in these observations was the pre-conference. During this conference the teachers and I looked at the goals

they set at the beginning of the year. Depending on the goal, I asked if I would see progress toward it during the observation.

Next, I explained to the teachers that I wanted the observation to be helpful to them and asked if there was anything special they wanted me to look for. For example, did they want me to focus on new techniques or on certain children about whom they were concerned?

Teachers varied in their responses during the pre-conference. Some gave me very specific children to watch or definite techniques to observe. One teacher, for example, said she had just moved four children to an assigned table at the front of the room. She wanted me to watch to see if they were listening and behaving. Another teacher who had moved from a younger to an older grade this year asked me to watch for the appropriateness of her entire lesson for this grade level. She wanted to make sure she was teaching at the correct level.

Conducting Formal Observations

The formal observations themselves were interesting. Some teachers were very nervous while others were quite calm. The majority of teachers told the children ahead of time that I would be coming in and encouraged them to be on their best behavior. One teacher, however, pointedly did not tell her children about my visit because she wanted me to see them as they

usually behaved. Each teacher gave me a detailed lesson plan, a seating chart, and copies of materials to be used during the lesson. I took notes during the entire lesson using a classroom observation form. The information on this form provided the basis for the post-conference.

Holding Post Conferences

The post conferences were generally positive. I used my notes from the pre-conference and the observation to involve each teacher in a discussion of the lesson. I pointed out positive aspects of the lesson and asked questions about aspects I did not understand. I recorded the teachers' comments on the evaluation form. If I was concerned about discipline, content, or classroom management, I tried to make one or two suggestions on how to improve. I asked the teachers what they thought they could do to make the lesson better.

Giving Feedback on Poor Lessons

Two lessons stood out because they were especially poor. In the first lesson a child was completely out of control and dominated the entire process. I told the teacher that I wanted to observe again when the child was not present. I then worked with the teacher to develop a solution for this child. In the second lesson the teacher was very nervous and her lesson did not flow well. She was extremely upset during the post conference and

apologized for her poor performance. I made several suggestions on simple things that would improve her classroom management and that she was already beginning to do. We agreed to schedule another observation to see how much she had improved. Later, I consulted with her mentor to elicit her help and support.

I tried to be honest with all teachers in my assessment of their work. However, I found it very difficult to tell them if they were not doing a good job. I found that if I wrote down a question or critique on the observation form, then I was forced to share it with the teachers. The issues were addressed, and I tried to approach them in a helpful rather that a punitive way. I wondered if the forms would be satisfactory if I ever needed to use one as evidence for not rehiring a teacher.

Observing Consequences of the Plan During the First Era

On February 15, 2000, we evaluated the plan for the first time. This was ten weeks after the original plan was distributed to the faculty. I planned our session for this day because it was an early dismissal day and we had an entire afternoon for our meeting.

We began the meeting with a discussion of traditional research and action research. Teachers shared their definitions of the terms first, then I distributed a copy of the McKinnis and Taggert (McKernan, 1996) action

research model I used in this study. We discussed the diagram and action research method so that the teachers would understand the type of process in which we were involved.

We encountered our first problem when we referred to the goals and measurements section of the teachers' notebooks (see Appendix J). I asked them to review all of the goals and measurements, placing a tally mark by each measurement they had used. This caused a great deal of confusion as the teachers said they did not remember how many times they had used a certain measurement. They also asked what types of activities could be counted toward meeting a goal. Some had not done anything to meet certain goals. It was very evident that our measurement system was not working.

I encouraged them to do the best they could in tallying their actions. I suggested that they try to remember how many meetings and observations they had had. By talking with their colleagues they were able to recall a few specific meetings. I finally suggested that they simply do the best they could to tally their meetings.

Next, using their goal and measurement tallies, the teachers looked at their copies of the evaluation and development plan. I asked them to analyze the components of the plan that were working, the ones that needed alteration, and the ones that needed to be removed altogether. Parts of the

plan that had not yet been implemented were simply ignored. For example, asking parents to submit their expectations for the school year would be done in the fall when school began. We had not yet begun the plan in the fall of 1999, so we ignored that section while working on our evaluation.

The teachers wrote their findings on chart paper and displayed them in the library. All of us searched for similarities among the responses. We placed the results into seven main categories:

1. Simplify the tally process (perhaps use a grid).
2. Revamp the entire measurement system.
3. State expectations of the plan more clearly.
4. Open the mentor and protégé system to all teachers.
5. Rework the schedule so there is more time for grade-level and mentor and protégé meetings.
6. Decide where special-area teachers fit into the grade-level meeting system.
7. Keep minutes at grade level meetings and give them to the principal.

Reflecting on the Plan During the First Era

The teachers expressed two main areas of concern in their discussion. The first one was that they did not know what to expect when the plan began.

They had not involved themselves in the plan through journaling, self-evaluation, or other evaluation methods. They said they really did not have a clear idea of how involved the plan was or how much effort they needed to give to it.

The second area of concern was the tallying of the various measurements. The teachers did not understand how keeping count of the number of times they met or used an evaluation form helped measure the achievement of a goal. They also were uncertain about what items could be measured. For example, could a weekly phone call to a partner teacher be considered a grade-level meeting?

After discussing the aspects of the plan that were not clear, the teachers began to change tones. One or two mentioned things that were working, and others said, “Now that we know what to expect, we will do a better job.” The teachers agreed that the plan should be kept in its original form. They did not wish to delete any items. However, they did say that we needed to improve in the following areas: tallying and measurement of goals, scheduling of grade level meetings, including special-area teachers in the grade-level meetings, keeping better records of grade-level meetings, and journaling.

As the meeting drew to a close, I asked the teachers to write a paragraph telling what they had learned about the plan in today's meeting. Many common threads emerged from these paragraphs, including that the original plan seemed sound, but that it needed to be implemented more effectively. Teachers also noted that they needed to take a more active role in the plan. They recognized the need for self-discipline and sacrifice on their part to make the plan work. Several teachers noted that they felt confused at first about how to proceed with the plan, but that the discussion helped to clarify their questions.

Analyzing the First Evaluation Session

That initial evaluation process was challenging for me. My first thought was that I had not explained the process clearly enough to the teachers for them to understand it. However, as they began to ask questions about things that I knew we had discussed, perhaps more than once, such as journaling or keeping minutes of meetings, I knew there was another problem. I began to realize that although the teachers said they were eager to participate in the plan, they had not yet fully "bought into it." My impression was that they were waiting to see if we would fully implement this plan. I thought some of them believed that the plan was just a class assignment for me and that it would soon be over with little impact on them. At the end of

the February 15 session I believed they understood that we were really going to use this new system.

I realized that I would have to revise certain aspects of the process. For example, I needed to follow their suggestion of devising a grid to simplify the tallying of the measurement system. It would be impossible for us to measure the achievement of goals if the teachers did not use some type of tally system.

In looking over the goals that we established in October, I realized that we had only begun to understand this system. Most goals had few tallies; many goals had none. The tallies that were counted were inaccurate, at best; they were based on teachers' memories of the number of meetings and observations that were held. Keeping accurate records was clearly a major area that needed to be addressed in our plan.

Another aspect of the plan that needed more attention was journaling. I thought that I could provide time at faculty meetings for journaling. This would certainly encourage the teachers to use their journals and to reflect on their practice.

I could encourage the teachers to provide minutes of their grade-level meetings by reminding them to do so. Eventually taking minutes would become a common practice. Even though one of my goals was for the

teachers to take full ownership of the plan, I would have to provide more direction and encouragement until they became comfortable with its various components.

A very interesting part of the evaluation session was the way the teachers changed their attitude as the process moved forward. At first, they were very critical, naming all the aspects that did not work and freely discussing areas that were unclear to them. Halfway through the meeting, however, the tone began to change as different teachers discussed what was working and stated that they would do much better now that they understood the plan more clearly. In hearing those statements I felt that some of the teachers were taking ownership of the plan for the first time.

Revising the Plan After the First Era

In our first evaluation session we discovered that the plan itself was sound, but that we had not begun to use it correctly. Thus our first change, based on the February 15 meeting, was not to the plan itself but to our execution of it.

The first item we addressed was the tally system. At the teachers' request, I devised a simple grid (see Appendix L) for them to use. The form listed various components of the plan, such as drop-in observations, audio taping, and grade-level meetings. To the right of each component was a

series of nine boxes, one for each of the nine weeks. I encouraged the teachers to place this tally sheet prominently in their rooms so they would be reminded to check it daily.

The second item that needed correction was the holding of grade-level meetings. I had hoped that teachers would hold these meetings on their own with their grade-level partners. However, it seemed that initially, at least, I would have to help in the scheduling. The dilemma I faced was when to schedule these meetings so that they did not become an extra burden on the faculty. I had hoped to hold them on Tuesdays, our regular faculty meeting day, but I did not want to overload the already full Tuesday meeting agenda. I had to remember that one goal of the evaluation and development plan was to simplify the evaluation and development process. Extra meetings did not seem to be the answer.

Seeking a solution, I called together the school's in-service committee and asked it to help me schedule the rest of the year's meetings. We made a list of dates of each Tuesday for the remainder of the year and penciled in items we had to discuss. These included selecting a new math series, working on consensus curriculum, holding liturgy planning meetings with the pastor, and attending to the daily business of the school.

We found that the biggest scheduling conflict was with the Liturgy Planning Committee. This was a rotating group of six teachers who met every other Tuesday to plan school liturgies. By allowing those teachers to come late to faculty meetings, we were able to schedule all of the meetings necessary to discuss and evaluate the plan. We agreed to review this decision with the Liturgy Planning Committee at the end of the year. It became very evident during this meeting that careful planning and scheduling was essential to ensure the success of the plan.

The third item to be considered was the inclusion of special-area teachers in the grade-level meetings. Because we started holding the grade-level meetings on faculty meeting days, the special-area teachers were always present. They did not always need to meet solely among themselves; in fact, they frequently needed to communicate with the classroom teachers. I decided to ask them to pick a grade level with which they needed to meet and to join that group.

The fourth item that needed improvement was the keeping of records at grade-level meetings. The teachers said they did not realize they were supposed to keep minutes of the topics discussed at these meetings. I reminded them to select a recorder for each meeting and to turn the minutes

in to me. I did not want them to feel that every word they said would be recorded for me to read, so I simply asked for general topics of discussion.

The last item that was brought up was journaling. The teachers still seemed uneasy about this aspect of the plan. We talked about the journals as ways for them to write down their thoughts and concerns each day. I mentioned that the journals were confidential, thinking that might encourage teachers to be more open in their writing. I began to realize that setting aside time at faculty meetings might be one way to ensure that this component of the plan is used.

Acting on the Revised Plan in the Second Era

Both the teachers and I developed a better understanding of the plan and our parts in it after the first evaluation. The teachers seemed pleased with the tally sheet that would help them measure their meetings more accurately. Because most of the teachers placed the tally sheet in a very conspicuous place in their classrooms, it served as a daily reminder to them to use various components of the plan.

Holding Another Grade-Level Meeting

Our next set of grade-level meetings was scheduled for March 7, a regular faculty meeting date. These meetings had been announced in

advance, so I expected the teachers to come prepared with items they wished to discuss. I reminded them to take minutes during their meetings.

The groups began their discussion immediately after announcements. Each group seemed to have a variety of topics to discuss; I discerned no lull in the conversation at any table. The minutes that the teachers gave me afterwards indicated that they discussed many topics, including curriculum, behavior, retention, and integration of subjects.

The special-area teachers were asked to join any group they wished. I simply requested that they divide themselves among the groups so that none was overwhelmed by their presence. One special-area teacher moved from group to group and participated in the discussion at each. She had some ideas for her subject that she introduced at each grade level.

Integrating the Pre-Conference and Post-Conference With the Plan

I began to use the pre-conference and post-conference time to encourage teachers to try new techniques. For example, one teacher was concerned about the amount of noise in her room and the poor behavior of her students. Another teacher had difficulty using her voice effectively, tending to speak in a monotone. I suggested to each of them that they audio tape their classes to determine how they could improve.

I found that making these suggestions to the teachers kept open the idea of evaluations. Evaluation was no longer just the formal aspect of my watching a lesson. Instead, it was beginning to become an ongoing process. The teachers chose when to audiotape their classes and when to analyze the tape. I asked only for their reflections. This entire process kept us engaged in an ongoing conversation about their teaching.

Using Formal Observations

During a formal observation of a math class, I watched a teacher instructing the children in the use of surveys. One of the students said, “We could survey whether or not the teacher is fair.” The teacher responded laughingly that she might be afraid to be a part of such a survey. At the end of the lesson I asked her if she would like to use a student survey of classroom atmosphere. She seemed a bit nervous, but agreed to use it. In this instance the formal observation led to a new and different type of teacher evaluation, one that also connected with the students’ work.

Using Journals

After school one day a teacher invited me into his room and handed me a small notebook. On it was written, “Am I expecting too much? Am I being consistent? What to do?” I looked at him questioningly until I realized

that this was part of his journal. He had written down his questions on this tiny pad that he kept on his desk.

We talked for about thirty minutes as he described the problem he was having with order in his classroom. He had already consulted with his mentor and was prepared to use some of her suggestions. However, he wanted more input, so he talked with me. I agreed with his mentor's suggestions and helped him fine-tune the plan that the two of them had devised. I was pleased that he had used the small notebook to help crystallize his thinking.

Using Student Surveys

During the second nine-week session using the plan, I asked four teachers if I could administer a student survey form to their students (see Appendix M). Some teachers were more enthusiastic than others, but all agreed to participate. I selected grades three, four, and five because I thought those students would be old enough to read the survey by themselves and to understand the questions clearly.

The student survey we used was taken from the Elementary Principal's Handbook (Hughes and Ubben, 1989). It was composed of twenty-five questions and was designed to measure student perceptions of classroom atmosphere. The questions were written to measure students' opinions about seven different aspects of the elementary classroom: teacher's fairness in

dealing with pupils, students' attitude towards teacher, teacher's attitude toward students as perceived by the students, teacher's interest in students' problems, teacher's interest in students' out-of-school life, teacher's role in creating student participation in class, and teacher's awareness of the classroom environment. The survey was written in statement form with three faces following each sentence: a smiling face, a neutral face, and a frowning face. Students selected the face that most closely indicated how they felt about the statement. An example is, "When I talk to my teacher about what I do on Saturday, she looks…." (p. 242).

To ensure the confidentiality of the students' responses, I administered the survey instead of asking the classroom teacher to do so. I assured the students that the teachers would not see their individual answers, but that they would get a summary of the entire class's responses. I encouraged the children to think carefully about their responses and to be honest. If they had no particular feeling about a question or did not know how to answer it, I told them to leave it blank. In each class the children seemed eager to use the forms, but they had many questions. Some wanted more choices than the three offered, and two children actually drew in additional options.

In using this survey I learned immediately that it needed revision. For example, the questions all referred to the teacher as "she;" one of our

teachers was a “he.” Secondly, some of the questions did not fit our situation. For example, a question designed to measure teacher fairness asked about students taking the TV out of the room. We did not allow our students to move audiovisual equipment, so that question did not pertain. Recognizing these problems, I tallied the scores and then met with all four teachers to share the results.

I tallied each class separately and gave the results to each teacher. I converted the raw scores to percentages and graphed the scores of each teacher so they could compare themselves anonymously to each other. I felt this would give more meaning to the results. As the teachers looked at the scores they seemed puzzled. We discussed that some questions were open to various interpretations. For example, the last question asked how the student would feel if he or she had the same teacher again. Several students put frowning faces and wrote a note of explanation. One child said, “I don’t want to hurt her feelings, I am just ready for a new teacher.” Each teacher had one or two students who felt this way, but the teachers said it made them feel bad to think a student would not want to be in their classes again.

After answering clarifying questions, I asked the teachers to think about the value of this student survey and to submit their thoughts to me in

writing. If we agreed that it was a useful tool, we would need to revise it to better suit our school.

Analyzing Tally Sheets

I collected tally sheets a few weeks after our first evaluation session. Many of the teachers had used them effectively, carefully checking the various elements of the plan as they used them. A few other teachers had trouble locating the tally sheets so I knew they had not been very helpful to them. I totaled the number of times each element of the plan had been used. I then gave clean sheets to each teacher and encouraged all the teachers to place the tally sheets in a convenient place. I compared the tally sheets at the end of each nine-week session to help us determine how well the various components of the plan were working.

Observing Consequences of the Plan During the Second Era

On Friday, May 10 the faculty and I gathered at 1:00 p.m. for our second evaluation of the plan. Once again this was an early dismissal day and we had planned to use this time for the evaluation process. Seventeen teachers were present and they arranged themselves in five groups. We followed the same format used in the first revision session: First, we looked at the goals and measurements section of their notebooks (see Appendix J). Teachers read over each goal to see if they were making strides toward

reaching it. We also looked at the goals to see if we wanted to change any of them. Many of the teachers brought their tally sheets to use as they assessed progress towards meeting goals.

After ten minutes we moved on to Appendix I, the actual plan. I asked the groups to discuss what was working, what was not working, and what needed to be changed. I distributed copies of the revisions they had suggested at our first evaluation session to determine if we had put them into effect or not. They recorded their ideas on paper at their tables. When we began the group discussion, we asked a recorder to write all ideas on chart paper.

It was interesting to note that the teachers suggested beginning our discussion with what was *not* working with the current plan. I usually began any evaluation session by listing the positive aspects of the topic or person to be discussed. I thought that this set a better tone for everyone involved as we spent time delineating the good things that were occurring. If suggestions for improvement had to be made, we could make them in a positive atmosphere. Although beginning our evaluation session with what was not working was not my usual style, I decided to go along with the teachers' request.

Suggestion Box

One group spoke up right away and asked if we had a suggestion box. I said "No," and we agreed that a box needed to be placed in the office or

work room. In the plan, the suggestion box was supposed to be available for teachers to place ideas about in-service. It was interesting that no one had missed it until we began to re-evaluate our plan. It was obvious that this particular component of the plan was not working effectively.

Grade-Level Meetings

In the area of grade-level meetings the teachers had several concerns. First, they reminded me that we had suggested in revision number one that the teacher schedule be reworked so that grade-level meetings could occur more easily, perhaps by allowing teachers to be free at lunch. Some teachers said that we always seemed to have a specific topic to discuss, and that they would rather talk about their current needs. Surprisingly, one teacher disagreed with the group, saying that if she were not given a topic to discuss, she probably would forego the grade-level meeting altogether.

In an effort to solve the dilemma of holding grade-level meetings, the teachers offered several ideas. They suggested scheduling specific times for grade-level meetings during the pre-service days to ensure that they occur. They also recommended a monthly schedule of meetings – for example, the first Tuesday of the month the entire faculty would meet; the second Tuesday grade levels would meet; on the third Tuesday committee meetings could be

held. I was pleased that they were trying to reach a solution to this problem themselves and that their discussion was free and open.

At this time I reminded teachers to provide me with minutes of their grade-level meetings. This was clearly a point of tension. Several teachers said they didn't have time to type them. Others said that "minutes" was too formal a term, perhaps they just needed to be called "notes." They suggested that I give teachers a note card at each grade-level meeting on which notes could be taken. This would ensure simple minutes and would encourage teachers to turn them in.

Again, I was pleased that the teachers were trying to find ways to solve this problem on their own. I found it interesting, however, that they wanted me to provide them with a note card before each meeting. My hope was that they would schedule the meetings on their own without my even knowing about them. It seemed that they had not yet claimed full ownership of this aspect of the program.

The special-area teachers then discussed their needs in relationship to grade-level meetings. They wanted to meet with each other as well as with other grade-level groups. They wanted to retain flexibility in their grade-level meetings. They finally suggested alternating their meetings to fit their needs.

One teacher group noted that the divisions for grade-level meetings set up in the original plan were not the divisions that we were using. For example, in the plan we scheduled Kindergarten and first grade teachers for grade-level meetings. In reality, the teachers were only meeting with their grade-level partners. The inter-grade meetings were not happening. We agreed that meeting with partner teachers was more important, but that getting together with other grade-level teachers should occur twice a year.

Finally, a teacher questioned the value of grade-level meetings at the end of the year. She did not understand why teachers would meet at the end of the year to discuss goals for their grade level, especially if a teacher were moving to another grade. The other teachers explained that this was an evaluative process to help the teachers plan for the upcoming year. I explained that it was an assessment of the current year and should contain information that would be helpful to next year's teacher regardless of who that person would be.

Preschool noted that they had grade-level meetings each week with their director and that they worked very well. However, they required a large time commitment. This comment led another teacher to summarize the grade-level discussion by saying that it seemed to be basically a time management issue and that we should focus our efforts on better scheduling.

The length and depth of discussion regarding grade-level meetings surprised me. The topic was clearly important to teachers, and they were eager to reach solutions themselves. I explained the difficulty I faced in providing time for grade-level meetings without over-scheduling the faculty. The teachers were very serious in their discussion about how to make this part of the plan work effectively.

Mentor and Protégé Program

The teachers then moved into a discussion of the mentor and protégé program. One teacher noted that the program started off well but then seemed to fade. She wanted one more formal observation by her mentor and it was never scheduled through the office. I was concerned by this remark. I felt that if the teachers had truly been empowered, they would have scheduled that last meeting on their own without waiting for my help. Perhaps I needed to encourage the teachers to plan more of their peer observations on their own.

A second teacher noted that during our first revision process we mentioned including all teachers in the school in the mentor and protégé program. We discussed that the purpose of the program was to help new teachers adjust effectively to the school. Teachers who had worked in the school for several years did not need to be mentored in this particular program. We agreed that the program should remain geared toward new

teachers and teachers who had changed grades and needed direction. Others would be admitted based on administrative or teacher request.

Teacher Evaluation Process

The teachers had several questions regarding the teacher evaluation process. First, they wanted to add two elements of self-evaluation to the plan, journaling and articles read. These would be listed as 5D and 5E under number 5 of teacher evaluation process. I was glad they made this suggestion because it showed me that they were actually using the journaling and reading components.

They had several suggestions regarding the Hanlon-Green form. First, they recommended having the Hanlon-Green form available to all teachers at the beginning of the year so they could use it right away if they wished. Second, they suggested keeping a blank form in the office at all times for easy access. They said they would like to meet periodically to discuss what they were learning by using the Hanlon-Green form.

The teachers then began to discuss peer observations and drop in observations. They wondered if we should establish a set number of each per year. It was finally decided that teachers who wanted a certain number of observations should set them as one of their personal goals for the year.

Teachers then asked several questions regarding how peer observations should be done. Through this discussion we agreed that teachers would schedule peer observations themselves without going through the office. They would normally use their planning periods to observe another teacher.

Parent Expectations and Evaluations

The final topic discussed in our evaluation session dealt with parent expectations and evaluations. The teachers clarified several questions for each other. They explained that the reason for asking parents for their expectations was to help us determine what parents were looking for and to help them set realistic expectations. Some teachers offered to share forms that they distributed to parents at the start of the year describing the development characteristics of a child in a certain grade. We agreed that teachers at different grade levels might wish to devise their own letters to hand out at the start of the year. We then noted that teachers should share their expectations with parents and students at open house or on registration day.

After this lengthy discussion of what was not working, I asked the teachers to tell me what was working. They announced that everything else

was. I asked them to write a paragraph telling me what they had learned about the plan during this session. We closed at 3:00.

Reflecting on the Plan During the Second Era

The teachers did make some positive comments about the second evaluation session. In their written summaries of the meeting, several of them said they now had a better understanding of the process itself, and they realized that they were responsible for the success of the plan. For example, a teacher wrote that we needed to do more peer observations, but that teachers needed to take responsibility for that themselves. A second teacher echoed this thought saying she needed to seek out peers to evaluate her, and she needed to evaluate peers for her own learning. Another teacher said she thought of a grid to use with the Hanlon-Green form that would use less paper, organize the results, and show a running evaluation. An upper grade teacher wrote, “What is exciting is that each time we meet we have the opportunity to give input. It is our process as well as Jean’s and even now goes beyond us to the parents and children.” This same teacher concluded, “I want to grow – it is up to me to make it happen.”

These remarks showed me that at least a few of the faculty were beginning to claim our new system for themselves. They realized that it was

their responsibility to make the system work, and that the more effort they gave the system the better the results were for them.

Another set of comments showed that the teachers were making progress in their understanding of the plan, even if they had not yet reached a sense of full ownership. For example, one teacher wrote that the evaluation process was "well on its way to becoming what we want. Changes seemed to be more in the area of fine tuning than in a major overhaul." Several other teachers agreed with this idea. An older faculty member commented that the process was not as tedious as she had expected. She also said, "I think I will use the process with ease next year, and I can benefit from all this. From being overwhelmed, I am relaxed. All this is helping me grow as a teacher." A second year teacher remarked that "it is a good thing to be a part of the process."

Teachers also selected specific areas of the plan that still needed to be improved. Grade-level meetings continued to be a topic of discussion. Teachers remarked that the meetings needed to be scheduled at the beginning of the year, during pre-service days, and regularly during the year. Preschool teachers said that their grade-level meetings were very time consuming but still valuable for them.

Three teachers commented on journaling, noting that they needed to do more of it, perhaps by setting a definite time each day. Two teachers commented that the Hanlon-Green form was a catalyst for their journaling efforts.

One of the most interesting outcomes of the teachers' comments was the insight some of them developed as a result of the process. "This plan needs to be flexible to meet the needs of everyone," one teacher wrote. "Every year is different as different needs arise." Another comment was, "I recognize my fellow teachers as my mentors. I learned again how lucky I am to teach with these people." One teacher noted, "We need to be open to new ways to evaluate ourselves and to work with different people." A teacher new to the staff wrote, "I also learned that everyone doesn't think and perceive things just as I do." Finally, a teacher remarked, "Evaluation should be beneficial, not stressful."

The comments showed me that some of the teachers were growing personally and professionally through the plan. They were experiencing first hand the benefits of the plan, recognizing their own need and desire for growth and their responsibility for it. They were learning things about our school and its inner workings. I realized that adult learners were similar to

student learners in this regard: They learned in various ways, at their own speed, and through what was relevant for them.

Analyzing the Second Evaluation Session

As I thought about the evaluation session later that evening, I realized that I had felt very uncomfortable during most of the meeting. It seemed to me that the teachers were making excuses for things they had not yet done. Even worse, I felt that some of them were blaming me for things that had not worked well. I was annoyed that the very first question was about the suggestion box. I had not placed it in the office yet, but no one else had offered to place it there either.

The teachers seemed to be asking some of the same questions or giving some of the same excuses that they had during our first evaluation session. For example, at that session we realized that we had a problem documenting our meetings. With the new tally sheet, this problem should have been alleviated. However, several teachers still had no documentation of what they had done. Also, at our first evaluation session we had discussed the fact that it was up to individual teachers to schedule peer observations, something all of them said they wished to do. At this session they said they had not scheduled peer observations because they did not want to give up

their planning time. This may be a legitimate reason, but I wished they had brought it up before today so that we could have resolved it.

As I continued to ponder this session, I thought that perhaps timing was a major issue. We met on May 10, two weeks before the close of school. Teachers were tired and stressed, ready for the year to be over. I was also tired and decided that was why I felt so defensive about some of their remarks. I wondered if we would encounter the same difficulties during the next era.

Revising the Plan After the Second Era

As fall 2000 approached, I began to plan for the beginning of the new school year. One of the difficulties I faced was maintaining the momentum of the teacher evaluation and development plan while organizing the other important details of a new school year. In addition to our regular start-up meetings, the faculty and I had agreed, as part of the plan, to add meetings for grade-level planning, for evaluation of the school mission statement, and for mentors and protégés. The in-service committee wanted to schedule meetings to discuss the spelling curriculum and the annual science fair. In addition, I wanted to meet with the teachers as a group to discuss journaling and to set individual goals for the year. Looking at our calendar of workdays,

I realized that it would be difficult to arrange for so many meetings and still provide time for teachers to prepare their rooms.

A Scheduling Dilemma

As I pondered this scheduling dilemma, I began to think about the yearly teacher retreat held on our first workday. I hoped to be able to connect the theme for the retreat to the evaluation and development plan as we had done the previous year. As the beginning of school drew closer, several families decided to withdraw their children. The faculty and I were distressed about this. I decided then that we would use the retreat day to re-examine our goals as a Catholic School and to determine where we were strong and where we could improve. This theme, “Called to Teach in a Catholic School,” fit well with the second year of our new plan. We were going to re-examine our mission statement as part of the plan. Therefore, looking at the values we held as Catholic educators was a natural outgrowth of that examination.

Taking One Step at a Time – Grade Level Meetings

Once the planning for the retreat was underway, I returned to the struggle of how to incorporate all dimensions of the plan into the regular life of the school year. Even though it sounded very simple, I finally decided to focus on one element at a time, making sure one thing was done before moving on to the next. This decision enabled me to move forward. First, I

looked at the workdays, scheduled all of the required meetings, and then found a time for grade level meetings to occur. I tried to be considerate of the teachers' time by scheduling the meetings in the afternoon as they had requested. Because part of our building is not air-conditioned, they wanted to work in their rooms in the mornings while the temperature was still cool. I planned for the grade level meetings to last just one hour, but I left the time at the end of the meeting open so that teachers could continue to meet if they wished.

Interestingly, after I worried so much about scheduling the grade level meetings to be convenient for the teachers, I learned that one group decided to meet at a completely different time. This was puzzling to me because the teachers requested that I schedule the meetings for them. It seemed to me that it would be much easier for them to establish times that were convenient without involving me in the process. I wondered if perhaps the meetings were given weight and value by being scheduled through the office. I remembered the teacher at the second evaluation session saying that if she were not given a topic to discuss at a grade level meeting, she probably would not attend. Did the meetings have validity because I scheduled them and included them in the master calendar? I would consider it a real step

toward ownership for the teachers to plan all of their grade level meetings without my input.

Sharing Responsibility

As we moved toward an evaluation and development system that offered more ownership to the teachers, I found myself engaged in a continuing struggle between performing my duties as an administrator and sharing responsibility with the faculty. For example, instead of worrying with the schedule for workdays myself, I could have delegated it to the in-service committee. However, the task had to be done during the summer, and I was the only employee who worked twelve months of the year. Some of the teachers might have been willing to come in for a day or two in the summer to plan the schedule, but I decided not to impose on them.

I found myself facing similar dilemmas during the school year when I had to decide whether to delegate a task or do it myself. I always tried to analyze the teachers' schedules first to determine if they had time to take on another job. I wanted to provide opportunities for them to share in the running of the school, but I did not want to overwhelm them or prevent them from giving their full attention to the students. Sharing responsibility was an area of continuing growth for me and for the faculty.

More Scheduling Decisions

As I continued to ponder the schedule for teacher workdays, I realized that I should not add any more meetings to it. I wanted the teachers to have plenty of time to talk among themselves, and to prepare their rooms and their lessons before school started. I knew that these workdays were among the most stressful times of the entire year for the teachers. Therefore, I decided to postpone some of the other components of the plan until a week or two after the year began.

When classes had been in session for a week, I finally found time to work on the rest of the scheduling. First, I listed all of the Tuesdays for the entire year. Following a teacher's suggestion from the second evaluation session, I then rotated the meetings to be held each Tuesday, scheduling faculty meetings, grade level meetings, and committee meetings for the entire year. Next, I added our early dismissal in-service days, selecting the one I needed for the final evaluation of the plan. By adding parent conference days and Diocesan in-service days, I had a complete outline for the year. The in-service committee planned the training to be done on our scheduled days.

I used another suggestion from the faculty to help with scheduling the meetings. The previous year the in-service committee and I realized that we had a major conflict with the Liturgy Planning Committee which met every

other Tuesday. I talked with the members of liturgy planning and they agreed to move their meetings to Thursdays. We agreed to rotate attendance at their meetings and decided to release those teachers from any other committee responsibilities. Thus, our Tuesdays were free for faculty meetings and the Liturgy Planning Committee members were not overburdened with duties.

My Fears

When I finished the schedule of meetings and in-service days, I discovered that I was afraid to distribute it to the faculty. I thought about this feeling for a while and finally realized that I didn't like the sense of being tied down that came with the schedule. I liked the sense of freedom that came from not having every date on the calendar filled with a meeting. I feared that once I gave that list of dates to the teachers we would be locked into meeting every Tuesday forever!

Further analysis helped me realize another reason for not wanting to distribute the schedule. I knew that no matter how carefully we planned, we would have to change some of those dates as the year progressed. I did not want to publish a list of dates that would eventually change.

I knew that in fairness to everyone I had to distribute the schedule. The teachers certainly needed to know ahead of time when they were supposed to meet with various groups. I finally typed a footnote on the schedule and then

gave it to the teachers. The footnote said, “All dates subject to change.” It was my last effort at maintaining some degree of control over our busy lives.

Having completed and distributed the in-service schedule, I was then able to organize dates for some of the other meetings relevant to the plan. I scheduled meetings to discuss the mission statement and to re-evaluate our goals. As much as I disliked filling up the calendar, I knew that scheduling the meetings would ensure that they occurred.

Re-evaluating the Goals

Once we successfully initiated the new school year, we returned to our work on the plan. We used our September 5 faculty meeting to re-evaluate our goals. At the end of a short business meeting I invited all teachers to stay for the review process. I was pleased that all teachers who had participated in the program the previous year stayed, along with one new teacher. Two teachers did not remain, one who had not participated the previous year and one who was new to the faculty.

First, the teachers looked at copies of the goals we had established for the plan (see Appendix J). Dividing into groups of two or three they discussed the importance of various goals and whether any changes were needed. As each group presented its work, all other groups were invited to join the discussion. All of the ideas were recorded on a large chart for easy

reference. We met for nearly an hour, making some minor changes in wording. The teachers thought that goals one and eleven could be consolidated because they were so similar. Goal one was “To increase teacher involvement in the evaluation and development plan.” Goal eleven was “To continue to re-evaluate the process.” The teachers said that by evaluating the process every nine weeks we were automatically increasing their involvement in the evaluation and development process. I thought about their ideas carefully but ultimately decided the goals were fundamentally different and that both should remain. The teachers were quite satisfied with the rest of the goals and did not suggest changing or eliminating any more of them.

Re-examining the Mission Statement

Our next step in working with the plan at the beginning of the school year was to analyze our mission statement. The teachers placed this idea in the plan when we first created it. We all agreed that we should do it yearly, and we thought the beginning of the year would be the best time. At a Tuesday faculty meeting we read copies of the statement, discussed it in small groups, and then reported to the entire faculty.

The teachers agreed on many aspects of the statement. However, several teachers thought the wording was weak, especially when we referred

to ourselves as a Catholic school but one that taught Christian values. We agreed that the mission statement needed to sound stronger and more reflective of our Catholic identity. We took notes of all of the comments. Four teachers agreed to meet separately with me to revise the statement based on our discussion

Acting on the Revised Plan in the Third Era

After these preliminary meetings, we were ready to activate our plan for the third time. I was pleased to notice that many components of the plan were working smoothly. Before classes started, the teachers asked for their tally sheets to help them keep track of all of their meetings, observations, and other parts of the plan. This was a vast improvement over the previous year when we had not yet devised a tally sheet. Other teachers requested a copy of the Hanlon-Green form and seemed pleased with the changes I had made in its format. Teachers began to leave note cards with minutes of grade level meetings in my mailbox. This was another improvement over the previous year when teachers said it was too hard to write up minutes of their meetings. So, many aspects of the plan had become part of our daily routine and seemed to be more easily accepted by the faculty.

Experiencing Some Difficulties

One component of the plan that was difficult to initiate early in the year was self-evaluation. The teachers spent a large amount of time at the start of the year helping themselves and their students adjust to each other. They were unwilling to leave their class to observe a peer or to try audio or video taping so early in the year. I decided not to focus on this area of the plan at this time. We had used quite a few alternate methods of teacher assessment by the end of the past year, so I decided to wait until the second nine weeks of school to promote this component of the plan.

I did, however, ask the teachers to send the parent evaluation form home with the students at the end of the first nine weeks. I hoped for full participation in the use of this evaluative method, so I requested that all teachers use it. I thought this would give us valuable information about parental perceptions of teacher performance that we could use during the rest of the year.

Conducting Drop-in Observations

During the first era of the study, I had difficulty executing the drop-in observations. They required far more time than I had imagined, and I had difficulty scheduling them in my day. In the third era I planned my visits to include only one floor at a time, a maximum of four classes. This simplified

the process and gave me a limited number of observations to perform each day. The drop-ins took no more than one hour and the teachers received immediate feedback. I began carrying my observation notebook with me whenever I ventured into the school. Thus, I was always prepared to perform a spontaneous evaluation.

I found the drop-in format especially helpful in the third era for two teachers who had students with behavior problems. I dropped in several times to observe those children and to take notes on their behavior. The notes were very helpful during conferences with parents, counselors, and therapists. The classroom teachers felt supported because I was present in their rooms so frequently, commending them on their work and making positive comments. These two particular teachers became very accustomed to my being in their rooms and told me that they did not worry when I appeared.

Holding Goal Setting Conferences

We started our goal setting conferences immediately after the start of school. It took nearly a month to finish them all because I scheduled only two or three a day. This gave me time to plan ahead for the conferences and to fully focus on each teacher when we met. It also left time during the day for me to handle other school matters. Some teachers were very slow to schedule their conferences, requiring that I "track them down." This hindered my

completion of the process. The next time I scheduled meetings, I posted a list publicly for the teachers to sign. This worked more efficiently; all teachers scheduled a meeting without any reminders from me.

The goal setting conferences were very valuable to me. I found that Sawyer's statement was true: "Teacher participation in goal setting helps teachers become self-reflective practitioners who can adjust their practices when necessary" (Sawyer, 2001). Two different teachers adjusted their teaching style as a result of goal setting. The first, a very experienced teacher, had developed a reputation as a "yeller." I spoke to her about it during the first era of the study and suggested that she try a kinder approach with her children. During the third year, she chose that goal herself before I said anything to her. She also noted that she had experienced success in her efforts to be kinder. She said to me, "You know, it really works. When I am positive with the children, they respond much better to me."

The second, another mature teacher, wanted to simplify her teaching during the third era of the study. She wanted to plan simpler lessons and to communicate ideas more effectively with the students. She said that she had decided this was important because of our conversations and evaluations from the first and second eras. I think that the consistent communication

occurring throughout the year served as a catalyst for change for both of these teachers.

Occasionally, the goal setting conferences revealed some deeper issues. A relatively new teacher in our school appeared rather unhappy during the third era. At our conference she told me she wasn't sure that she wanted to continue to teach. She explained that she was not excited about coming to school or being in the classroom, and she knew this was not fair to her students. She also spoke negatively of the pressure she felt among her grade level peers to "be the best."

I listened to her and then made a few suggestions to help her decide whether or not to continue with teaching. Realizing my responsibility to the children and to this teacher, I made mental notes to speak to her mentor and to her partner teachers to see if they could be more supportive of her. I hoped that, together, we could help her rediscover the joy of teaching. If not, we needed to encourage her to pursue another career. From this conference I realized that I needed to keep a close watch on her, her students, and her parents during the year.

Eliciting Parent Expectations

As I was looking over the evaluation and development plan one morning in the fall, I realized that I had heard very little about the parent

expectation letters we were going to send out. This was a major component of our plan for the third era, and I was curious to see how it was going. At a faculty meeting I asked the teachers about it. Several teachers had sent forms home on the first day asking about hobbies, likes, and dislikes that the children had. Few of these forms actually asked the question: "What do you expect your child to learn this year?" Other teachers had not sent anything home yet.

I reminded them that this was an integral part of our plan, designed to promote communication between parents and teachers. Some teachers asked if the forms *had* to be sent home, and I said, "Yes." I told the teachers who had sent forms that did not ask for expectations to send another form.

I was a bit disturbed by this problem. The teachers did not follow through on a part of the plan that they themselves had created. I wondered if, perhaps, it were a communication problem. They were very busy at the beginning of the year and probably needed a reminder to send the forms home and to include a question about expectations. We had never done this before, so obviously they needed a bit more guidance and encouragement to get it started. This situation reminded me of the tally problem we encountered the previous fall. It was a new concept and we had to iron out all of the kinks to make it work smoothly. Ultimately, the teachers came to

understand what they needed to do and all of them sent the expectation forms home. I realized the need for clear direction from me on what to include in the forms and when to send them.

Requesting Parent Evaluations of Teachers

On a Tuesday afternoon in mid-October, I met with five faculty members to discuss our first set of parent evaluations of classroom teachers. The five teachers had volunteered to distribute parent evaluation forms on conference day. The teachers gave the forms to the parents in person and commented that the parents seemed willing to complete them (see Appendix N). The response rate from the parents varied from twenty percent to seventy-five percent. The teachers and I talked briefly to discern what led to the differences in response rates, but we could find no single reason.

Because the forms were returned directly to the office, the teachers had no way of knowing the rate of response. They suggested that I give them feedback after a week so that they could remind the students to bring the forms back. The anonymous nature of the survey made it impossible to pinpoint those who had completed it. We agreed that we needed to encourage the students and parents to return the form to ensure a better response in the future.

The teachers had a few comments about the results. The ones who had received responses from only three or four parents did not feel that the survey was very meaningful. The teachers who had larger response rates were more interested in the results. After the meeting the teacher who received the most responses said she was thrilled by her results. This was the first year in her current grade, and all of the parents commented on what a fine job she was doing.

Two of the five teachers who used the parent evaluation form were teaching new grade levels this year. They received the highest response rates from their parents. Our parents were very cautious about these new teachers and tended to watch them carefully. This might explain why they received more responses than their peers. The other teachers had worked in their grades for several years and were generally well regarded by parents. Therefore, the parents might have felt less need to evaluate them.

Later in the year, one of the new teachers repeated the parent survey to see if any changes had occurred in their perceptions. Once again I collected the responses. At the end of one week, I reported to the teacher the number of responses I had received and asked him to remind the parents to complete them. He received one more response after this reminder. Forty-five percent of the parents in his room repeated the survey. Even though the participation

in this evaluation method was not extremely high, I still thought that it gave valuable feedback to the teacher and provided a means of communication for the parents who chose to use it.

Observing the Consequences of the Plan During the Third Era

We held our third and final evaluation session of the entire plan on Oct. 31. Once again this was an early dismissal day, so the teachers and I were able to start working at 1:00 p.m. Twenty teachers were present for this session; only one who had been involved in the plan from the beginning did not stay.

I began the meeting by distributing a copy of the goals we had revised in September. Only one change was suggested; that we remove the phrase “in advance” from our goal of planning meaningful in-service activities. The teachers said the word was not necessary because our in-service planning was always done in advance. The faculty agreed to this change and it was noted.

I then asked the faculty to divide into groups composed of teachers from different grade levels and special areas. I asked each group to study one particular section of the plan and to answer the now familiar questions: “What is working?” “What is not working?” and “What needs to be changed?” After fifteen minutes the teachers reported their results to the

entire group. Teachers from all groups were asked for their input. Two recorders wrote down all of the thoughts, one on large chart paper and another in a notebook. Active discussion and dialogue ensued.

The teachers were in agreement that most components of the plan were working. They said the new dimension of discussing and evaluating the school's mission statement and philosophy was very beneficial. They felt that it helped them focus more clearly on their own goals for the year. They noted that grade level meetings were working better than before, as were mentor and protégé meetings. They also said the parent expectation letters had been helpful to them as they learned more about their students. Both the teacher evaluation and the development process were considered to be working.

Parts of the Plan That Needed Change

The teachers suggested some changes in each area of the plan. A recurrent theme was the timing and scheduling of various meetings. For example, teachers said that finding time to schedule pre and post conferences for formal observations was often stressful to them. They recommended starting the formal evaluation process earlier in the year to reduce the time pressure that they felt.

They also said that it was difficult to schedule grade level meetings during the pre-service workdays. They had asked for the meetings to be held

at the end of the day so that they could work in their rooms in the cool morning hours. However, they said that by the end of the day they were too tired to meet. They suggested that when grade level meetings occurred on Tuesdays following faculty meetings, we could save time by writing out announcements and distributing them at the start of the faculty meeting.

In the area of the mentor and protégé program, the teachers thought that faculty members who were changing grade levels did not need to be included in the program. This comment came from a mentor and protégé team who didn't want to participate in the program during the third era. The protégé had moved to a higher grade level and thought that she could handle the change independently. I placed her in the program for two reasons. First, I wanted to ensure that she had time to communicate with her new grade level partner. Second, I wanted her to learn to develop better techniques for communication with the parents and faculty. Our mentor and protégé plan stated that a teacher could be a protégé for more than one year at the principal's discretion. I thought this teacher needed another year. I should have communicated my thoughts to her more clearly.

The teachers said the parent expectation letters were very helpful to them. However, they said that it would be easier to send the letters home during the first week of school rather than handing them out on registration

day as our plan recommended. They wanted to add a section on student likes and dislikes and suggested that perhaps a uniform letter to all parents would be better than several different ones.

The teachers thought that the process of teacher evaluation was working, but once again they expressed difficulty with drop-in observations and peer evaluations. The problem with drop-in observations arose from the form I used (see Appendix O). The last part of the form said, "I had a question about," followed by a blank line. The teachers said they did not know how to respond to the questions. Were they supposed to schedule a conference, write an answer, or just respond verbally? I explained that they could do any of those things. The drop-in visit was not a formal observation, so they could answer the question as quickly and easily as possible. They did not have to schedule a formal meeting to talk about it.

The teachers voiced the standard complaint about peer observations, saying it was very difficult to schedule them. During the third era I had offered to provide release time for teachers who wished to engage in peer observations. No one took advantage of the opportunity. Teachers involved in the mentor and protégé program observed each other during the year, but few other teachers did so. I was never fully satisfied with our use of peer observations during the study.

In the area of development, the teachers thought it would be beneficial to discuss the ideas that had been placed in the suggestion box. The suggestion box was established for teachers to submit their ideas for in-service. The faculty wanted to discuss those ideas as a group during our faculty meetings.

Reflecting on the Plan During the Third Era

As a final part of our evaluation of the plan, I asked the teachers to compare the plan itself to the goals we had established for it. To facilitate this process, I gave each group a worksheet (see Appendix P). I assigned one or two goals to each group, asked them to write the specific goal on the worksheet, and then consider each section of the plan. I wanted to know if the plan was helping us meet the goals we had established.

After thirty minutes, each group reported back to the entire faculty. All faculty members were invited to comment on the small group reports. During this dialogue the teachers agreed that all goals were being met through the plan. However, they had mixed opinions as to how thoroughly the goals were met and which components best enabled us to meet them.

The teachers said that seven of the eleven goals were met through most dimensions of the plan. They were: increasing teacher involvement, developing a more authentic process, strengthening communication within

the school community, developing a stronger mentor and protégé program, reducing stress in evaluation, simplifying the process, and re-evaluating the process.

The teachers then said that four of the goals were partially met through the plan. They said the goal of strengthening grade area communication and planning was met only through grade level meetings and was not seen to be consistent throughout the school. The reporting group stated that only one section of the plan met this goal, the section that called for monthly grade level meetings.

Teachers then said that the goal of stimulating growth and change for the better was met only as teachers volunteered to help each other or when they wanted “just to be nice.” This was a surprising conclusion for most of the other faculty members who said they thought growth and change was occurring throughout the school on a regular basis. Upon further discussion, the faculty decided that the difficulty in meeting this goal occurred with our measurement system. We were only measuring growth and change through articles read and discussed or conferences attended. While some teachers were sharing ideas learned from articles or conferences, they were not sharing on a faculty wide, regular basis. The teachers thought that much

growth and learning was occurring within the faculty, but that it was not measured by the criteria we had established.

The goal of collaborating with other teachers and sharing successful teaching techniques received mixed reviews from the faculty. The reporting group said that collaboration occurred during the beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year meetings when teachers discussed mission, goals, and philosophy. Collaboration also was thought to occur during mentor and protégé meetings and through peer observations, faculty meetings, and grade level meetings. Teachers felt that this goal was not met through other components of the plan.

The teachers said that planning meaningful in-service activities was met only through the development section of the plan. Teachers said this goal could be met through other parts of the plan, but this had not yet happened. They thought that development could occur through the mentor and protégé program, through faculty meetings, and through the use of varied methods of evaluation. However, they said that at this time development was not occurring as fully as we had expected.

Analyzing the Third Evaluation Session

I found the discussion at this evaluation session very thought provoking. Several times a small group would make a statement saying that a

certain goal had not been met. The rest of the faculty would respond with silence. At least three times faculty members looked at me, as if expecting me to speak up to clarify a statement or to give a different opinion. It was clear to me that they did not wholly agree with the statement made by the presenting committee.

I chose not to make any statements. I did not want to sway the responses of the small groups, and I wanted to see if the teachers would take enough ownership to speak up when they did not agree with a specific committee's remarks. Finally, one or two teachers disagreed with a small group report. In one instance the small group defended themselves rather forcefully and the responding teacher ceased speaking. In another instance the teachers actually asked me if I agreed with the statement. I declined to give an opinion. When the meeting adjourned I felt that the group was frustrated because they did not all agree with what the smaller committees had reported. However, they were not willing to speak out to say what they truly thought.

Thinking About Leadership Style

I continued to think about this meeting during the next few days. As I recalled what the teachers said or did not say, I found that I was actually analyzing my own leadership style. I was asking myself, "Should I have

stepped in and answered their questions?" Or, "Did I do the right thing by letting them deal with the problems by themselves?" I realized that this project was forcing me to think about my style of leadership.

I believe in a very collegial style. I usually consult with teachers, parents, board members, or the pastor before making any decisions of importance. Through this consultation I am able to listen to others' viewpoints while I express and clarify my own. I find this input valuable, as I become aware of many different facets of an issue.

In my analysis of the meeting, however, I realized that sometimes I was so willing to hear others' ideas and to include others in decision making that I was in danger of losing the focus of what I was trying to accomplish. In the faculty discussion of goals for the study, several comments were made by teachers with which I disagreed. Obviously other teachers disagreed as well because they looked to me for reinforcement of their ideas. However, I was so determined to let the plan work and to encourage the faculty to think for themselves, that I did not respond. I wondered if I should have taken a more definite stand after the faculty had finished their discussion. I began to realize that even a collegial leader must sometimes step forward and challenge the "followers."

Summary

By the end of the third era, we had tried every aspect of the plan. We had composed the plan, used it, and revised it three times. We had overcome many problems, but still had areas that did not work satisfactorily. We had become comfortable with the action research process and were able to use it effectively to make needed changes. We had grown and changed as a faculty.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAKING SENSE OF THE STUDY

After the faculty and I had worked on the teacher evaluation and development plan for three eras, the equivalent of one full school year, I was ready to analyze both the plan and the action research process. We had discussed the teachers' goals for the plan at each of the three evaluation sessions. Now it was time for me to analyze the goals that I set at the beginning of the study.

Meeting My Goals for the Study

I established three overriding goals at the beginning of this project. One was to develop an approach to measuring and recording teacher growth through a new evaluation and development process. Another goal was to transform the traditional cycle of teacher evaluation into a continuous process of teacher development. A third goal was to provide an empowering opportunity for teachers to become reflective practitioners, capable of critiquing and improving their own performance. I achieved various degrees of success in meeting these goals.

Measuring and Recording Teacher Growth

When the study began, I believed that the goal of measuring and recording teacher growth would be relatively easy to reach. I had a few ideas

of my own on how to measure growth and I thought that the teachers would help me develop some more. I remembered the difficulty we encountered as we tried to decide how to measure such abstract concepts as authenticity, collaboration, and stress. We finally agreed that we could use some quantitative measures to determine growth in qualitative areas. For example, we could count the various types of evaluation used, we could analyze minutes of grade level meetings to determine how much and what type of communication was occurring, we could list new ideas we tried, and we could use surveys to determine changes in stress. We listed various ways of measuring growth and change for each goal (see Appendix J). Even though the teachers initially expressed some uncertainty about measurement, we decided to move ahead with the study.

Problems with Measurement

At the beginning of the first era, I provided all of the teachers with notebooks and asked them to keep a record of the various things they did that were part of evaluation. I expected them to document their grade level meetings, to journal, to count the new ideas they tried. I expected them to record every thing they did regarding evaluation or development. When we met for our first evaluation of the plan, I was surprised to learn that very few teachers had documented anything.

Tally Sheets

Many items were supposed to have been counted, including meetings with peers and administrators, drop-in observations, grade-level meetings, conferences, and in-services. The teachers had not done this. After much discussion, we agreed that some type of tally sheet was needed to help us keep an accurate record of our actions.

I devised a simple tally sheet, distributed it to the teachers, and believed our problem was solved. When I began to compile the results of the tally sheets at the end of the study, I discovered some difficulties. Not everyone recorded the data accurately. For instance, the director of the preschool counted more grade level meetings than her teachers. I knew the director's number was accurate because the preschool team met every week.

As I continued to compile data from the tally sheets, I encountered more discrepancies. For example, I kept records of all of the grade level meetings and knew how many had been scheduled. Few of the teachers had the same number as I did. Even accounting for teacher absences, I realized that the tally system was flawed. The teachers had not kept accurate records and the sheets were of no use as a method of measurement.

Minutes of Grade Level Meetings

A second way that we had planned to record teacher growth during the study was to analyze the minutes of the grade level meetings to determine what was discussed. If new ideas were brought out and subsequently tried, we would have evidence that the plan was working. Again, I encountered flaws in the process. During the first era the teachers did not meet frequently. I only received minutes from one grade level meeting.

During the second era the teachers met a few more times and some of them turned in minutes of their discussions. At the evaluation session they complained that writing up minutes was time-consuming and difficult. Finally, in the third era, the teachers began to meet regularly and to turn in minutes on note cards provided for them in the office. This system worked well and I began to receive much data about the meetings (see Appendix S).

Once again I was surprised at the difference between my expectations of the plan and reality. I had hoped that as teachers were given time to meet and discuss their work, they would eventually suggest topics for in-service as a way to improve their practice. The note cards showed that the teachers talked of class management, scheduling, and instruction. They shared ideas with one another, but they never suggested holding an in-service on the topic

to garner ideas from another source. Only one group actually planned to attend a national conference on early childhood education. The note cards clearly documented teacher communication, but they did not serve as a measure of formal development as I had hoped.

Journaling

At the beginning of the study I thought that teacher journals would be a major source of information regarding teacher growth. I naively thought that teachers would journal daily, submit them to me for perusal, and share their thoughts with the entire faculty. None of these things happened. First, very few teachers journaled at all. They said it was too hard, that it took too much time, and that they did not want to do it. Second, the few teachers who did journal wanted to keep their thoughts private. I had to change my plan and assure them that I would not read their entries. They could share their thoughts orally with the faculty if they chose to do so. Journaling did not prove to be a successful method of measuring teacher growth.

Suggestion Box

Another method of measurement we tried was counting the number of ideas placed in the suggestion box. This was another idea that failed to work as planned. Neither the teachers nor I placed a suggestion box in the office until the end of the second era. By the end of the study, only three

suggestions had been made and two of those dealt with maintenance issues, not development.

The one relevant suggestion, placed in box during the winter of 2000, dealt with in-service. This idea requested a change in the scheduling of in-service days during the year. The teachers wanted to schedule early dismissal days before each reporting period so that they would have time to work on report cards at school. The dilemma was that we used those early dismissal days to meet our required in-service days for the year. Changing them to work days meant we had to schedule in-service at other times. When some teachers suggested adding extra in-service days to the beginning and end of the school year, they encountered problems with the rest of the faculty. The faculty members found themselves sharply divided on this issue and discussed it animatedly both in and out of faculty meetings.

As emotions heightened, I recalled McKernan's (1996) words, that one of the results of the action research process was its empowering effect on teachers. He noted that teachers who began to question practices in their classrooms would soon generalize the process to question the inner workings of the school. He felt that the experience could be liberating to teachers. I think his words came to fruition as the teachers tried to change our process of scheduling in-service days. I think the episode could be considered a measure

of teacher growth because the teachers showed initiative in bringing a controversial idea to the faculty for discussion. However, one development idea in two years was far less than I had imagined when our study began.

Successes With Measurement

Interestingly, we were successful in measuring teacher growth in ways we had not expected. Written feedback from teachers was extremely informative. Their responses to parent and student evaluations and to video and audio taping provided clear information about their professional growth. Faculty evaluation sessions for the plan along with pre and post observation conferences also gave facts regarding teacher change.

Teacher Documentation

As teachers began to use various methods of self-evaluation, I asked them to give me written feedback on what they had learned. These documents proved to be an excellent source of information regarding teacher growth and change. For example, a teacher who used parent evaluations found that she was rated lowest in class instruction. She wrote, “I rated fairly well here, but it is clearly the area I need to work on.” She wrote of her struggle to balance her belief in the importance of homework with the parents’ concern that she gave too much. She concluded saying, “I know what my goals are for next year.”

Another teacher wrote of her insights while listening to the audio-tape of her class. She said, “I realized that I called on the boys much more than the girls, about a ratio of 4 to 1.” Another teacher noticed an “edge” in her voice when she listened to the tape. Since then, she said, “I have tried very hard to watch the tone of my voice …. so as not to hurt anyone’s feelings.”

This written feedback from the teachers was a good measure of their personal growth and change. The teachers explained in their own words the positive impact of each type of evaluation and the areas where they needed to improve. In retrospect, I realized that this was the type of feedback I had hoped to elicit from journals. The teachers actually provided it, but in a different form than I expected.

Evaluation Sessions for the Plan

Another measure of teacher growth came from the evaluation sessions for the plan. The actual comments made by the teachers during the evaluation process were recorded in small groups or on chart paper. At the end of the meetings the teachers wrote down what they had learned during the session. At the end of the first and second evaluation sessions, teachers wrote that they needed to become more involved in the process; that they needed to try more methods of evaluation and to document them more clearly. These comments indicated a lack of growth and involvement early in the plan.

During the third session the comments showed that growth had occurred as the teachers discussed the various methods they had used. Teachers had used parent, student, self, and peer evaluations. They had audio taped and video taped themselves. Some had engaged in peer observations. They were holding grade level meetings regularly. Even though they discussed the many difficulties involved in these activities, they had clearly tried them and learned from them. The notes from their discussions were a good measure of their growth.

Conferences With the Principal

As the teachers and I met for goal setting and pre and post evaluation conferences, I discovered another means of measuring growth. The individual conversations dealing with each teacher's goals and progress toward meeting them was a rich source of data regarding growth and change. For example, a first year teacher's goal was to become more organized in her planning. At the end of the year she felt that she had accomplished her goal. She cited better lesson planning, preparing materials ahead of time, keeping her desk neater, and being able to find things more easily as evidence of her success. An experienced teacher set a goal of helping two new students adapt successfully to the classroom. She spoke of friendships made, of the

students' "happier" demeanor, and of improved grades as proof that her goal was met.

Small Group Meetings

I held meetings with small groups of teachers who were involved in the mentor and protégé program and with the creation of the Hanlon-Green form. We talked about how the programs were working and whether or not they had promoted teacher growth. In both meetings the teachers discussed problems and successes with the programs. Then they talked about what they had learned from their involvement in them. Protégés frequently spoke of the value of teaming with an experienced teacher who could tell them how to handle everyday situations or difficult problems. All of the protégés said they had grown by working with their mentors.

Teachers who used the Hanlon-Green form said the process of reflecting on their schoolwork forced them to analyze their practice. They frequently focused on problem areas and tried to discover what led to the problem and how they could prevent it the following week. The teachers said that the Hanlon-Green form helped them grow and improve.

Teacher Interviews

The best source of data regarding growth and change during the study came from individual teacher interviews held at the end of the third era.

Although this method harbored the possibility of teachers being intimidated by the administration, the results seemed to reflect open and honest communication (see Table Q1, Appendix Q). In these interviews the teachers talked about their growth, about new methods they had tried and new ideas they had discussed. They also talked about their fears and frustrations, their doubts, and their lack of growth in certain areas.

When I asked the teachers if the study had stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty, fifteen responded, "Yes," and three answered, "Maybe." Two teachers said they did not know if growth had occurred. The teachers who thought growth and change had happened mentioned many ways in which they had grown through the plan. They included: new methods of evaluation; more time scheduled for teachers to meet with one another; and increased accountability based, in part, on their input into the plan. The teachers also mentioned an increased awareness of the purpose of evaluation as a source of growth and change. Several of them came to realize that our evaluation system was designed to foster their personal growth and development.

The teachers who did not experience growth or change through the plan were very specific in their reasoning. One had started at St. Anne's the same year we initiated the plan. She said she had no way of telling if we had

changed and grown as a faculty because she had no basis for comparison. She only knew us after the study began. The second teacher was new to the school in the second year of the study and therefore could not make an accurate statement about our growth and change. The first teacher did say that she heard faculty members talking more about grade level meetings and about their need for better communication as the study progressed. The second teacher noted that faculty members were very willing to talk with her and to share ideas. She attributed this to the fact that everyone was using tally sheets and therefore wanted to communicate with other faculty members.

Final Thoughts on Measurement of Growth and Change

In conclusion, I found that measuring teacher growth was a very elusive task. Counting the number of meetings attended, articles read, or evaluation forms used did not, necessarily, validate teacher growth. A teacher might attend every grade level meeting held during a year but never try a new idea. Her attendance clearly did not promote her growth.

I found a more effective way to measure teacher growth through some of the messier, qualitative methods, such as teacher interviews and individual written feedback. These methods gave teachers a chance to talk about their practice. While they were not as definitive as a quantitative count, I think

they provided a very realistic picture of what actually happened in a teacher's mind.

Transforming Teacher Evaluation

My second goal in this study was to transform the traditional cycle of teacher evaluation into a continuous process of teacher development. The teachers and I found the action research process to be a very important factor as we worked toward this goal. The very nature of the process forced us to constantly evaluate and revise our evaluation and development system. The faculty and I achieved mixed results in this section of the plan.

My Vision of Teacher Development

When setting the goal, I expected teachers to use both traditional and new methods of evaluation to identify areas in which they needed to grow and improve. I hoped that they would seek ideas for improvement by reading educational literature or attending professional conferences. Then, I imagined the teachers using the concepts gained through those experiences to fill our suggestion box with ideas for in-services beneficial to the entire faculty. In my vision, those formal in-services would become the heart of teacher development in our school.

Disappointments with Development

I was disappointed when I began to analyze this part of the plan. Looking over the tally sheets and transcripts of teacher interviews, I found little evidence that teachers were reading more professional journals or attending more conferences. Six teachers said their reading of journals had increased during the study, but fourteen said they experienced no change. Four of the six who had increased their reading did so because they were enrolled in graduate programs and were required to read for their courses, not because of the plan. Only two teachers said their reading of professional material increased because of the new system of development. Five teachers reported an increase in attendance at professional conferences during the study, but fifteen teachers reported no increase.

Related to the minimal reading of educational journals and attending conferences was the very limited use of current research to help solve classroom problems. Only one teacher reported using a new technique, discovered in an educational journal, with her students. This teacher began to use some emergent writing techniques with her young students based on a study she read. The teacher was involved in graduate work at the time.

The biggest disappointment for me was the failure of the plan in promoting formal in-services for the faculty. I had hoped that the increase in

reading and conferencing would lead naturally to a multitude of timely ideas for in-service. Instead, teachers placed only one in-service idea in the suggestion box during the six months that it remained in the office. This idea dealt with the scheduling of in-services, not with a particular topic the teachers wished to study. Development certainly did not occur as I had envisioned when the study began.

Successes with Development

During the third era of the plan, we planned several in-services. They dealt with school safety and our emergency plan, the use of the media center, and current trends in medication used to treat children with learning and behavior problems. Another in-service day was used to discuss the adoption of new textbooks. Two of these in-services were based on suggestions given to the in-service committee by faculty members; they did not go through the suggestion box.

In the concluding interviews, I asked the teachers if they thought in-service had changed during our study. I was surprised when fifteen teachers said they believed that in-services had become more meaningful. They explained their reasons, saying they felt that better communication among the faculty led to more discussion of their needs and a greater awareness by the in-service committee of what to plan. They said the in-services that had been

presented in the third era seemed more worthwhile, more concrete, more helpful, and more effective than previous ones. They felt the in-services were worth the teachers' time.

The teachers also said that they felt a new sense of ownership in the area of in-service. One teacher noted that the entire faculty was now responsible for in-service, while another teacher said there was more effort put into the planning of in-services.

Only three teachers were uncertain about whether or not in-services had improved. Two teachers said there was no change in in-services before and after the plan was activated. Those two teachers had definite opinions about in-services. One said that the in-services we had did not focus on teaching. Another said the effectiveness of the in-services depended on the quality of the presenter and the attitude of the listener. This teacher was not happy with an in-service done in-house and felt the presenter was not well prepared.

Redefining Development

In analyzing this aspect of the plan, I realized that development had increased during the study, but not in the way I had imagined. In setting up the plan, I thought of development in a narrow, formal sense, including reading articles, attending conferences, and planning in-service opportunities.

I did not foresee the amount of development that occurred informally. For example, development occurred when a mentor shared an effective technique with a protégé, even if the mentor did not quote the latest educational research. Development occurred when two teachers shared an idea for in-service at lunch and presented it to a member of the committee at recess. The idea did not flow through the suggestion box, but it was presented to the appropriate committee members for action.

Increased Communication

The main reason for this informal development was an increase in communication throughout the school. As the study progressed, teachers communicated more often and more freely with each other and with parents. In the concluding interviews, sixteen teachers said that communication within the school community had increased during the study. The teachers said communication with parents was better due to the use of parent expectation letters, newsletters, and parent evaluations. One teacher said there was a new emphasis in the school on conveying information to parents, especially about specific units of study. A second teacher confirmed this remark, adding, “We’ve become more aware of the importance of… parent communication and we’ve been given different ways to make that happen.”

The teachers also commented on the increase in communication among faculty and between faculty and administration. They listed many sources of improved communication, including peer observations, the mentor and protégé program, additional memos from the office, and grade level meetings. The Hanlon-Green form and tally sheets were also mentioned as catalysts for increased communication.

Five teachers specifically mentioned grade level meetings as sources of increased communication. One teacher said, “The biggest change I’ve noticed… has been in the grade level meetings.” This teacher mentioned listening to other faculty members talking about the helpfulness of the meetings in reducing feelings of isolation. She concluded, “I just couldn’t do without” sharing ideas with her mentor. Another teacher added, “I think we are much, much more aware that we are a team. I think we talk more. I think we are more open with each other. I see a kinder, gentler approach with one another, more compassionate.”

Topics Discussed at Grade Level Meetings

The minutes of grade level meetings re-enforced the idea that development was occurring and increasing (see Tables S1-S3, Appendix S). During the first era only six grade level meetings were documented. While no ideas for in-service came from these meetings, the teachers did help each

other in areas of student discipline, parent communication, and improvements for seasonal activities for the following year.

In the second era, fifteen meetings were documented. During these meetings the preschool teachers made plans to attend a national conference for in-service. Other teachers discussed curricular topics, such as selecting a new math series, integrating art further into the curriculum, selecting speakers to visit the school, acquiring new textbooks, and adjusting schedules to ensure maximum learning.

During the third era, fifty-one meetings were documented. No formal in-service topics were discussed, but many new ideas were shared. Teachers continued to talk about curriculum issues, including math, health, handwriting, reading, religion, phonics, and computers. They began to delve into administrative topics, debating scheduling ideas, new report cards, handbook changes, and sharing duties.

An outgrowth of these discussions was an increase in teacher activity in various areas. Some teachers devised new schedules for their classes and brought them to me for review. The kindergarten teachers produced a rough copy of a revised report card they hoped to use. The preschool teachers submitted an addendum to the parent handbook. All of these ideas sprang from grade level meetings and were clear evidence of increased development

among the faculty. As one teacher said in the concluding interview, “I think the plan promotes [communication] by saying, ‘We want you to get together, we want you to share, and plan, and work things out’. ” This increase in communication clearly led to a parallel increase in informal development.

Creating a Continuous Cycle of Evaluation and Development

Clearly, development became part of a continuous cycle as teachers communicated with each other regularly during the year at scheduled meetings. Teacher evaluation became a yearlong process instead of an isolated event. In the beginning of the school year teachers set goals and sent out parent expectation letters. After the first nine weeks they asked parents for a written evaluation and discussed the results with me. In the winter we scheduled formal observations, complete with pre and post conferences. Following the formal observation, teachers selected a second evaluative method to use. In the spring they met with me for a final conference, discussing strengths and areas of improvements and setting tentative goals for the following year. Throughout the year various teachers used other evaluative tools, including the Hanlon-Green form, journaling, peer and student observations, and drop-in observations. So, evaluation did change from a one-time per-year event to a continuous cycle.

Analyzing the Action Research Process

We were very successful in using the action research process. Throughout the study we followed McKernan's (1996) simple model as we planned, acted, observed, and reflected.

We planned at the very beginning of the study, spending several faculty meetings thinking about the changes we would like to make in our existent teacher evaluation plan. We spent additional meetings discussing various components of a new plan and then putting them all together.

After several weeks, we acted, putting the plan into effect. Our first attempts were not very successful, as we discovered when we met for the first time to evaluate the effects of our plan. We learned that in spite of our well-thought-out plan, we had not integrated many of its components into our lives as a school faculty. We then reflected on our inaction, analyzing our lack of success in implementing the plan. Citing confusion and misunderstanding, we revised our plan and began the process again.

The confusion and misunderstanding were actually a predictable outcome in our first evaluation session. In creating a new plan for evaluation and development, we were attempting to change a major component in our school. Experts in the study of change say that it is normal for uncertainty to increase as old structures break down to make way for new ones (Fullan,

1993). In fact, Fullan quoted another change expert, Rosenholtz who wrote: “Creative breakthroughs are always proceeded by periods of cloudy thinking, confusion, exploration, trial and stress” (as cited in Fullan, 1993).

The action research process was very well suited for this project because it allowed for constant revision during the entire study. There was no set answer or solution for our plan, rather, it was a process of growth and change. We repeated the action research process two more times during our study. Each time we followed the same procedure, and each time we recognized parts of the plan that needed revision.

The action research process worked for us in two ways. First, it kept the plan in front of us at all times and made us aware of the fact that we were going to be reflecting on it at regular intervals. Second, it gave us a sense of ownership, because we knew we could make any changes to the plan that we felt were necessary. We were the researchers and the plan was ours to modify as we wished. True to its name, the action research process kept us actively involved in the duration of the study.

Measuring Our Progress

To verify our success with the process, I designed a survey to show if changes occurred in our evaluation system due to the plan. At the beginning of the study the teachers listed both strengths and problems in the original

evaluation system at St. Anne's. Using their words and ideas, I created a survey to verify their opinions. I distributed the survey to the faculty in the fall of 1999. In the winter of 2001 I distributed a revised survey to see if teachers' perceptions of the strengths or problems had changed during the study (see Appendix D).

The survey was divided into six main topics. The first three, considered to be areas of strength, included Teacher Input, Teacher Consideration, and Conferencing. The second three, considered to be problems, included Timing, Scheduling, and Authenticity. The comparison of the two surveys yielded some interesting results. Nearly all areas of strength in the original survey were still considered strengths in the second survey. The greatest change was in the category of Teacher Input, where eight more teachers strongly agreed that teacher input was a strength of the new system than of the original system. Also, five more teachers strongly agreed that teacher accountability was a strength of the new system rather than of the original system.

These changes were reflected in the concluding teacher interviews when teachers said that the plan encouraged them to take more responsibility for evaluation and for their own professional growth. Teachers said that

evaluation was more "self-created" and was a tool for their growth and development in the new system.

In the section of the survey titled Teacher Consideration, the largest change was in recognizing the plan as a teacher-centered process. Five additional teachers in the second survey said this was a strength of the new system. Three more teachers said using formal observations was a strength of the new system. In the Conferencing section of the survey, the largest changes were in one-on-one time with the principal and enlightening results. In each area three more teachers said these were strengths of the new system than of the original system (see Table T1, Appendix T). In the concluding interviews, a teacher noted that talking about her teaching during conferences with the principal helped her change.

The section of the survey dealing with problems in the evaluation system showed a greater change between the original plan and the revised plan. Fewer faculty members thought the original problem areas were still problems in the second survey. The most dramatic changes were in the areas of authenticity and scheduling. Sixteen teachers in the second survey said that evaluation was a realistic representation of their teaching, compared to four teachers in the first survey. One reason for this increase was the varied methods of evaluation used in the revised system. Twenty teachers in the

second survey said that evaluation from outside sources, especially parents, was not a problem in the new system. Only six teachers thought outside evaluation was not a problem in the first survey. Teachers also said that scheduling observations was less of a problem in the new system, and fewer teachers felt that observation was just “one more thing to do.”

The data from the survey indicated that the strengths of the original plan remained strengths at the end of the study. However, many of the problems in the original system were no longer seen as problems when the study concluded. This survey provided an additional measure of the changes brought about through the action research process and our new evaluation and development plan.

Mixed Results

In working with the teachers to transform the traditional system of teacher evaluation into a continuous process of evaluation and development I achieved mixed results. By the end of the study, evaluation was occurring steadily throughout the year as teachers used varied methods of critique. The development component, however, was harder to measure. I did not reach my imagined goal of creating an on-going, formal system of development flowing from teacher dialogue, through the suggestion box, to the in-service

committee. However, I did help the faculty increase their informal development opportunities by providing time for increased communication.

In the concluding interviews, several teachers commented on their professional growth as a result of the study. Two of the teachers who began a graduate program said they did so because of their work together as mentor and protégé and their discussions at grade level meetings. The preschool faculty agreed to attend a national conference in Atlanta as a result of the study. Another teacher noted that she returned to a regional educational conference because of the plan. Although these results involved fewer teachers than I had hoped, they were still very positive.

An Empowering Opportunity for Teachers

My primary goal for the evaluation and development plan was to provide an empowering opportunity for teachers to become reflective practitioners, capable of critiquing and improving their own performance. In the concluding teacher interviews, eighteen of the twenty teachers involved in the study said they had reflected on their teaching as a result of the plan. The faculty and I were very successful in achieving this goal.

Several different components of the plan helped increase teacher reflection. These components included traditional evaluative methods, such as goal setting, formal observations, and pre and post conferences; methods

involving other people, such as student, parent, and peer observations; and methods of self-evaluation, including journaling, the Hanlon-Green form, audio and video taping. Grade level meetings, the mentor and protégé program, and drop-in observations also promoted teacher reflection.

Types of Evaluation

Although a traditional method of evaluation, formal observations were a source of reflection for some teachers. One teacher said that she referred to her copies of formal evaluations from year to year to see where she had improved and where she still needed to grow. Other teachers noted that the goal setting and pre and post conferences related to formal observations caused them to think about their teaching.

Evaluations by people other than the administrator were a major source of reflection for the faculty. Teachers cited evaluations by parents, students, and peers as sources of growth. In the concluding interviews, five teachers said they had used student evaluations, 13 had used peer evaluations, and 15 had used parent evaluations.

Student Evaluations

The teachers were less willing to ask students to evaluate them than parents or peers, believing that the results would not be accurate. In fact, the student evaluation form we used was most appropriate for older students. I

found that second and third graders struggled with the form; fourth graders were the youngest group that could use it effectively.

The five teachers who chose to be evaluated by their students learned a great deal. One teacher was initially upset by the results when the children said they did not want her to visit them at home. The students also said they did not like the appearance of their room. The teacher decided to talk with them about the results of the evaluation. In that conversation she learned that they had misinterpreted the question about visiting their home, believing it would be because of their poor behavior. She also discovered that they did not like having their work displayed in the classroom, a practice that she had used for years.

Because of the student evaluation and her subsequent conversation with them, this teacher changed her method of displaying student work. She also began to take more notice of her students' needs. She said in the concluding interview that the evaluation plan "has made me think about a lot more than I would ever have thought about. It has made me re-evaluate myself."

A first year teacher felt affirmed by the student evaluations. The children in his class gave him average to high marks for the way he dealt with them personally and for the way he encouraged them to participate in

class. He admitted to being surprised by the higher-than-expected marks and commented: “I generally ‘ranked’ in the middle of the pack (of his peers) This is a great position to be in for two reasons. First, I will try harder to be in the top position, Second, the peer group is made up of some of the world’s best teachers, not a bad place to be.”

This teacher received low marks from the students when they were asked if they felt comfortable asking him for help. In reflecting on those scores, he wrote: “I am discouraged about these results and realize that I must work on this, which is a good thing.” Both the praise and the criticism motivated this teacher to think about his work.

Student evaluations even had an impact on teachers who did not use them. Several teachers said they became much more aware of how the students perceived them through the discussion of student evaluations with other faculty members. These teachers realized that students were “evaluating” them everyday, whether or not a form was used.

Peer Evaluations

Peer observations were also catalysts for reflection by the teachers. Eight teachers used the peer observation method, some as part of the mentor and protégé program and others independently.

One of these teachers remarked that she was more comfortable inviting peers into her room because she knew that everyone was involved in peer observations, not just her. She said she was using the feedback provided by other teachers to help her grow and change. A second teacher said that peer observation was very helpful to her when she moved to a new grade level. She observed her grade level partner and learned that many of the techniques she had used with younger children were not going to work with an older age group. She said, “I had to change how I talked to the children and the way I presented things.”

Parent Evaluation

Parent evaluations were another new form of evaluation for the faculty. Fifteen teachers used parent evaluation forms during the study. They were nervous about requesting feedback from parents, fearing that the comments would be negative. Interestingly, the majority of the forms returned were very positive.

Three forms stood out because those parents made specific suggestions for change. Two comments were rather mild, requesting better communication and less homework. However, two other remarks were more critical. One parent remarked that a second year teacher never seemed to have her class under control. Another parent of an experienced teacher said

the teacher seemed distant and hard to talk with. While these comments were difficult for the teachers to hear, they led to growth and change.

The second year teacher realized that she needed to work on class management. Together we made several changes in her teaching techniques, including giving students fewer chances before providing consequences, using a quieter tone of voice, and actually removing a child from her class. Later in the year, when the same parent made another comment about this teacher's lack of control, we were able to name the improvements that had occurred. Ultimately, the parent admitted that she had not revisited the classroom since making her original remarks.

This parent's evaluation was helpful because it pointed out an area where the teacher needed to improve. It caused the teacher to reflect on her practice and to be willing to accept suggestions from me on how to change her class management. As one of the other teachers said, regarding parent evaluations: "You have to know where you have to improve. You need someone else to point that out to you, because you don't see it."

Self-Evaluations – Journaling

Journaling also promoted teacher reflection during the study, although not to the degree I had anticipated. Seven teachers reported using journaling as a new method of evaluation; four had used it prior to the study. Two said it

actually caused them to think about their craft. One used it to record student behavior rather than to reflect on her teaching.

The teachers who used journaling before the study began said that it caused them to analyze patterns in their teaching and to determine what was causing them to be successful or not. Both recognized the need for better lesson planning as a result of their journal entries.

Two teachers who did not journal said simply that it was too hard for them to manage. Each said she had intended to journal, but could never make herself actually sit down and do it. One suggested that it be removed from the plan altogether so that teachers did not feel guilty for non-compliance.

In planning the study I thought that journaling would be one of the major sources of teacher reflection. I envisioned teachers journaling daily during planning periods, at the end of the day, even at home before going to sleep. I thought they would excitedly bring their journals to school and share with their peers the amazing insights they had gained. From these enlightened discussions they would plan timely and dynamic in-services for the entire faculty.

Journaling did not produce the dramatic effect I had hoped. However, the teachers who did journal thought about their practice as a result and seemed to grow through the process. I realized that journaling was one of

many ways for teachers to become reflective practitioners, more suitable for some than for others.

Other Methods of Self-Evaluation

The evaluation methods that seemed to have the most impact on the faculty were various types of self- evaluation. Audio tapes, video tapes, and the Hanlon-Green form provoked the deepest reflection of any of the other methods. This seemed logical, because these methods required self-analysis, whereas the peer, parent, and student evaluations were asking outside parties to be the analysts.

Fifteen teachers used the Hanlon-Green form during the study, making it the most frequently used method of self-evaluation. Teachers usually completed the form at the end of the week, reflecting on their work for that time period. One teacher liked this method because it gave her a "retrospective view" of her teaching. She said that analyzing her work through the Hanlon-Green form showed her which lessons had been successful and which ones had not. She thought about how she could have done things differently to improve them.

Other teachers said the Hanlon-Green form caused them to think more about their teaching. One began to see patterns occurring week after week and realized that she needed to plan better lessons. Another began to analyze

her reasons for becoming a teacher. She conducted a deep soul-searching through her use of the Hanlon-Green form and actually changed some beliefs she had held for twenty years. She realized, for example, that teacher-made tests were actually a reflection of what she had taught, not just what the students had learned. She began to understand that if an entire class did poorly on a test, she had to re-teach the material in a new way, she could not simply blame her students, which she had done previously.

Audio and video taping were other evaluative methods that promoted self-reflection. Six teachers used audio taping as a method of self-evaluation and two used video taping. Even though these numbers were small, the results were dramatic. One teacher used both methods and said they were more effective for her than any other. She said they truly showed her the most important part of teaching, how a teacher communicated ideas to the children. Through critiquing the tapes she noted, “I have learned not to clutter my teaching, to downsize my teaching and to be more focused.”

Two other teachers said the audio-tape was helpful because it clearly captured an unsatisfactory tone of voice they were using with the students. One teacher said, “If someone talked to me in that tone, even though I didn’t mean it that way, I would probably be hurt. It wasn’t what I said, it was the tone…. I didn’t hear it in the classroom until I listened to the tape.” Another

teacher also realized that she needed to change her tone of voice after hearing herself on tape.

Only two teachers used video tape. The first noted that she did better than she expected. She thought the video tape showed her doing a fine job in the classroom. She became so comfortable with the tape that she asked if she could use it for her formal observation. She suggested taping a lesson and then critiquing it with the principal. The second teacher to use a video tape was disconcerted more by his appearance than his technique. He vowed to dress more neatly and to work on losing weight. He also asked a peer to critique the tape for him and to provide suggestions for improvement.

An unexpected aspect of the audio and video tapes was their impact on teachers who did not use them. A peer who viewed the second tape said it caused her to start thinking of her own teaching style as she watched the teacher on tape. She realized some changes she needed to make in how she handled her students. Other teachers said that they now walked into the classroom aware of the fact that they were on stage. One teacher wrote, “I envision a camera rolling in my classroom…. It causes me to stop and to think how I sound and how I act. I find myself thinking, ‘How do the students perceive me?’ ”

Other Catalysts for Reflection

Other aspects of the evaluation and development plan promoted reflection among the faculty. Surprisingly, the tally sheets, which were only designed as a counting device, became a means of self-evaluation for some teachers. At the end of each week teachers examined the sheet and determined what they had and had not done. If they had not met with their grade level partner, for example, they made a concerted effort to do so the next week. The teachers began to use the tally sheets as a measure of their participation in the plan.

Grade level meetings became times for growth and reflection. After teachers finished discussing the details about what they needed to do for the week or month, they frequently moved into a deeper conversation. One teacher said she simply did not feel adequate to the task of teaching her subject area. She asked for help from her peers. Other teachers asked for assistance in areas of discipline or in organizing their rooms. Notes of the grade level meetings showed that teachers not only shared solutions to these every-day problems, but that they also tried to help each other determine why the problems were happening and how they could be avoided.

The mentor and protégé program served as a catalyst for reflection. Several teachers commented on the value of meeting with a mentor and

seeking advice from him or her. All of the protégés and mentors observed each other and discussed what they saw. This process led to much discussion of techniques and methods, helping both parties to reflect on their teaching.

Creating the Plan

Another factor that encouraged teachers to reflect on their practice was the action research process of creating, implementing, observing, and analyzing the plan itself. The process of designing a new system of evaluation forced the faculty to think about evaluation more frequently and in different ways. One teacher said that the plan "provoked a lot of introspection" about her teaching. Another said that working on the plan gave her a better understanding of the purpose of evaluation. She said, "I think all of us are now thinking [that] the true reason for evaluation should be to improve our performance as teachers; to improve what we do with the children. [We are] more thoughtful and challenged about our work."

Designing the new system of evaluation and development led the teachers to a new awareness, not only of the purpose of evaluation, but also of the constancy of evaluation. As the teachers discussed the impact of the plan in their concluding interviews, many of them mentioned that the plan awakened in them an awareness of evaluation as a daily part of a teacher's

life. In the final interviews, six teachers used the actual term “awareness” to explain the realization that they should constantly be critiquing their work.

Regardless of the evaluative method used, the result was the same: teachers understood that they were “on stage” every day. They did not have to wait until a formal observation was scheduled to begin thinking about how to teach. They knew that an administrator could walk in at any minute for a drop-in observation, so they had to be constantly prepared to do their best. They began to realize that parents evaluated them through homework assignments, through the interactions they had at the beginning and end of the day, and through comments made by the children on the way home. Teachers understood that students evaluated them all the time, from the first “hello” in the morning to the final smile at the end of the day. Teachers learned that their body language and tone of voice had a major impact on how the students perceived them. Through this study teachers understood that they were always being evaluated and that they must always strive for a higher level of performance.

In summary, the new evaluation and development plan did provide an empowering opportunity for teachers to become reflective practitioners. The variety of methods used was a major part of this reflection. Several teachers

noted that having a choice of methods was an aspect of the plan they truly appreciated. They also felt relieved that they were being evaluated through more than one method; that the formal observation was not their only chance to prove their teaching ability.

Resistance

As I worked on the final analysis of the plan, I began to more clearly understand some of the problems that beset us from the beginning. When the teachers were slow to use various new methods of evaluations during the first era of the study, I thought that they did not have a clear understanding of what they were supposed to do. In fact, several teachers pointed this out in their concluding interviews, saying they simply could not see the entire picture. Some said they just trusted me and went along blindly, hoping they would eventually realize what to do. By the end of the third era, the majority of teachers expressed a much clearer understanding of what was expected of them and of how the program worked.

In my final analysis, however, I realized there was actual resistance by the teachers to doing what was asked of them. They never explained this to me verbally, they simply did not participate in the various aspects of the plan. In the concluding interviews one teacher expressed this problem outright, saying, “I think we all resisted it…. because it looked like more than we had

ever had to deal with before." This teacher spoke of conversations in hallways after our faculty meetings when teachers said there was too much work involved in the plan for them to truly wish to participate.

I was surprised by this resistance. The teachers would appear to be excited about the plan in our organizational meetings, but they actually were confused, overwhelmed, or simply not interested. I was startled that these teachers felt so strongly about the plan but never said anything to me about it. I thought the faculty and I communicated more openly than this.

One dimension of the problem may simply have been the teachers' natural tendency to avoid change. Change is unknown; change causes stress; change is frightening. Even a bad situation that is familiar to people may be easier to tolerate than the uncertainty of changing the status quo. To initiate change, a leader must create enough energy to overcome the resistance to change and to move followers in the direction of change. (D. Parks, personal communication, October 30, 2001)

I encountered this resistance to change frequently during our study and had to constantly work to overcome it. The teachers' lack of record keeping in the first and second eras, the failure to schedule grade level meetings, the non-participation in peer observations, and the inconsistent tallying of meetings were all examples of teachers refusing to change. Only after

repeated encouragement from me did the teachers begin to use various aspects of the new program.

One of the teachers spoke very clearly about the resistance that existed among the faculty. She gave me insight into why it existed. In the final interview this teacher spoke of a situation that occurred five years ago. In the first year of my principalship I had to release two teachers. I based my decision on performance, not seniority. To the faculty, this meant that any teacher in the school could have lost his or her job. No one felt secure. The teacher speaking during the interview said many faculty members were extremely stressed during this time, including her. They all realized that evaluation was critically important, because it meant keeping or losing a job. Five years later, this particular teacher still worried that she might be let go at any time because of her performance.

I was unaware of these faculty concerns when I asked them to join me in developing a new plan of evaluation and development. Only at the end of the study, during the interview process, did I understand why they felt they had to participate and also why they did not speak openly to me about their concerns. In spite of the friendly relationships we enjoyed, I was still the one person who determined whether or not they kept their jobs.

In an article about receiving feedback from many sources, Dyer (2001) pointed out that, “The 360-degree feedback process can be a powerful tool, but only if it is used wisely and judiciously. Crucial to this process is trust. Once violated, trust is difficult to restore” (p. 36). Dyer went on to say that feedback from many sources must be used developmentally, to help the recipient grow and improve. It must never be used for evaluative purposes.

I finally understood why the teachers showed such a resistance to the new evaluation system. Not only were they dealing with the normal aversion to change, but they also were trying to overcome a very legitimate fear about their future employment at the school. I requested an incredible amount of trust from them when I initiated the new evaluation and development process. Even though I told them at the beginning of the study that the new methods would not be used to determine whether they were rehired each year, their own experience made them think otherwise.

Changes in Me

I expected the faculty to grow and change during the study. I was intrigued to find that I grew and changed as well. I became a stronger administrator through this study, better at planning, at communicating, and at upholding my beliefs. I gained a better awareness of the sensitive relationship

between teachers and administrators, and I recognized areas where I needed to grow and improve.

Becoming a Better Planner

One of the things I learned early in the study was the importance of continuous planning. When the study began, I had a basic idea of what I hoped to accomplish. At our first few meetings I was well prepared to present my ideas to the teachers. However, as the study progressed I found myself less well prepared for some of our sessions. This lack of good planning led to confusion among the faculty and ineffective meetings.

For example, in our goal setting meeting, I did not have a clear understanding myself of how we would measure goals. My lack of clarity was quickly transmitted to the teachers, who also had a difficult time grasping the concept. Their confusion, in turn, led to a lack of good measurement in the first and second eras of the study. In another instance, I thought that distributing notebooks to the teachers would enable them to keep accurate records of all aspects of the study. I gave them notebooks with dividers and labels and told them to use them. However, I never explained what they should record, or how, or when. Consequently, the notebooks were of very little use to the teachers.

I realized that developing a plan with the faculty was very similar to teaching a lesson to a class of students. A good teacher thought through the lesson thoroughly, planned for every contingency, and prepared several methods of presenting information to children with different learning styles. The better prepared the teacher, the more successful the lesson. The times when I was well prepared to interact with the teachers, our work was successful. When I was poorly prepared, the work was less satisfactory and often had to be redone.

Better Scheduling of Meetings

As the study progressed, I learned that an important component of planning was scheduling. I had to become adept at scheduling multiple meetings that did not conflict with one another or overburden any teachers. I learned that when I did not stay abreast of the scheduling, our time was not used productively. If meetings were called at the last minute, teachers either could not attend due to conflicts or were not prepared to do the necessary work. It was not sufficient to tell teachers to be prepared for some type of meeting every Tuesday. They needed to know what type of gathering so that they could be prepared. Although it required additional work on my part, the scheduling of meetings at the beginning of the year enabled all of us to be better organized and more productive.

Better Personal Scheduling

I also learned that I had to schedule my own individual meetings with teachers more efficiently. If I needed to speak with a teacher about a specific topic, I had to set a time and write it on the calendar. Once I scheduled it, I made sure it occurred. If I did not set a specific time to meet, we did not get together.

I identified a strong resistance in myself to filling up my calendar with meetings. If my schedule for the day were filled with appointments, I felt restricted and confined. I knew that if my day were fully scheduled I would have no time to help teachers or parents with any problems that arose. Nor would I have time to creatively plan future events. I learned during this study to distribute my meetings over a longer period of time. For example, I began my formal observations of the teachers earlier in the year and scheduled fewer of them each day. This made the process much less stressful for me. I learned to reserve unscheduled time for myself each day, even if it required being slightly less accessible to teachers or parents. I was always available for emergencies, but sometimes less pressing issues had to wait until another day.

Better Communicator

As communication increased throughout the school during the study, I found that my skills as a communicator increased. During our planning and evaluation sessions I listened as the teachers shared ideas with one another and with me. I had to hear the ideas, understand them, and incorporate them into the plan. I had to ask clarifying questions when I did not grasp a concept clearly.

I spent much more time meeting and talking with teachers which strengthened our level of communication. After administering and tallying student and parent evaluations, I had to communicate results to the teachers. I listened to their feedback and worked with them to make sense of the results. I talked with the teachers about their instruction during the pre and post conferences, often suggesting various methods for them to try. If a teacher displayed a weakness, I had to talk with her about it clearly and in an unthreatening manner.

As the study progressed and we encountered some trouble spots, I found that I had to discuss those with the teachers. I had to communicate my expectations to the teachers, telling them that they needed to follow through on plans we had made. I had to maintain consistent communication, because when I stopped communicating, the plan began to falter. For example, when I

failed to mention parent expectation letters for several weeks, they were not distributed. We needed the reinforcement of regular communication to keep the plan in front of everyone and to keep all of us working on it.

Better Follow Through

Closely connected to better communication was better follow through. I learned that if I communicated an idea once, it had very little impact. For areas of the plan to function effectively, I had to follow through on the activities we had agreed on. Journaling, for instance, was an idea that seemed to have limitless possibilities at the beginning of the study. However, even though I mentioned it several times to the teachers, I never actually gave them a time to journal until the third era. I never scheduled time for journaling during faculty meetings or asked them to share thoughts from their journals. Journaling, therefore, was not as effective as it might have been.

I found that many dimensions of the plan were not used until I had worked long enough with the teachers for them to be comfortable. Only then did they assume responsibility. Grade level meetings were an example of a concept that required a great deal of follow through until the teachers and I developed a system that worked. At the end of the study, teachers were meeting with each other on their own time as well as during times I scheduled. They were turning in minutes of their meetings that showed

growth in their discussions. This happened through consistent follow through.

Increased Awareness of the Sensitive Relationship between Teachers and Administrators

Just as the teachers increased their awareness through the study, so did I. As an administrator, I became more aware of the fact that teachers had a primary job to do, teaching the children. When I invited them to participate in the study, I placed an extra burden on them. Some of them responded excitedly, yearning for an extra challenge, and some agreed grudgingly because they felt they had little choice. I had to constantly be aware of the extra time I was asking the teachers to spend on the study. I had to be careful not to expect them to place the rigors of the study before their duties as teachers.

Another thing I learned through this study was that not all teachers wanted to share leadership. Many teachers liked participating in decision-making discussions but did not wish to follow through with actual work on committees. For example, the teachers requested a new calendar for the upcoming year with revised in-service days. However, no one wanted to create the new calendar. They handed it back to administration for the final planning.

I became aware that some of these teachers were very insecure about themselves and their ability. When I asked them to be evaluated by peers, parents, students, or even a video tape, I was asking them to step into an uncomfortable situation. Because I thought that all of our teachers did a good job in the classroom, I was surprised when some of them balked at using these new methods. I finally realized that sometimes this fear presented itself in the form of resistance to the plan. Then, I understood that I needed to approach the teachers gently with the idea of using new methods and to ensure their privacy and confidentiality if they did use them.

Becoming a Stronger Leader

I know that I became a stronger leader through this plan. I became better able to identify and handle instructional and classroom management problems. I dealt with problems earlier, realizing that they would only become worse if I delayed. I learned to use the feedback from parent, student, or peer interviews to reinforce concerns I had about a teacher's performance. I learned to be critical of feedback from others, deciding when it was valid and when it was not.

Periodically, the new evaluative methods presented surprising information to me. Sometimes the parent or student evaluations of teachers mentioned a problem about which I was unaware. Other times they failed to

point out an area about which I was concerned. In either case, I would observe the teacher further to determine if the problem were real. I learned that I must speak to a teacher at once when a problem occurred. I became more willing to address issues immediately and to follow through with them.

I learned, through the resistance, that sometimes I had to be strong and move ahead even if the teachers were holding back. I usually asked for their support in an area, and I always tried to take their views into account before making decisions. But, sometimes, I had to act in a way that they did not appreciate. I learned simply to do it, explaining why, and not worrying about whether or not they liked what was happening. For example, during the first two eras of the study, I continually asked teachers to use parent evaluations. A few teachers did; the majority did not. Finally, in the third era, I simply stated that I wanted all teachers to distribute parent evaluations by the end of the first nine weeks. I really wanted to see if this method of evaluation were valuable, and so I told the teachers to use it.

Delegating Authority

As the study evolved, I continued to learn the fine art of delegating authority. I realized that often it was easier to do a job myself than to explain it carefully to someone else. However, I also realized that if I did not delegate, the teachers would never develop a sense of ownership in the

school. Also, some tasks would never be completed because I would not have time to do them.

I learned that successful delegation contains several components. First, it is very important to select the proper group or person to perform a task. I always asked for volunteers to work on specific topics, believing they would do a better job because of their interest level. I tried to prepare them carefully, explaining clearly all aspects of the job. Touching base with the group periodically and providing consistent follow through were also important steps in the process. I learned that if I followed this process clearly, the group was usually successful and could continue on its own without much guidance from me.

However, occasionally, someone volunteered for a task for which he or she was not well suited. My dilemma then was how to ensure that the task was completed without offending the volunteer. In one instance, two teachers offered to design a new schedule for one of our classes. One of the volunteers immediately asked several clarifying questions and it became obvious that he was not going to be successful in his task. I waited for a week and then invited another teacher to join the group. This teacher was very good at organizing and planning schedules and was able to help the other teachers plan a very workable solution.

A second important dimension of delegation I learned was to accept ideas other than my own. A group seldom devised the same solution to a problem that I had envisioned; it might be better than my idea, or worse, or simply different, but it was rarely the same. For delegation to succeed, I had to let the group devise its own solution. I could not impose my ideas unless it were absolutely essential to do so. I found that groups developed a stronger sense of ownership and a stronger ability to succeed when they had the freedom to develop their own ideas.

Third, I tried to delegate important tasks so the teachers felt their time was well spent. If a job were particularly onerous, I asked teachers to work with me so that no one felt they were treated unfairly. I learned to ask more than once. If no one responded to a request, I waited a day or a week, realizing that I might receive a more positive response on a different day. I tried to use good judgement, to determine which tasks were most effectively done by me, and which would be done better by a group. I thought of the amount of time I had to complete the task. If deadlines were short, I might have to do it myself since committees often took longer. If teachers were particularly busy, I might do it myself to avoid burdening them. Finally, I thought of the sensitivity of the task and also of the benefits of having various opinions.

I learned that providing empowering opportunities for teachers was a delicate and complex task. I wanted to provide every opportunity for teachers to grow and change, but I could not force them to participate in anything. I found that I agreed completely with Fullan (1993) who wrote: “There are exciting but no comfortable positions when contending with the forces of change, because one must always fight against over control on the one hand and chaos on the other” (p. 21). He compared the two extremes between which leaders exist as “polar opposites,” and added, “One must simultaneously push for change while allowing self-learning to unfold” (Fullan, p. 21). Finding this fine balance was a constant source of tension for me throughout the study.

Evaluating Summatively and Formatively

I also learned that I had to continue to work on the concept of summative versus formative teacher evaluation. It was not fair to ask teachers to engage in risky evaluative methods, such as parent and student evaluations, if the results were going to be used to determine contract renewal. These new and challenging methods must be used simply for formative evaluation, for teacher development. Thus, I had to continue to work on a method of evaluation that effectively measured a teacher’s performance for summative purposes. If it became necessary to ask a teacher

to leave, I had to have documentation for this purpose. This had to come from repeated formal observations and from communication with the teacher. It had to be handled confidentially and professionally.

Final Thoughts

This study was a remarkable experience for me and for the faculty at St. Anne's School. Teachers tried methods of evaluation that were new to them, and they experienced growth and change in the process. They became deeply involved in designing a new system of evaluation and development and developed a new sense of ownership during the process. They came to see themselves as researchers and as professional educators engaged in a lifelong process of improvement.

I grew through my work with the faculty, through the design and implementation of the plan and through my own self-evaluation as an administrator. I realized that I had much knowledge as an experienced teacher and administrator, but that I needed to continue to learn and grow each day. As the study came to a close, I realized that I didn't want it to end. I wanted to continue to be a seeker of knowledge in my school and in my life.

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Appendix A

Strengths of the Original Evaluation System

(Data generated at the September 17, 1999, faculty meeting)

Peer evaluation

Teacher input

Pre-conference and post conference

Informal and formal evaluation

Ability to plan a “fantastic lesson” due to prior notice

Self-reflective

Non-threatening

Evaluation form given in advance – new teachers had time to review

Accountability

Teacher-centered

Many components

Open-ended and in-depth format

One-on-one time with principal

Precise, thorough form

Enlightening

Positive, constructive feedback

Appendix B

Ways of Improving the Original Evaluation System

(Data generated at the September 17, 1999, faculty meeting)

Is it a realistic representation?

Time to observe peers

One more thing to do

Evaluation should occur at least twice a year

Scheduling observation

No evaluation from outside sources (parents)

Follow up on weaknesses after post conference

Appendix C

Instrument to Gather Teacher Perceptions of the Original Evaluation System Fall 1999

The following were presented as strengths of our current evaluation system at our September faculty meeting. Please indicate your level of agreement that each item is a strength of the current system by circling one of the following numbers:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

TEACHER INPUT

1. Use of peer evaluations	1 2 3 4
2. Teacher input into the evaluation	1 2 3 4
3. Self-reflective process for teachers	1 2 3 4
4. Teacher accountability	1 2 3 4
5. Many components in the process	1 2 3 4
6. Teacher goal setting	1 2 3 4

TEACHER CONSIDERATION

1. Use of informal evaluations	1 2 3 4
2. Use of formal evaluations	1 2 3 4
3. Prior notice of formal evaluation	1 2 3 4

4. A non-threatening process 1 2 3 4

5. A teacher-centered process 1 2 3 4

6. Open-ended and in-depth format 1 2 3 4

7. Precise, thorough form 1 2 3 4

8. Evaluation form given in advance to new teachers 1 2 3 4

CONFERENCING

1. Teacher/principal pre-observation conference 1 2 3 4

2. Teacher/principal post-observation conference 1 2 3 4

3. One-on-one time with principal 1 2 3 4

4. Enlightening results 1 2 3 4

5. Positive, constructive feedback 1 2 3 4

The following were presented as problems of our current evaluation system at our September faculty meeting. Please indicate your level of agreement that each item is a problem of the current system by circling one of the following numbers:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

TIMING

1. Need time to observe peers 1 2 3 4

2. Formal evaluations should occur twice a year 1 2 3 4

SCHEDULING

1. Scheduling observations is difficult 1 2 3 4

2. One more thing to do 1 2 3 4

AUTHENTICITY

1. Is it a realistic representation of teaching (due to prior notice?)

1 2 3 4

2. No evaluation from outside sources (parents) 1 2 3 4

3. No follow up on weaknesses after the post-conference 1 2 3 4

Appendix D

Instrument to Gather Teacher Perceptions

of the Revised Evaluation and Development System

Winter 2001

The following were presented as strengths of our *original* evaluation system at our September 1999 faculty meeting. Please indicate your level of agreement that each item is a strength of the *current* system by circling one of the following numbers:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

TEACHER INPUT

1. Use of peer evaluations	1 2 3 4
2. Teacher input into the evaluation	1 2 3 4
3. Self-reflective process for teachers	1 2 3 4
4. Teacher accountability	1 2 3 4
5. Many components in the process	1 2 3 4
6. Teacher goal setting	1 2 3 4

TEACHER CONSIDERATION

1. Use of informal evaluations	1 2 3 4
2. Use of formal evaluations	1 2 3 4
3. Prior notice of formal evaluation	1 2 3 4

4. A non-threatening process	1 2 3 4
5. A teacher-centered process	1 2 3 4
6. Open-ended and in-depth format	1 2 3 4
7. Precise, thorough form	1 2 3 4
8. Evaluation form given in advance to new teachers	1 2 3 4

CONFERENCING

1. Teacher/principal pre-observation conference	1 2 3 4
2. Teacher/principal post-observation conference	1 2 3 4
3. One-on-one time with principal	1 2 3 4
4. Enlightening results	1 2 3 4
5. Positive, constructive feedback	1 2 3 4

The following were presented as problems of our *original* evaluation system at a September 1999 faculty meeting. Please indicate your level of agreement that each item is still a problem of the *current* system by circling one of the following numbers:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly Agree

TIMING

	Not a problem		Still a problem	
1. Need time to observe peers	1	2	3	4
2. Formal evaluations should occur twice a year	1	2	3	4

SCHEDULING

1. Scheduling observations is difficult	1	2	3	4
2. One more thing to do	1	2	3	4

AUTHENTICITY

1. Is it a realistic representation of teaching (due to prior notice?)

	1	2	3	4
2. No evaluation from outside sources (parents)	1	2	3	4

2. No follow up on weaknesses after the post-conference

	1	2	3	4

Appendix E

Aspects of a Model System of Teacher Evaluation and Development

(Data generated at the October 1999 faculty meeting)

Ask for parent expectations in the fall and for evaluations in the spring.

Have monthly area meetings for teachers in the same or related grade levels.

Evaluate teachers two or three times a year (formally).

Have pop-in evaluations of 5 to 10 minutes.

Use student evaluations.

Have evaluations by people other than the principal – peers, assistant principal, director of preschool.

Use audio/visual methods of evaluation.

Ask observers to focus on student behaviors during lessons.

Use goals set by teachers at start of year for mid-year evaluation or check up.

Use self-evaluations with some type of follow up by another person.

Discover how we come across to parents.

Check philosophy – do actions match?

Appendix F

Worksheet

Goals for Teacher Evaluation and Development

November 1999

GOAL	HOW TO MEASURE

Appendix G

Goals and Measurements for the Development of a Teacher Evaluation and Development System

(Data generated at November 3, 1999 faculty meeting)

Goals are listed first, followed by measurements in italics.

1. To strengthen grade-area communication and planning *(count number of meetings, use check-off form).*
2. To increase teacher involvement in the evaluation and development process (leading to long-term growth for individual teachers) *(scripted forms which record what both parties' goals, reflections, comments are during evaluative meeting).*
3. To develop a stronger mentor and protégé program *(mentor and protégé evaluation, record keeping, note taking).*
4. To develop a more authentic evaluation process *(drop in observations by administration).*
5. To reduce stress in evaluation *(questionnaire, more frequent evaluations).*
6. To collaborate with other teachers, sharing successful teaching techniques *(feedback and sharing).*

7. To stimulate growth and change for the better (by attending national conferences and reading professional publications) *(pre- and post-observation forms, discussion, monitoring of individual professional goals).*
8. To plan meaningful in-service opportunities (in advance) *(maintain list of in-services held yearly).*
9. To continue to re-evaluate the process *(continue to allow feedback from teachers during process).*
10. To strengthen communication within the school community *(questionnaire, parent survey).*
11. To simply the process *(tally the amount of paperwork and time).*

Appendix H

Teacher Generated Plans for Evaluation and Development

Teacher Plan Number One

AUGUST:	Parent expectations at Orientation
	Protégé and mentor meetings started weekly
	Grade-level meetings
SEPTEMBER:	Mission/philosophy check
	Outline short-term/long-term goals
	Pop in observation/evaluation by peers
OCTOBER	
NOVEMBER:	Grade-level meetings
DECEMBER	Pre-conference/evaluation/post-conference
	First-year teachers
JANUARY:	Grade-level meetings
	Personal goals check
	Obtain student goals
	Pop-in observations
FEBRUARY:	Grade-level meetings
MARCH:	Pre-conference/evaluation/post-conference
APRIL:	Grade-level meetings

MAY: Parent evaluation

Teacher Plan Number Two

BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS:

1. Mentors assigned before student arrival
2. Grade-group meetings and in-services

FALL – AFTER SCHOOL BEGINS

1. Parent expectations
2. Preliminary goal setting (teacher)
3. Begin self-evaluations (twice a month)
4. Begin 2 –3 (5 –10 minute) pop-in observations
5. Formal observation: late Oct./early Nov.
6. Student evaluation: (mid Oct.)

SPRING – MID SCHOOL YEAR

1. Formal observation: late April/early May
2. Parent evaluations: follow up to expectations in fall
3. Student evaluations: done by appropriate grade levels
4. Formal observation at any time of year by peers

OTHER IDEAS: Alternating weeks for meetings:

Week 1: Faculty meetings

Week 2: Grade-group meetings

Week 3: Committee meetings if needed

Teacher Plan Number Three

Evaluation Time Table

1. Parent expectations questionnaire sent with registration materials.
2. During in-service discuss parent expectations and evaluation process.
3. Beginning-of-year meeting with peer co-teachers.
4. Sept. -- Principal meets with each teacher (philosophy and goals).
5. Teachers meet 1st Tuesday of month with co-teacher (mentor and protégé).
6. Sept. - Oct. -- Principal does pop-in evaluation.
7. Nov. -- Principal – 1st formal observation with follow up.
8. Jan. -- Teachers do self-evaluation weekly.
9. Late Jan. -- Teachers meet with principal for check up (mid-year).
10. Feb. -- Peer observation and discuss self-evaluation.
11. Mar.- Apr. 2nd formal evaluation with principal.
12. Spring -- Student evaluation and parent evaluation info. to be used for next year.

Teacher Plan Number Four

AUGUST:	Planning Week – In-service planning meeting, meeting with principal, conference plans
	Last week: Area teacher meeting
	Send home parent handbook
SEPTEMBER:	Survey of parent expectations
	Meeting – area teachers – evaluate & discuss surveys
	Meeting – unrealistic expectations - parents
	Last week – area teacher meeting
OCTOBER:	Preschool director evaluation
	Last week: area teacher meeting
NOVEMBER:	3-month evaluation – principal
	Last week – area teacher meeting
DECEMBER:	Last week – area teacher meeting
JANUARY:	Peer evaluation
	Last week – area teacher meeting
FEBRUARY:	6-month evaluation – preschool director
	Last week – area teacher meeting
MARCH:	Last week – area teacher meeting

APRIL: Parent evaluation before final conference

Last week – area teacher meeting

MAY: Year-end evaluation – principal

Peer evaluation

Last week – evaluation of year – planning for next year

- Weekly staff and area meetings – eliminate goal 3 (mentor and protégé) – team planning

Teacher Plan Number Five

AUGUST:	Registration
	Hand out parent expectations
SEPTEMBER:	Philosophy and set goals
	Put out in-service suggestion box
OCTOBER	3 peer pop-ins – 1 per 9 weeks
	Grade-level meetings during lunch once a month (Mentor and protégé)
NOVEMBER:	1 Tues. per month for area meetings or committees
DECEMBER:	Formal evaluations (scheduled)
JANUARY:	Student evaluations
FEBRUARY:	AV methods (optional)
MARCH:	Evaluation by assistant principal or preschool director
APRIL:	Peer pop-in sharing of great stuff
	Hanlon-Green all year long
MAY:	Parent evaluations (add teacher image question)

Appendix I

Teacher Evaluation and Development Plan First Draft

(Developed Nov. 1999.)

MISSION – PHILOSOPHY – GOALS

1. During pre-service days, all teachers review school mission and philosophy in discussion groups. Questions are answered, suggested changes discussed and referred to school board if necessary.
2. During pre-service days teachers are instructed to think about their goals for the upcoming year. In September they meet with the principal to discuss and mutually establish goals for the year.
3. During formal observation post-conference, teachers and principal discuss goals and evaluate progress.
4. During end-of-the-year workdays, teachers personally review goals and begin to form new ones for following year.

GRADE LEVEL MEETINGS

1. During pre-service days teachers meet in grade-level or special-area groups.

2. Monthly thereafter teachers meet in grade-level groups. Divisions are preschool, K – 1, 2 –3, 4 – 6. (Meetings occur either at lunch [release time] or on Tuesday afternoons after school.
3. During end-of-the-year workdays, grade-level groups meet once to discuss needs or goals for the following fall.

MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ MEETINGS

1. During pre-service days new teachers meet together with principal for orientation. Temporary mentors are assigned based on grade-level assignments.
2. Protégés select permanent mentors after four weeks.
3. Mentors and protégés meet weekly during release time for first month of school. Further meetings are scheduled as needed, but no less than once a month.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATIONS

1. During registration day parents are asked to consider their expectations for their child's learning during the school year. Forms are distributed, and parents are asked to return them within five days.
2. Teachers follow up on expectations in several ways:

A. Phone call – necessary right away for unrealistic expectations.

B. Newsletter.

C. Individual conference – may also be needed quickly to clarify individual expectations.

D. All parents meet with teachers at the end of the first and third nine weeks – expectations are discussed at this time.

E. An end-of-the-year parent evaluation distributed through the main office will evaluate parent satisfaction with the year.

TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS

1. Each teacher meets individually with principal in September to discuss goals for the year.
2. Several quick pop-in observations are performed by principal or assistant throughout the year. Brief, written comments are given to teachers.
3. Peer observations are held throughout the year. These may be pop in, announced, or include a written evaluation form.
4. Formal observations and evaluations by the principal will be held at least once yearly; more often if needed or requested. These formal

observations include a pre- and post-conference and will allow time to discuss how goals are being met.

5. Several optional elements may be added by teachers if they wish. These include:
   A. Self-evaluations using the Hanlon-Green form.
   B. Student evaluations which are grade-level appropriate and may also include the setting of goals by students.
   C. Audio or video self-evaluations.
6. Teachers will use one faculty meeting each week to alternately meet as a whole faculty, in grade-level groups, in faculty committees, and as mentors and protégés.

DEVELOPMENT

1. A suggestion box for in-service ideas will be placed in the office in August.
2. Teacher development will occur naturally in the monthly grade-level meetings.

Appendix J

Goals and Measures for Teacher Evaluation and Development

Revised December 1999

GOAL	MEASUREMENT
1. To increase teacher involvement in the evaluation and development process.	1. A. Tally each type of evaluation used by the teacher during the study. B. Count the number of evaluation meetings held with peers or administrators. C. Record teacher involvement in development activities (suggesting topics, planning and attending in-services). D. Record changes in the plan after each review – nature and number of changes indicative of teacher involvement.
2. To develop a more authentic evaluation process.	2. A. Count the number of “drop-in” observations.

	B. Count the observations performed by people other than administrators; i.e., peers, parents, or students.
	C. Record instances of self-evaluation (Hanlon-Green form, audio or video taping).
3. To strengthen grade-area communication and planning.	3. A. Count the number of grade-area meetings held.
	B. Analyze minutes of meetings for --
	(1) Strength of ideas or issues discussed – new ideas indicate stronger meetings.
	(2) In-service ideas that are actually used – follow through of ideas shows development component is working.

	(3) Teacher's opinions of what was worthwhile in each meeting.
4. To stimulate growth and change for the better (by attending national conferences and reading professional publications).	4. A. Count the number of conferences teachers attend. B. Record number of articles read by teachers; look for evidence of sharing in minutes of grade-area meetings.
5. To collaborate with other teachers, share successful teaching techniques.	5. A. Analyze minutes of grade-area meetings – look for examples of shared ideas. B. During each evaluation period ask teachers to list new ideas they received.
6. To plan meaningful in-service opportunities (in advance).	6. A. Count number of in-services held yearly. B. Evaluate each in-service for quality.

	C. Analyze minutes of grade-area meetings to determine source of ideas.
	D. Count number of ideas submitted to the suggestion Box.
7. To strengthen communication within the school community.	7. A. Survey parents yearly re-garding effectiveness of communication.
	B. Count instances of poor communication – calls from parents, meetings missed by teachers, questions regarding policy.
8. To develop a stronger mentor-protégé program.	8. A. Count number of mentor and protégé meetings.
	B. List areas of improvement suggested for protégés.

	C. Observe protégés, noting changes (improvements) in behavior.
	D. Evaluate program yearly.
9. To reduce stress in evaluation.	9. A. Survey teachers twice yearly to determine stress levels regarding evaluation.
	B. Count variety of methods used – teachers under less stress may use greater variety of methods.
10. To simplify the process.	10. A. Analyze teacher notebooks – clarity indicates simplicity.
	B. Record time spent on paperwork – less time indicates simplicity.
11. To continue to re-evaluate the process.	11. A. Count number of meetings held to

evaluate the process.

B. Analyze the number and scope of changes suggested (minor changes may indicate greater satisfaction).

Appendix K

Hanlon/Green Teacher Self-Assessment Form

Fall 2000

Please rate yourself in each category using the following scale:

1. = Infrequently (less than 50% of the time)

2. = Sometimes (between 50% and 75% of the time)

3. = Frequently (between 75% and 90% of the time)

4. = Almost always (more than 90% of the time)

NAME _____ DATE _____

A. I think positively.

1. I use positive statements with students, parents, peers, and administration. 1 2 3 4

2. I provide efficient consequences. 1 2 3 4

2. I view problems as opportunities in the classroom and the school community. 1 2 3 4

4. I maintain a positive momentum in all areas of my work. 1 2 3 4

B. I take initiative and strive for excellence.

1. I set and maintain classroom goals that go beyond minimum standards. 1 2 3 4

2. I involve parents through:

a. communication about student progress. 1 2 3 4

b. help with class projects. 1 2 3 4

c. assistance with school activities and service projects. 1 2 3 4

d. clarification of class goals and priorities. 1 2 3 4

2. I make arrangements for field trips, plays, speakers, and special projects. 1 2 3 4

4. I move beyond minimum standards in professional development. 1 2 3 4

C. I am a team player.

1. I am involved in team planning and team teaching. 1 2 3 4

2. I support those in need (students, parents, teachers). 1 2 3 4

3. I complete required tasks promptly and completely. 1 2 3 4

4. I serve on committees to identify and address concerns of the whole school. 1 2 3 4

D. I take responsibility for all aspects of my work.

1. In my lessons I --

Plan, 1 2 3 4

Act, 1 2 3 4

Check, 1 2 3 4

Do. 1 2 3 4

2. In my personal life I get adequate

Diet,	1	2	3	4
Exercise,	1	2	3	4
Sleep,	1	2	3	4
Recreation.	1	2	3	4

3. I am accountable to --

Students,	1	2	3	4
Parents,	1	2	3	4
Peers,	1	2	3	4
Administration,	1	2	3	4
Parish.	1	2	3	4

4. I grow professionally through --

Reading,	1	2	3	4
Studying,	1	2	3	4
Interacting with peers,	1	2	3	4
Evaluating myself or asking others for feedback.	1	2	3	4

E. I maintain flexibility while continuing to meet set goals.

1. My daily lesson plans include a back-up plan.	1	2	3	4
2. I adjust lessons to meet students' needs.	1	2	3	4

3. I balance the needs of the class, the school community, and myself. 1 2 3 4
4. I willingly share and accept new ideas. 1 2 3 4

Appendix L

Activity Tally Sheet for Teachers

Teacher _____ Date Due _____

Directions: Place this sheet where you can check it daily. Make one tally mark in each box indicating the activity you have completed. The week you start is week one. Return to Mrs. Green on the due date. Thank you.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Grade level meetings									
Mentor and protégé meetings									
Drop-in visits									
Formal observations by principal									
Conferences with principal									
Evaluation by students									
Observations by peers									
Evaluations by peers									
Evaluations by parents									
Audio taping of Lessons									
Video taping of Lessons									
Journaling									
Use of Hanlon –Green form									

Informal discussions with peers									
New ideas tried									

Appendix M

Elementary Student Classroom Atmosphere Evaluation Form

DIRECTIONS: Fill in the face.

1. When my teacher helps me with my work, my teacher looks . . .

2. When I talk to my teacher about my family, my teacher looks . . .

3. When my teacher is busy and I raise my hand to talk about a problem, my teacher looks . . .

4. When my teacher talks to the class, I feel . . .

5. When I walk into my classroom and look around, I feel . . .

6. When I do not understand something and I ask my teacher about it, my my teacher looks…

7. When I talk to my teacher about my work, my teacher looks . . .

8. When I talk to my teacher about what I do at home, my teacher looks . . .

9. When I have a good idea and I tell my teacher about it, my teacher looks…

10. When my teacher talks to me, I feel . . .

11. When I tell my friends how my classroom looks, I feel . . .

12. When I ask my teacher if I can hand out papers, my teacher looks . . .

13. If my teacher came to visit my home, I would feel . . .

14. When I answer a question in class, my teacher looks . . .

15. When I talk to my teacher about what I do on Saturday, my teacher looks . . .

16. When I bring in things to share with the class, my teacher looks . . .

17. When I talk to my teacher about myself, my teacher looks . . .

18. When I do not understand what to do on a paper and I ask my teacher to tell me again, my teacher looks . . .

19. When I do some of my work wrong, my teacher looks . . .

20. When I have a problem and I tell my teacher about it, my teacher looks . . .

21. When I ask my teacher if I can take a message to the office, my teacher looks . . .

22. When I do good work, my teacher looks . . .

23. When I volunteer to help in the classroom, my teacher looks . . .

24. When I look at the walls and bulletin boards in the classroom, I feel . . .

25. If I had my teacher again next year, I would feel . . .

Note. From The Elementary Principal's Journal by L.W. Hughes and G.C. Ubben, 1989.

Appendix N

Parent Evaluation Form

FALL 2000

Name of Teacher _____

Please circle the number that best suits your response.

1 = never 3 = most of the time

2 = some of the time 4 = always

I. Communication

This teacher communicates clearly with my child. 1 2 3 4

This teacher communicates effectively with my child. 1 2 3 4

This teacher communicates clearly with me. 1 2 3 4

This teacher communicates effectively with me. 1 2 3 4

I feel comfortable discussing school matters with this teacher. 1 2 3 4

This teacher returns notes quickly and professionally. 1 2 3 4

This teacher returns phone calls quickly and professionally. 1 2 3 4

II. Instruction

This teacher explains concepts clearly. 1 2 3 4

This teacher gives assignments which:

- are appropriate. 1 2 3 4
- can be done independently. 1 2 3 4
- are rewarding. 1 2 3 4
- are enjoyable. 1 2 3 4
- are the right length. 1 2 3 4

This teacher grades fairly. 1 2 3 4

My child has learned new concepts this year. 1 2 3 4

III. Classroom Management

The teacher maintains order in the classroom. 1 2 3 4

The classroom atmosphere promotes learning. 1 2 3 4

My child feels comfortable in the class. 1 2 3 4

The teacher treats all children respectfully. 1 2 3 4

The classroom is neat and orderly. 1 2 3 4

There are many things for my child to do in the classroom. 1 2 3 4

If you have specific comments or concerns that have not been addressed, please include them here or on the back.

Thank you for taking your time to fill out this survey and for keeping your responses confidential. Please return this form to Mrs. Green.

Appendix O

Informal Observation Form

On _____, I briefly visited your _____ class.
(date) (Math, English, etc.)

I liked _____

_____

I had a question about _____

_____

_____

Date _____ Signature _____

Comments:

Appendix P

Goals Evaluation Worksheet

Used by the faculty in the final evaluation session, May 2001.

Did we meet or are we meeting this goal? _____
(Write the goal here)
_____

Are we meeting the goal through this plan?

MISSION – PHILOSOPHY – GOALS
1.
2.
3.
4.

GRADE LEVEL MEETINGS
1.
2.
3.

MENTOR AND PROTÉGÉ MEETINGS
1.
2.
3.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATIONS
1.
2.
    A.
    B.
    C.
    D.
    E.

TEACHER EVALUATION PROCESS
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
    A.

B.
C.

6.

DEVELOPMENT

1.
2.

Appendix Q

Table Q1

Raw Data From Concluding Interviews With Faculty Members

	New evaluation methods used	**Former evaluation methods used**
Teacher 1	Parent evaluation, student evaluation, journaling, Hanlon-Green form, audio-tape	Formal observation, peer observation
Teacher 2	Parent evaluation, peer observation, parent expectation letter	Formal observation
Teacher 3	Parent evaluation, peer observation, Hanlon-Green form, audio-tape, drop-in observations	Formal observation, journaling
Teacher 4	Parent evaluation, mentor observation	Formal observation
Teacher 5	Parent evaluation, peer observation	Formal observation, Hanlon-Green form
Teacher 6	Parent evaluation, journaling, Hanlon-Green form, drop-in observations	Formal observation, peer observation
Teacher 7	Parent evaluation, journaling, drop-in observations	Formal observation, peer observation, Hanlon-Green form
Teacher 8	Parent evaluation, student evaluation, Hanlon-Green form, parent expectation letter	Formal observation, peer observation, journaling,
Teacher 9	Parent evaluation, peer evaluation	Formal observation, drop-in observation
Teacher 10	Parent evaluation, student evaluation, audio-tape, journaling	Formal observation, Hanlon-Green form

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	New evaluation methods used	**Former evaluation methods used**
Teacher 11	Parent and student evaluation, Hanlon-Green form	Formal observation, journaling
Teacher 12	Parent evaluation, peer observation, Hanlon-Green form, tally sheet	Formal observation, journaling
Teacher 13	Parent evaluation, peer observation, drop-in observation, Hanlon-Green form, journaling, tally sheet	Formal observation
Teacher 14	Peer observation, parent evaluation, Hanlon-Green form	Formal observation
Teacher 15	Parent expectations letter, Hanlon-Green form, peer observation, journaling	Formal observation
Teacher 16	None	Formal observation, drop-in observations, parent drop-in observations, peer observations, mentor observation
Teacher 17	Parent evaluation, student evaluation, peer observations, Hanlon-Green form, audio-taping	Formal observation, video-taping
Teacher 18	Peer observation, mentor observation, parent expectations letter, Hanlon-Green form, drop-in observations	Formal observations, student self-evaluation
Teacher 19	Parent evaluation, Hanlon-Green form, mentor observations, audio tape, journaling	Formal observations, peer observation

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	New evaluation methods used	**Former evaluation methods used**
Teacher 20	Parent expectations letter, journaling, peer observation, drop-in observations	Formal observations
	Have you seen a change in collaboration among the faculty during the study?	**Have you tried any new ideas as a result of the study?**
Teacher 1	No, because teachers have always talked to each other a lot. Grade level meetings allow time for more in-depth discussion; communication is more worthwhile than before	"Of course I have because I was new to the grade."
Teacher 2	"It seems to be about the same to me as it was last fall [1999]. It seems good and helpful to me."	"They [mentor and grade level teachers from last year] gave me lots of ideas which I still have in folders." [Mentor this year] "especially has been helpful. Every month she has reading projects. She shared with me and we have had tremendous success with them."
Teacher 3	"I see a big increase since the start of last year with my partner teacher and with other faculty members. I talk on a daily basis with my partner teacher this year and I did not do that last year."	"Yes, I have gotten a lot of new and good ideas. I have tried them and they have worked."
Teacher 4	"With my partner teacher we pretty well collaborate every day to some degree. We have formal meetings as well. It probably averages out to once a week."	"Yes. A lot of them . . . there are so many; a lot of them are small, they are not necessarily major." [How to create a spelling list to meet needs of all students.]

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you seen a change in collaboration among the faculty during the study?	**Have you tried any new ideas as a result of the study?**
Teacher 5	"Increased because of the different situation where Pat and I are together every afternoon. We are constantly collaborating." Result of placement but also increased awareness due to study.	"We get new ideas [due to placement]. We'll come up with a theme; she'll have ideas and I'll have ideas.
Teacher 6	"Probably an increase. Being part of the mentor-protégé [program] has caused an increase. Release time for grade level meetings has enhanced formal meetings"	"Yes. I have been reading a lot. And then I have gotten some ideas from teachers." [name game for word studies and ideas for emergent writing came from reading journals.]
Teacher 7	"I think I've collaborated much more with other faculty members since last fall because of concerns with behavior in the classroom. I've collaborated in the hallway . . . sit[ting] down and talking to them . . . having them come to my classroom and model."	"Any new idea they gave me I gave it a try. [The ideas were] a refocus . . . . approaches, more, different ways to approach a student . . . collaborating helped me look at different angles."
Teacher 8	"We communicate a lot more than I did last year." [Because of mentor program.] "This year there are 3 of us and we try real hard to communicate. With the plan we've had to track things. We've had designated times to do that."	"Yes . . . . I've gotten an idea for the classroom, an activity . . . even how to handle situations with parents."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you seen a change in collaboration among the faculty during the study?	**Have you tried any new ideas as a result of the study?**
Teacher 9	"I've collaborated with other faculty members quite often this year. I've noticed . . . an increase in communication."	"I've tried new ideas that I've learned from watching Maryanne, from peer observations, and from grade level meetings." [teaching reading and word recognition.]
Teacher 10	"I have felt a decrease . . . because I'm not in the building. I see an increase because of mentoring."	"Yes, my partner teacher came in with new ideas. She tries what I do and I try her ideas."
Teacher 11	"There has been a greater effort with the upper level teachers . . . to collaborate [about the students]. There's been a definite increase in the way the faculty has been working together on this evaluation plan . . . . In the 30 years I've been here there's not been that level of communication.:	
Teacher 12	"I think I've seen an increase" [especially in preschool staff]." Not an increase in the number of times we meet but an increase in the focusing [of] what we're meeting about." Good to meet with K.	Began using new math series due to collaboration with Kindergarten teachers

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you seen a change in collaboration among the faculty during the study?	**Have you tried any new ideas as a result of the study?**
Teacher 13	"Absolutely an increase . . . . certain things we've done are emphasized more . . .grade level meetings . . . . It's opened up doors where peers can talk to each other about methods, techniques, things that are working, [or] not working." Peer observation . . . was really good to watch someone else teach. Teaching is a very isolated profession."	"I don't know. I'm sure I have. Most of the reasons I've tried them was because in some type of assessment it was something that needed working on."
Teacher 14	"It increased a great deal over what I had done in the past. My collaboration has increased as…I have gotten to know people better in preschool."	"Curriculum ideas, not so much classroom management."
Teacher 15	"I have collaborated quite a bit . . . . It was an increase over the year before." [Could be due to being on staff longer and knowing more faculty members.]	"Yes, I have tried some of them and plan to try some more."
Teacher 16	Collaborated "More than any other place...more because it was a new job. Knowing I was writing on my tally sheet made me mentally take note of communication." Worked with art teacher, Spanish teacher, mentor, and parents	"Yes, the Christmas program came from collaboration and has led to more collaboration…I've gotten music from another church. I've talked to other people who have done it and gotten ideas."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you seen a change in collaboration among the faculty during the study?	**Have you tried any new ideas as a result of the study?**
Teacher 17	Meets with partner teacher weekly to plan together and share the load. This is not new, she has always done this.	Trying to change her lesson planning by planning more interactive lessons with the class. Based on class needs.
Teacher 18	"Definitely an increase in communication. We talk to each other more." Not as many opportunities to meet with upper grade level teachers as she would like. Grade level meetings help. "We're constantly in touch with what works and what does not."	"I have to share those with [my protégé] because she brings those to me."
Teacher 19	"Definitely. Teachers automatically meet at grade levels. "This has provoked a lot of getting together. A lot of good has come out of it."	"A lot of different approaches to different things. Because you've shared more so you've got a lot of new ideas."
Teacher 20	More. "Grade level and special area teachers . . . have sat down and had conversations." (This is new) "Tallying" and discussion keeps "the evaluation process foremost in our minds."	"Yes. A wider view of what students think about me, or what parents think about me. Just because you're thinking about giving out evaluations."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 1	"No, I don't think so because I try hard to keep up with everything. I wish I had more time to go to other schools to observe."	"Oh, yes. I think it's an awareness. They want to be better. Any way they can become better they will try it. If it means observing one another . . . whatever works, they're willing to try it. We've done more of that than we ever did before . . . evaluating ourselves. We've listened to what parents [and] children have to say."
Teacher 2	"No. As far as journals go, I do all the time, at home. As far as conferences, I have not attended any in the past year."	"I think that has helped because it helps people think a lot more about their teaching." She cites evidence of 4 teachers working on their master's degrees – 2 as a result of the mentor-protégé program.
Teacher 3	"This is about the same. I have not attended conferences"	"I think the plan has caused growth. It has increased grade level meetings and committee meetings."
Teacher 4	This teacher reads because she is in graduate school. She attended a conference last year with other preschool teachers.	"I think it has . . . it has [made us] all more aware of things I'll be learning forever. I think working together helps teachers develop and grow because we all have strengths and weaknesses we can offer to one another."
Teacher 5	"No, I don't think so."	"It has made us more aware of what we're doing. Whether it's been recorded or not, but we're thinking. That's good."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 6	"I don't know if I'm reading more because of the study, necessarily, because that's something I've always done." It has not impacted her attendance at conferences.	"Yes, I think it has forced us to be more accountable, and perhaps raise our standards, simply because we had some benchmarks, we had some tallying . . . .It just kind of jogged us to more of an awareness."
Teacher 7	This teacher reads professional journals and also reads required work for her teacher certification classes. She gave no indication of change in her reading patterns or conference attendance due to the study.	"Yes, definitely. I think probably just in listening to everybody else. One of the most important things to come out of this study is the recognition for that time and value for grade level meetings and overlapping grade level meetings. I think the teacher development program at times gave me a focus. Let's focus over here [parent communication, for example] instead of unrealistically trying to do a grand sweep and do everything."
Teacher 8	"My professional reading has not changed. I went to the conference . . . at Emory. I had never been to a SACS conference before."	"Yes, I think we all have to look more closely at ourselves, using different methods. I think it's always good for us to look deeper at ourselves and to share things . . . . Having more designated time promotes it a lot more. Just like students need structure, I think teachers need structure. This year I have been overwhelmed with the classroom and I haven't been as focused on [different types of observation] as I should have."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 9	"I'm not sure that has changed a whole lot with this program. I always go to the Early Childhood Conference."	Yes. "I have noticed that we seem to work together better with an exchange of ideas among the faculty." [She notes faculty members doing in-services on conferences they've attended.] "That is going to be beneficial to all of us. I believe that's changed."
Teacher 10	"No change." She read journals for her master's degree.	"Yes, I think it has brought awareness to everybody that there's more than one way to do things. It's given everybody different ways to observe ourselves and each other. It gives us choices."
Teacher 11	"Conferences, no, but classes, yes. I've gone back to studying technology."	"The plan has brought forth in me the need to change, to grow, to continue learning. I think what has changed is our attitude toward evaluation. It can be teacher friendly. It doesn't have to be . . . feared. We see ourselves as partners in the school . . . not just workers. We are more open to be evaluated . . . to take responsibility for evaluating ourselves….It has made us sensitive to the fact that we are always under a microscope. When you open yourselves up to be evaluated by parents, students, committees, each other . . . sometimes it's very difficult. You're always on the edge. I'm not sure that's a good thing."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 12	The preschool teachers attended two conferences, local and national. She sees a new awareness of the value of attending them and reading early childhood journals. Awareness could be due to plan or to consistency among preschool staff. (The same teachers have worked together for several years.)	"I think that it stimulated growth. . . . This last time that we changed [the plan]. . . we felt that we were very much a part of it." She is hopeful that "we will take all the good things and just . . . really buckle down and . . . take it as far as it can go."
Teacher 13	Increased because of the plan and because of a master's program. Added responsibility of working on new 7th grade caused her to read more. Plan has caused teachers to have more dialogue on their own assessment, not just student assessment.	"Very much so. Again, I think it's just that we've had to think differently. We have used brainstorming, small group discussions, a variety of methods to pool our ideas. . . . We don't often have the chance to dialogue about teachers or teaching methods [before the plan]. So I think it has opened a lot of doors that way."
Teacher 14	"Not really. I always try to read articles. I've always tried to attend conferences."	"Hard to evaluate because the plan started when I got here. I've heard a lot of people express more of an interest in grade level meetings… than they did at the beginning. I've heard people talk more about sharing ideas with their co-teachers."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 15	"No, because I have always done a lot of personal reading and attend all the conferences I can."	"Yes! . . . I think the teachers are taking more responsibility and initiative for their own growth as teachers. . . . We are stretched and challenged to our best potential. I think anytime anything is self-motivated it is more meaningful and has a longer lasting effect." Hanlon-Green and journaling show where weaknesses are day-to-day. Grade level meetings help teachers get new ideas and try new things.
Teacher 16	"I have increased my professional journal reading. I've gotten on the internet searching for articles."	"I have no feedback from last year to look on. It has certainly helped me to talk to the other teachers, and since they're part of the tally program they're pretty much ready to talk to me.
Teacher 17	Not as a result of this study.	"There has been growth in some ways; however, there was resistance from the faculty. . . . The discussion in the hallway was that there was too much to do for the study; that the demands of the study were . . . overwhelming."
Teacher 18	"I don't know that I have changed."	"Absolutely. I think it has changed the way faculty looks at evaluations. You've taken giant steps into the evaluation that is self-created. I think that's your biggest change, allowing the faculty to participate in evaluation."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you changed your reading of journals or attendance at conferences due to the study?	**Has the study stimulated growth and change for the better among the faculty?**
Teacher 19	"I went back to the Early Childhood Conference. I had let that go. I read a little of the journals. It has made me more aware of doing some things."	"I think so definitely. . .when I think of all the sharing we have done just putting the plan in place. We've heard others' ideas."
Teacher 20	Her reading has increased dramatically due to a master's program.	"When we started people were. . . not enthusiastic about evaluation. . . . now they've taken a sense of ownership. . . . There's been a change for the better in attitude toward evaluation. . . . [Teachers] use it as a tool for growth and development."
	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 1	"I think we are putting an effort into having in-services that are practical and worth the teachers' time. I'm not sure [if this is due to the plan.] The committee asks people for suggestions."	"I'm not sure I've seen a big change. Everyone is pretty open. Yes, there's been more communication because we've sent out all of these evaluations. We did offer people the opportunity to fill in those forms."
Teacher 2	"Not that I can tell."	Pink memo and PTO are mentioned. "I don't know if it's improved but it seems a lot stronger."
Teacher 3	"I think they have been more meaningful and helpful than last year. I think [the plan] makes us think about it more. We are more responsible."	"Yes." Increase in newsletters sent home by herself and other teachers. Increase in memos from office, also.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 4	More effective. "The team building involved in developing the plan has been a good thing. People . . . feel like they own it."	Grade level meetings have encouraged teachers to talk more "by design." "I think the plan promotes [communication] by saying, "We want you to get together, we want you to share, and plan and work things out." Parent expectation letter increased communication with parents.
Teacher 5	The same. "Being involved in the plan might make the in-service committee more aware of it."	"It helps with communication with parents. [The plan] keeps us aware of what we need to do as far as newsletters . . . . "
Teacher 6	Group discussions have made in-services more meaningful. "Some newer issues have been brought to light that we haven't thought of before."	No. This teacher already sent newsletters and called parents weekly.
Teacher 7	"I think anytime the faculty is given an opportunity to provide input into what is important to them, then it becomes more meaningful."	More emphasis on teachers conveying information about units of study to parents. Tally sheet causes this teacher to be more consistent in communication with parents. Communication at grade levels and among different grade levels is enhanced.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 8	"I guess we have had more. It was good to collaborate ideas [on the plan itself.]" She liked sitting with teachers outside of her grade level for discussion about the plan. "We can all learn from each other and relate."	"There is a lot more communication than when I first came. I feel like everyone is doing expectations [and] newsletters. You proofread them, you know what is going on in our rooms, with parents. There's more formal time" [for teachers to meet, with grade level and mentor and protégé meetings.]
Teacher 9	"The ones we've had this year have been very meaningful. They've been something we could use, something concrete."	"The biggest change I've noticed . . . has been in the grade level meetings. Just listening to other faculty members talk about how it's helpful to them and maybe how isolated they were before . . . . I just couldn't do without that" [sharing ideas with a mentor.]
Teacher 10	"I think we plan them better. We've talked about what we need and we're meeting those needs."	"Definitely, parent communication has gotten better. We've become more aware of the importance of that [parent communication], and we've been given different ways to make that happen. I think it's better [among faculty] because we're bigger and we're trying harder to communicate."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 11	"Teachers are involved in the planning of the in-services. [More meaningful?] It depends on the presenter and attitude of the person sitting there."	"Communication is better yes. I think parents feel very free to evaluate us. I would say that we [teachers] are much, much more aware that we are a team. I think we talk more. I think we are more open with each other. I see a gentler approach with one another, more compassionate."
Teacher 12	"It made us think about the purpose of in-service. Now we plan the in-service. We've put a lot more into it before we go into it."	"I think your memo every week helps a lot." Preschool parents like a weekly newsletter regarding the entire preschool. Communication among preschool staff has "evolved to the point where they can bring personal issues to the table and work it out and know that it isn't going any further."
Teacher 13	"The plan has had a great effect on it. They've become more meaningful because this is something we have ownership in. This is talking about us."	"Sure. This is the first time evaluations are centered just on me, my classroom. The Hanlon-Green form makes you think about it [communication and dealing with parents.]"
Teacher 14	No prior knowledge to compare. In-services are meaningful to her as they teach her about St. Anne's.	Sees an increase in communication between preschool and Kindergarten teachers. Preschool teachers seem to be more cohesive this year. More communication with parents about specific things.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 15	"I think it has helped people identify areas in which we need in-service. The quality has improved. They are more useful to us. The plan stimulated our thinking on the purpose of evaluation -- how it should be a continual, life-long process."	"I know all the teachers put out newsletters more often. Parent and student evaluations improve communication . . . .Grade level meetings and mentoring meetings [help a lot to improve communication]. Faculty memos are good."
Teacher 16	Helpful. "I would think [the plan has impacted them] because as the teachers talk to each other more they see what there is a need for. There is a communication system established."	"The plan is helping me to do teacher to teacher communication and reminding me to do parent to teacher communication. There is a whole atmosphere of communication, and there are lots of easy ways to communicate . . . in-services, grade level meetings, special area meetings . . . .The plan is already established, and it's set up that periodically we'll have meetings."
Teacher 17	In-services on the plan helped keep us on target. Others didn't seem to focus on teaching.	Teachers try harder to communicate, making a more conscious effort to do so. More newsletters are written now.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have our in-services become more meaningful as a result of the study?	**Has communication within the school changed during the study (including parents, students, teachers)?**
Teacher 18	"I have to use the word ownership when I think of in-services . . . . The formation of the committee to schedule and come up with new and innovative in-services is delightful. They are open to input on new ideas from the faculty. I can see a direct correlation between the need for in-services and what we have."	"I think we do a great job of communicating. That is speaking from . . . a heightened awareness that you have instilled in us in communicating. It has been brought to the front burner through this process . . . The faculty is more aware of what they're communicating . . . This has brought to the front of their minds that communication needs to be done at all levels within this community. I would say this has increased by a small percentage. I still think teachers communicate mainly with those around them or beside them, whereas reaching all floors, buildings, and levels has not increased that much."
Teacher 19	"I think so. We have an in-service committee, so I guess that has formulated some better preparedness into looking into what should happen."	"I would say there is . . . a lot more communication. Communication seems to have eased among faculty. It comes more freely. I don't know [about communication with parents]. I have problems with that sometimes."
Teacher 20	"Our in-services have always been pretty good. I don't think because of the plan we've had a big change in whether they are meaningful or not."	Hasn't really noticed it. Parent and peer evaluations and grade level meetings force teachers to communicate more often and openly than usual.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the mentor and protégé program become stronger as a result of the study?	**Have your feelings of stress related to observation changed since the study began?**
Teacher 1	This teacher was in the program for the 1st year only. Recognizes the importance of making the protégé feel a part of the faculty. Sees need for an outline for mentor to follow.	The idea of drop-ins, and parent and student evaluations was stressful. "I don't worry about it [formal observation] as much as I did years ago. I've gotten used to it. I think for me there will always be a certain amount of stress regarding evaluation no matter how prepared I am."
Teacher 2	Second year as protégé. "I think the good thing about it is there is a set time for it this year. I don't know if it's gotten stronger or not, but the scheduling is better."	"I think any type of evaluation is always a little bit nerve wracking . . . I don't think anything is going to change that."
Teacher 3	This is her second year as a protégé. "It seems weaker this year. Last year we knew when the meetings were going to be, and this year there seem to be fewer meetings."	"I am not as stressed when you come in now…More people are coming into the room observing and I am used to it. Now it is not the only thing I am being judged on. There are informal and peer observations. More goes into the big picture than one formal observation."
Teacher 4	This is her second year as a protégé. "I think it has become stronger since last year. This year the scheduling seems to be a little more concrete."	"Anytime you're going to be observed, that's stressful. I like for you to observe me because you notice the little things that I don't realize. I welcome the stress . . . . I found the observation to be beneficial. [Having options made a difference in stress] "because . . . it's not one person alone."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the mentor and protégé program become stronger as a result of the study?	**Have your feelings of stress related to observation changed since the study began?**
Teacher 5	She was a mentor last year. "I thought it was wonderful last year." No idea of change this year.	"I always get nervous, and I guess I always will before a formal observation . . . The peer [evaluation] wouldn't cause as much stress" as the principal's.
Teacher 6	This is her 2nd year as a mentor. "I think it is more beneficial this year because she and I are . . . grade level partners. We have a wider common base from which to start."	"In some ways the process of coming up with this has been a little stressful . . . . Now it is being implemented it would actually relieve [stress]. . . . Just knowing what the expectations are in the plan [reduces stress].
Teacher 7	No experience.	"I think there will always be a heightened amount of stress regarding the formal evaluation, . . .even a drop in. I've tried to be more open about asking the other teachers for help, to come into my room and make a suggestion . . . . Having the study gave me suggestions on how to cope with stressful situations . . . . There was a prescription right there . . . if I wanted to choose any one of those things.
Teacher 8	Second year as a mentor. "It's much stronger because you give time for the observations, the meetings."	"That will never change for me. I'm still a child when it comes to wanting to have approval. It's good for me because I've had to do it more. I don't feel as uncomfortable with [pop-ins] anymore."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the mentor and protégé program become stronger as a result of the study?	**Have your feelings of stress related to observation changed since the study began?**
Teacher 9	Not involved this year.	"I'm always stressed in evaluation. What I find . . . less stressful are the informal observations [drop-ins]." More options also reduce stress – like the audio tape.
Teacher 10	She has been a protégé and a mentor. "I think it's more structured and that's better for communication." Observations make it better now.	"I think the stress is reduced because we have choices. I know there are other options I can use to help myself or redeem myself." The formal evaluation still causes stress.
Teacher 11	She is a mentor for the 1st time this year. "I'm still trying to find my way through it for the first time."	"I think it's increased in some ways: filling out forms, tallying. I'm not as stressed when the principal walks into the room now. Because I think the principal also sees what evaluation is. She is one person evaluating."
Teacher 12	No involvement.	"I don't know that they've changed. I don't get too stressed out about evaluation." Scheduling a post conference was stressful last year.
Teacher 13	No involvement.	"The evaluation system is less stressful. Partly because the more you dialogue about anything with anybody you become more comfortable with it. Also, I have seen another side of the evaluation process. It really is, truly, a way to help me."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the mentor and protégé program become stronger as a result of the study?	**Have your feelings of stress related to observation changed since the study began?**
Teacher 14	She was a protege last year. She thinks the program is good. She sees potential problems with protégés selecting their own mentors, if they choose a friend.	"The stress level has gone down a lot. I haven't felt as judged as I did before [in another school] . . . . You are not looking for every little . . . thing to criticize. You've been more open to methods that may not be your methods of teaching . . . if they're effective."
Teacher 15	She has been a mentor for two years. "I feel like it is more effective this year. People are more comfortable with it this year . . . because they know how it's supposed to work."	She has never been stressed by evaluation, has been a music teacher before, and is used to being in the public eye. She is stressed by the paperwork in this program. "I feel like it has reduced stress for being evaluated . . . People feel like it's not all a one shot thing. People can do things different ways that they're more comfortable with."
Teacher 16	She is a protégé this year. The program is "very helpful to a new person. There has been a real sense of everyone wanting to help."	"I've not felt too much stress . . . . Just knowing someone could walk in at any time keeps me on my toes."
Teacher 17	Not involved.	Reduced a little due to many options. "We all feel that the one formal observation hangs over us that determines if we stay at St. Anne's." She liked the video tape.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the mentor and protégé program become stronger as a result of the study?	**Have your feelings of stress related to observation changed since the study began?**
Teacher 18	She has been a mentor for two years. "I feel that this year we are more consistent and have provided more opportunities for the mentor and protégé program to operate. The teachers were anxious for it. These are teachers I hope will stay with us if we get them started."	"At the beginning of this evaluation I was stressed." She couldn't determine where to put tally marks and could not see the big picture. Her stress level now is lower. "It's much lower. I have seen the goals. They are concrete. They are written down for me."
Teacher 19	She was a mentor for 1 year. Did not like giving up her "sacred" classroom time to mentor.	She is not as stressed because there are more elements, not just one observation. Paperwork increased stress for her.
Teacher 20	Not involved.	She was never stressed about evaluation. The new process seems to make it a little more exciting. She looks forward to peer observations and feedback from peers and administration. She hopes to grow from feedback.
	Has the plan changed since we began to use it?	**Is the plan more or less effective now than when we began to use it?**
Teacher 1	The plan seemed simple at first because she thought we were only doing the Hanlon-Green form. Then it became very complicated, now she understands it much better. "It has gotten simpler."	"The changes have been effective. It's very thorough."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the plan changed since we began to use it?	**Is the plan more or less effective now than when we began to use it?**
Teacher 2	She likes the way faculty meetings have been set up this year, with set days for grade level and committee meetings. It seems to have cut down on her meeting times.	No response.
Teacher 3	"We've worked on the plan. We've changed it; what worked and what didn't work. We revised it accordingly."	"It has become more effective but not simpler. There is lots of paperwork, but we keep track of it all."
Teacher 4	"It has changed because we have tweaked it here and there. We discussed and found weak places and words that need to be changed."	"It has definitely been effective because we have worked and worked and worked . . . . I like that I don't have to do all of it, that I have some choice."
Teacher 5	The plan has changed and become simpler. She understands it better now and says the tally sheet and other changes we made at the meetings helped simplify it.	She says it is more effective now.
Teacher 6	"I think it definitely changed, because of the in-service meetings." She says we tried new ideas after seeing things that did or did not work.	"Because we said, 'This does not work; that would make it simpler.' Because we were allowed the flexibility to take out and add in our newer ideas."
Teacher 7	"I think our plan has changed since we first started to use it, and I think it has become simpler, probably because we created the tally sheet."	"I think it's an effective plan . . . . It delineates what we need to be thinking about. It gives us a first and second line of choices as to . . . how to help with teacher development by the things that are on that tally sheet."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the plan changed since we began to use it?	**Is the plan more or less effective now than when we began to use it?**
Teacher 8	"I think it's simpler now because we've shaped it. I think having it in place a little longer helps… It seems that there are more of us doing it this year, i.e. expectations."	"It's always good."
Teacher 9	"I'm not sure that it's become simpler. We have expanded the options that we had before . . . . We've made a lot of changes. What's really been nice . . . is we weren't told that we had to do this or that. We all had a say in it. We started off more idealistic and found out that a lot of things didn't work."	
Teacher 10	"I think it's become simpler as we developed it." Tally sheet and becoming familiar with the process helped simplify it.	"It is more effective."
Teacher 11	"I don't know if it's become simpler. I think it has become more refined." She had high expectations of the principal, wanted her to do too much.	"The faculty took ownership with Mrs. Green . . . . Each person has made the plan her own."
Teacher 12	"I think it's simpler. Some of that simplicity may be nothing more than that we understand it better . . . . I think the freedom to express yourself the way you feel best has probably been the best way it has evolved."	"I feel very comfortable with it now . . . .I keep that [tally sheet] and I write down when I meet with you and it's become a part of doing it . . . . It was a planned conversation."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the plan changed since we began to use it?	**Is the plan more or less effective now than when we began to use it?**
Teacher 13	"I like the fact that . . . it seems to have opened up other possibilities other than always having the principal come in and . . . watch your class. Using videos and tapes and each other, I think there's a whole spectrum of possibilities."	"I think the changes have been effective because we've tried to make it more user-friendly, less time-consuming . . . . I think it has gotten simpler."
Teacher 14	"Yes, it has changed, but not real major changes. We started out with a good plan that we sort of fine-tuned."	"I think we've streamlined some things by combining where we had a lot of different goals and objectives . . . . It has become more teacher friendly. It has had more teacher input than systems usually do."
Teacher 15	"I think things have been refined as we have gone along. So that we are trying to streamline it . . . . We will work the kinks out of it as everybody gets used to things."	"I'm not sure that it's simpler, because there are more options and having to document this and that makes it more complicated. However, I think that also makes it more valid. I think this on-going and many-faceted evaluation is more valuable to you and to the teacher than anything based on one class period's formal evaluation."
Teacher 16	"I have not seen a big change. "I've seen ideas thrown out, but I've only been looking at it for a few months."	She is a new teacher this year and did not answer this question.
Teacher 17	"I think so. I think the end result is more beneficial than it was at the beginning."	"I think you have opened it up to give us more options and to have the options clearer to us. It has many more dimensions."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Has the plan changed since we began to use it?	**Is the plan more or less effective now than when we began to use it?**
Teacher 18	"Simpler, yes, by being more flexible; more opportunities for it . . . . I think we've polished it . . . we've refined it. I think it has been put to the test and we've thrown things out that haven't worked."	"More effective now."
Teacher 19	"Maybe a little more complex or a little more intense. But we put all the pieces in place . . . it makes it more intense but not necessarily stressful. Complex may be the word. Not problematic."	"More effective. We didn't go into changing anything unless we were trying it, and we knew it had to be done this way to be better."
Teacher 20	"Yes, it definitely has grown and changed. We have looked at the goals and looked at our meetings and offered suggestions and changed things then and there . . . . It seems like it has evolved . . . . It is pared down to a good feeling . . . . This is manageable . . . . This is doable and it's worthwhile to do it."	"Yes, I would say [the changes] have been effective."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 1	"Yes, a big one was the audiotaping and listening to myself . . . . I thought, "If someone talked to you in that tone, even though I didn't mean it that way, I would probably be hurt. It wasn't what I said, it was the tone . . . . I didn't hear it in the classroom until I listened to the tape." She also learned to ask children about displaying their papers, to do spot checks on the amount of homework, and to talk to parents who seem distant.	"It has made me think about a lot more than I would ever have thought about. It has made me re-evaluate myself. However, I have to admit that at the end of last year, I felt picked apart . . . . But, you need to improve yourself. You have to know where you have to improve. You need someone else to point that out to you, because you don't see it."
Teacher 2	"I have tried to . . . . The Hanlon-Green is good because it gives you a nice kind of retrospect, and everything is easier in retrospect. Some days you say, "I could have done this," and, "I should have done this." And some days you say, "Yeah, I did ok."	She didn't have time for journaling. It was difficult for her.
Teacher 3	"I have changed lots of things in my teaching. Some are due to the plan, and some are because of being a new teacher . . . . I have emulated [my mentor's] techniques. I have learned to recognize the positives, not the negatives."	"It is a good plan. I hope we keep using it and following through . . . . It has improved the evaluation process. It has decreased stress in evaluation for most teachers."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 4	This teacher has thought about her body language and facial expressions in the classroom as a result of talking about the student evaluations. She has become more aware of the importance of her body language to the children. She does not think she has changed her teaching a lot."	"I think letting the teachers be a part of the process is a good thing, because it is something we have to live with . . . . By letting us be a part of it you have valued our opinion. You've shown us that you value us."
Teacher 5	This teacher said self-evaluations, especially the Hanlon-Green form, caused her to reflect on her teaching. She also used the formal evaluations from years past as a reflective tool. Talking about evaluation during the planning meetings was also helpful to her. It gave her time to think about how she teaches. Changes in her teaching this year may be due simply to a grade level change.	None
Teacher 6	"Yes. There is higher accountability." Parent evaluations, audio and video taping caused this person to reflect on her teaching. She reviewed someone else's video tape and began to think of her own teaching style. She changed some content after reading journals.	"I think it has been a growing process and a stretching process for the faculty . . . . I think the hardest part is behind us. Now it is just the implementations, not so much the writing of it."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 7	Yes. This teacher said the Hanlon-Green form caused her to think about her teaching, notably the sections on using positive statements and on communicating with parents. She is also more comfortable inviting peers into her room because everyone on the faculty is involved in peer observations, not just her. She is learning to use feedback from others to help herself grow and change. She has also thought more about her teaching style and why she does certain things in her room.	She feels fortunate to be working in a school where a study is taking place. She believes that the administrator has set an example for the teachers to continue to learn and grow, not to "rest on your laurels."
Teacher 8	"Yes, every time I'm evaluated. Things I could do better or that I don't do well, strengths and weaknesses . . . . There are things I am more consciously aware of through more evaluation . . . . I'm more clear-cut . . . . I think my expectations are clearer with my students."	"I do feel bad this year because I feel there are times when I haven't gotten in to it as much as I should have. But I think we do what we can."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 9	"I think two things in this study that have really helped me in the way I teach are the peer observations and the audio taping. In watching [my mentor], I was able to see that the way I taught preschool did not apply to first grade, and I really had to change how I talked to the children and the way I present things . . . . And by listening to myself on tape I was able to see that I called on maybe the boys more than I did the girls, or my tone of voice . . . . I have changed a lot this year. In fact, I know I'm not the same that I was last year. I feel that I'm a little bit better of a teacher because of the observations, the evaluations we've used these past couple of years."	"It's been stressful for all of us . . . . I really didn't feel like I had given as much as I should have or could have. For myself, it's been helpful, and I feel like I learned a lot, and . . . I'm a better teacher because of it."
Teacher 10	This teacher said the audio tape caused her to reflect on her teaching. She learned to slow down and wait for the children to be quiet before she began to talk. She has learned to have patience. It was scary to her at first.	"I think it's incredible that this could happen. That we can just completely, not necessarily change everything we do, but add and modify. And everybody did it. I know the mentor program is a big plus."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 11	This teacher said the [Hanlon-Green form] has caused her to think about her purpose in teaching, who is she as a teacher, why she teaches, how she relates to the children. She received feedback from parents that caused her to change how she related to some students. She changed her attitude toward tests, realizing that they measure how well she is teaching as well as how the children are learning.	"I didn't need the camera or the tape recorder on, because I started hearing it in my own head. And the other thing is that parent conferences are so valuable . . . . It's looking at it like we're a team."
Teacher 12	"I don't know if I teach differently. I think what I teach is different . . . . We've changed how we team-teach. We seem to be teaching more universally the same. Not the same style, but more consistency in the way we are teaching all of the children."	"I think it was a lot bigger than you thought it would be."
Teacher 13	Through the Hanlon-Green form this teacher saw patterns in her teaching. She journaled about the patterns and then made the following changes: better communication with parents through newsletters and notes home, better lesson planning, more positive attitude toward paper-work.	"I'm glad that we had to do it . . . . The evaluation of teachers has always been a very stressful, convoluted process . . . . I feel more comfortable in [evaluation] now that I understand the purpose better."

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 14	"Yes . . . because I realized I wasn't just being evaluated the one time a year that the principal . . . just popped in. In a very real sense I was being evaluated every time I walked into the classroom [through peer, parent, student and principal evaluation]." Her teaching has changed through the awareness of being "on" every day and through preparing more detailed lesson plans.	None
Teacher 15	This teacher has thought more about intangible things through the study: tone of voice, facial expression, and patience. Also, she thinks more about working with other teachers. "It challenges us to keep going one step further and improving."	"I think it has been good because I think all of us now are thinking about the true reason for evaluation should be to improve our performance as teachers; to improve what we do with the children. [We are]more thoughtful and challenged about our work."
Teacher 16	"Knowing that someone would come in and watch my class made me stop and think about what I was doing." Journaling caused her to reflect on her teaching and to make changes in planning and management. "My organizational skills improved, my planning skills improved."	"I think it's a good idea . . . very systematic and clear. I think there are parts of this evaluation process that would help teachers at different times during their teaching profession." She wonders if teachers will continue to use the program now that the study is over.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 17	The audio and video tape were the most helpful to this teacher because of their visual or auditory nature. They show the most important parts of teaching, how clearly you are getting ideas across to the children. "I have learned not to clutter my teaching, to downsize my teaching, and to be more focused."	"I think we all resisted it . . . because it looked like more than we had ever had to deal with before . . . . I think it would be good for a new teacher coming in."
Teacher 18	"I envision a camera rolling in my classroom . . . . It causes me to pause and to stop and to think how I sound and how I act . . . . I find myself thinking, "How do the students perceive me?" (She used audio tape, not video tape.)	She would like to eliminate journaling because it was hard for her and bothered her that she didn't do it. She likes reserving time for grade level meetings but worries that teachers don't take them seriously enough. She hopes the plan will be used for many years and that we will not return to the old method.
Teacher 19	"It has provoked a lot of introspection." She has asked herself questions about her teaching. She has become more aware of the "impact and importance of every day." Her planning is better now.	At times she thought she would "bow out" because the program was too difficult. She didn't like the paper work, especially the cards recording minutes of meetings. However, she grew to like them as they helped her remember to do things.

(table continues)

Table Q1 (continued)

	Have you thought about how you teach as a result of this plan? Have you made any changes in how you teach?	**Do you have any other thoughts about the plan that you would like to share now?**
Teacher 20	"You become more aware, more conscious of your techniques, how you're coming across to people, whether you're effective or not." She sees no change in herself due to the program.	"I feel like our evaluation plan is practically on the cutting edge of being modern and more detailed and thought about."

Appendix R

Table R1

Themes Derived From Concluding Teacher Interviews: Facilitators of Growth

Facilitators of Growth: More active teacher involvement in evaluation	
Self-evaluation	***Evaluation by others***
Evaluating selves (1,8,11)*	Peer observations (1,7,9,10,14)
Using audio tape (1,6,9,10,17,18)	Using parent evaluation (1,6,11)
Using video tape (6,17)	Using student evaluation (1,4)
Using Hanlon-Green form (2,5,7,11,13,15)	Meeting with peers and administrators (4,5,7,11)
Reflecting on formal observations (5)	Being observed informally (drop-ins) (14,16)
Motivating self (1,9,11,19)	Using parent expectation letters (5)
Journaling (6,13,15,16)	
Tallying (5,6,7,10,16,20)	
Working on the plan	
Developing the process (11,12)	
Participating in process (8,14)	
Continuing the process (12, 15)	
Increasing accountability (6)	
Raising standards (6,7)	
Designating time (8)	
Providing choices (10)	
Developing ownership (12, 15, 11)	
Planning in-services (10,11,12,18)	
Working together (4,9,16)	
Scheduling meetings more effectively (4)	
Designating time (8,13)	
Better process of communication	
Meeting with special area teachers (20)	
Meeting with mentor (3,6,10)	
Recording minutes of meetings (19)	
Dialoguing about teaching methods (13)	
Teaching and talking with a partner (3,4,5,8,11)	

*Number refers to teacher in Table Q1.

(table continues)

Table R1 (continued)

Facilitators of growth: Better process of communication (continued)
Increasing memos from office to teachers (3,5,12,15)*
Sending more newsletters to parents (2,3,5,7,8,12,13,14,15,17)
Holding mentor and protege meetings (5,6,8,9,10,15,17)
Increasing committee meetings (3,7)
Increasing grade level meetings (3,4,6,7,8,9,13,14,15,16,18,19,20)
Overlapping grade level meetings (7, 13,14)
Sharing strengths (4,8,9,16,19)
Identifying weaknesses (4,15)
Thinking -- brainstorming and group discussion (2,5,8,13)
Listening to each other – sharing ideas (1,7,8,9,11,13,14,16,17,18,19,20)
Different attitude toward communication
Communication seemed more worthwhile (1,2); stronger (2,17)
Teachers tried harder to communicate (17)
Teachers were more aware of being a team (11)
Teachers shared on a more personal level (12)
Teachers had more compassion toward one another (11)
Teachers realized importance of parent communication (1,7,10,13)
Teachers using outside sources for professional growth
Taking courses for personal growth (11)
Attending conferences (4,8,12,19)
Increasing reading of professional journals (12,13,16)
Entering master's programs (2,4,13)
Increased awareness
Awareness of need to grow, to be better (1,7,11)
Value of continued learning (4)
Awareness of how we are teaching (5,6)
Awareness of different ways to do things (10)
Understanding purpose of evaluation (13, 15)

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1. (table continues)

Table R1 (continued)

Facilitators of growth: Increased awareness
Awareness that teachers are constantly under scrutiny from many groups (11, 18)*
Realization of need to change teaching style (5)
Heightened awareness of importance of communication (18)
New awareness of real purpose in teaching – helping children grow in all dimensions (11)

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1.

Table R2

Themes Derived From Concluding Teacher Interviews: Outcomes

Outcomes: Change in attitude toward evaluation	
Evaluation not feared (11)*	
Purpose of evaluation to improve work with children (15)	
Teachers take more responsibility for their own growth (15)	
New program is teacher friendly (11)	
Evaluation is a tool for growth and development (13,15,20)	
Evaluation is more self-created (18)	
Teachers are partners in the school (11)	
Teacher looks forward to peer and administrative feedback (20)	
Teachers feel valued (4)	
Teachers are more open to evaluation (11)	
Changes in stress	
Increase in stress	***Decrease in stress***
Drop-in observations added stress (1)	Peer observation was less stressful than formal observation (5)
Developing and using plan was stressful (6, 9, 11,15,18,19)	Formal evaluations less stressful (1,3,11)
Parent evaluations were stressful (1)	Plan provided ways to deal with problems, reduced stress (7)
Scheduling observations was stressful (12)	Principal was open to many methods of evaluation (14)
Student evaluations were stressful (1)	Knowing expectations of plan reduced stress (6)
Evaluation was always stressful (1,2,4,5,7,8,9,10,13)	Teachers became used to more people coming into the classroom (3)
Realization of constant scrutiny by peers, parents, students, administration led to higher anxiety (1,11)	Choices of types of evaluations reduced stress (3,4,9,10,15,17,19)
	Drop-ins less stressful (8,9)
	New evaluation system less stressful (3,13,14,18)
Changes due to stress	
Stress led to change and growth (4, 20)	

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1. (table continues)

Table R2 (continued)

Outcomes: Changes in in-service	
In-service more meaningful	***Teachers developed ownership***
More practical (1)*	Teachers were responsible (3,4,11)
Established a communication system (16)	More effort put into planning (10,12,19)
More helpful (3,6); useful (15)	Teachers felt ownership (4,13,18)
More concrete (9)	Teachers learned from each other (8)
More meaningful through group input, discussion, and realization of purpose (3,6,7,9,13,14)	Teachers talked about their needs and met them (10,11,16)
More effective (4)	Teachers thought more about in-service due to plan (3,5,15)
Touched on newer issues (6)	
Worth teachers' time (1)	
Quality of in-service	
Effectiveness depended on attitude of teacher and quality of presenter (1)	
In-service did not focus on teaching (17)	
Better quality (15)	
No change in in-service due to plan (2,5,20)	
In-services on the evaluation and development plan	
Gave teachers a sense of ownership (4)	
Kept teachers on target (17)	
Built sense of teamwork (4)	
Increased communication among faculty (16)	
Stimulated thinking – evaluation as a life-long process (15)	
Overlapping grade-level work was good for the teachers (8)	
New ideas about teaching	
Sources of new ideas	
Teaching a new grade (1,5,10); Grade level partners (2,5,6,7,8,10,12,16)	
Mentor (2,9,18)	
Reading professional journals (6,8)	
Peer observations (9)	
Establishing curricular themes (5)	
New methods of evaluation (13,20)	

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1. (table continues)

Table R2 (continued)

Outcomes: New ideas about teaching
Actual idea tried
Spelling list to meet different needs (4)*
Name games for word studies (6)
Emergent writing (6)
Different ways to approach students (7)
Handling situations with parents (8)
Teaching reading (2,6,9)
New ways to plan lessons (17)
New method of student assessment (13)
Asked children for their input in classroom matters (1)
Did spot checks with parents on homework amount (1)
Needed to call on boys and girls equally (9)
Waited for quiet before speaking to class (10)
Developed more patience (10)
Used more positive statements with students (3,7)
Recognized patterns in her teaching; lack of good planning led to discipline problems (13, 16)
Changed her body language, facial expressions (4)
Curriculum ideas (14)
Christmas music program (16)
Adopted new math series for preschool after talking to kindergarten teachers (12)
Needed to change tone of voice when talking to children (1)

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1. (table continues)

Table R2 (continued)

Outcomes: Increased communication	
Changes in attitude toward communication	***Changes in process of communication***
Communication more worthwhile (1)*	Special area teacher meetings (20)
Teachers tried harder to communicate (11,17)	Parent and peer evaluation forced communication (20)
Teachers shared on a more personal level (12,14)	Team teaching situation required collaboration (8,11)
Communication was easier because of "atmosphere of" (15) and "heightened awareness of" communication (18)	Dialoguing about teaching methods (13)
Communication seemed stronger (2, 17)	Peer observation (7,13)
Communication among faculty was easier (18)	Parent evaluation focused on one teacher, not whole school (13)
Realization of importance of parent communication (1,7, 10, 13)	Parents felt free to evaluate teachers (11)
Communication more worthwhile (1)	Teachers more aware they were a team (11)
Clearer focus at grade level meetings (12)	Scheduled meetings promoted communication (4,8)
Communication more helpful (2)	Parent expectation letter (4,8)
	Tally sheet (4)
	Mentor-protégé meetings (8,9,15)
	Discussed strategies that worked and didn't work (1,13)
	Established communication system (16)
	Discussed methods and techniques (13)

*Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1. (table continues)

Table R3

Themes Derived From Concluding Teacher Interviews: Hindrances to Growth

Hindrances to growth: Problems with communication
Communication still done mostly with teachers physically close by (10,18)*
Teacher wanted more meetings with grade level partner (18)
Still some problems with parent communication (19)
Resistance by faculty
Teachers resisted the study (17, 19)
Demands were too much, excessive paperwork, difficulty of program (17, 19)
Journaling too hard (2)
Stressful for all (9)
Teachers on edge due to constant evaluations by parents, students, peers (11)
Documenting several options is complicated (15)
Teachers not using grade level meetings to full advantage (18)
Not involved fully in the program (8, 9)

* Numbers refer to teachers in Table Q1.

Appendix S

Table S1

Raw Data From Grade Level Meetings: First Era

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
Preschool, K, and first	1	Progress on ADHD student	Focus on positive with students, not negative	
		Ways to settle children when they are restless	Some things teachers see as punishments are seen as rewards by students	
		Follow through important in discipline		
		Children stay out late with parents causing problems in school		
Art, guidance, PE, Second, & third	1	How to handle unexcused absences	Writing a letter to parents about new PE activities	
		Silliness after holidays	Policy for teachers completing testing forms.	
		Timing for a group project		
		Teachers sharing duty for recess and detention		
		Meeting needs of immature students		
		Teaching multiplication		

(table continues)

Table S1 (continued)

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
Russian, music, fourth, fifth, & sixth	1	How to reinforce positive student behavior	How to deal with a difficult parent	
		Feelings of lack of knowledge of content area		
Preschool	3	Thanksgiving meal	New Advent theme	Scheduled Saxon math
		Visit from St. Nick	Evaluated Thanksgiving meal – new plan for next year	Final details on math in-service
		Catholic Schools Week		

[a] Number of meetings

Table S2
Raw Data From Grade Level Meetings: Second Era

Grade	**No.**	**Shared ideas**	**New ideas**	**In-service ideas**
Preschool	2	Field trip	People to contact for transportation unit	National conference
		Lenten prayer services	Separate music program for preschool	
		Discovery Toy Read-A-Thon	New schedule for PE during swim unit	
		Possible retained students	Changing Saxon math units after two week trials	
		Parent conferences		
		New life unit (spring)		
Second	9	Landform maps	Different units	
		Bread for Mass	Science fair	
		Field trips to Rocky Mount, Bays Mountain	May crowning	
		Curriculum areas	Integrating art	
		End of year process		
		Music program		
		Behavior		
		Retention of students		
		Religion activities		

(table continues)

Table S2 (continued)

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
Third	2	Curriculum areas	Oral language projects (2)	
		Testing information	Techniques for managing difficult children	
		Prayer service		
		Students on medication		
		Behavior issues		
		End of year paper work		
Fourth	1	Research paper		
		Progress of each class		
		Pacing of subjects		
Special area teachers	1	Removing students from class for poor behavior	Art and music need more time between classes	
		Lack of planning time	Need for textbooks – especially language	
		Scheduling problems	Using parent helpers	
		Need for textbooks in music, language	Ask Bristol, Virginia, for music texts	
		Communication with classroom teacher on behavior problems	Change special area schedule mid-year to stop discipline problems	
		Scheduling makeups		
		Computer class often skipped by teachers		

[a] Number of meetings.

Table S3
Raw Data From Grade Level Meetings: Third Era

Grade	**No.** [a]	**Shared ideas**	**New ideas**	**In-service ideas**
Preschool	9	Curriculum issues	Saxon math	National conference
		Monthly plans	Nutrition curriculum	
		Themes for year	Second Step	
		DARE visit	Friday Club	
		Field trips	New materials	
		Community helpers	Sign-in and sign-out log	
		Halloween & Advent	Addendum to handbook	
		Thanksgiving	Building program	
		Pokemon	Preschool needs	
		Materials	Yard sale for fundraising	
		Snacks		
		Discipline		
		Confidentiality		
		Special areas		
Kindergar-ten	8	Curriculum	New report card	
		Pacing	Handwriting (in preschool)	
		Computers	Speakers	
		Alphabet – new order	Reading specialist	
		Assessment	Religion schedule	
		Motivating children	Saxon phonics	
		Community helpers		
First	10	Stories	Self portraits	
		Creating class rules	Redo calendar time	
		Feast days	Work for early finishers	
		Curriculum	Cafeteria behavior	
		Parent letter	How to use volunteers	
		Staying calm	Ideas for student teacher	

(table continues)

Table S3 (continued)

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
First		Beginning of school	Election activities	
		Daily logistics		
		Materials		
		Open house		
		Midpoints & grading		
		Class management		
		Seating charts		
		Discipline		
		Thanksgiving ideas		
		Field trip		
Second	2	First day of school		
		Information for students		
		Native American unit		
		Parent volunteers, letter		
		Field trip		
Third	4	Oral report	Web sites	
		Curriculum		
		Parent letter	Journal cover	
		Colonial Days	Manners unit	
		Class schedule		
Fourth	6	Pacing	Computer programs	
		Curriculum	Overview of year	
		Journals	Assessment	
		Gary Paulson	Accelerated Reader	
		Grading		
		Computer moms		
		Organization of units		
		Supplies		
		Oops book		
		AM and PM duty		

(table continues)

Table S3 (continued)

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
Fourth		Dismissal		
		PE clothes		
		Class management		
		Schedules		
		Lunch – half days		
		Form for special student		
		Lesson line		
		Tardies and absences		
		Thanksgiving meal		
		Research skills		
Fifth & sixth	7	Curriculum	Journal planning	
		Field trips	Teacher relationships	
		Working together	Three-way Scheduling	
		Parent letter		
		Special needs students		
		Class environment		
		Field trips		
		Daily schedule		
		First day		
Special areas	2	Parent letter	Document problems	
		Classroom teachers	Sharing AM and PM duty	
		Discipline		
		“Red Flags” for children having a hard day		
		Preschool time limits		
		Registration		

(table continues)

Table S3 (continued)

Grade	No. [a]	Shared ideas	New ideas	In-service ideas
Special areas		Attendance, grading		
		Snacks		
		Mentor and protégé		
		Faculty meetings		
		Starting date		
		Timeliness		
		Plan book		
		Pink memo		
		Make-up classes		
Counselor and Kindergar-ten teacher	2	Class schedule	Dealing with ADHD child	
		Regressive behavior		
Friday Club teachers	1	Schedule for year		

[a] Number of meetings.

Appendix T

Table T1

Strengths and Problems of the Original and New Teacher Evaluation and Development Systems

	Original (Fall 1999)								New (Winter 2001)							
	1		2		3		4		1		2		3		4	
Survey item	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Teacher input																
Use of peer evaluations	1	5	3	15	8	40	8	40	0	0	1	5	11	52	9	43
Self-reflective process for teachers	0	0	0	0	7	35	13	65	0	0	0	0	7	33	14	66
Teacher accountability	0	0	0	0	8	40	12	60	0	0	0	0	4	19	17	81
Many components in the process	0	0	2	10	11	55	6	30	0	0	0	0	7	33	14	66
Teacher goal setting	0	0	0	0	4	20	16	80	0	0	0	0	5	23	16	76
Teacher consideration																
Use of informal evaluations	1	5	1	5	7	35	11	55	0	0	2	10	5	23	14	66
Use of formal evaluations	0	0	0	0	7	35	13	65	0	0	0	0	5	23	16	76
Prior notice of formal evaluation	0	0	1	5	4	20	15	75	0	0	0	0	5	23	16	76
A non-threatening process	0	0	0	0	7	35	13	65	0	0	2	10	5	23	14	66
A teacher-centered process	0	0	1	5	7	35	12	60	0	0	1	5	3	14	17	81
Open-ended and in-depth format	0	0	0	0	8	40	12	60	0	0	0	0	7	33	13	62
Precise, thorough form	0	0	0	0	10	50	10	50	0	0	1	5	11	52	9	43
Form given in advance to new teachers	0	0	0	0	5	25	14	70	0	0	0	0	2	10	14	66

(table continues)

Table T1 (continued)

	Original (Fall 1999)								New (Winter 2001)							
	1		2		3		4		1		2		3		4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Survey item																
Teacher/principal pre-observation conference	0	0	0	0	6	30	14	70	0	0	0	0	5	23	16	76
Teacher/principal post observation conference	0	0	0	0	1	5	19	95	0	0	0	0	3	14	18	86
One-on-one time with principal	0	0	0	0	4	20	16	80	0	0	0	0	2	10	19	90
Survey item																
Enlightening results	0	0	0	0	6	30	14	70	0	0	0	0	4	19	17	81
Positive, constructive feedback	0	0	0	0	2	10	18	90	0	0	0	0	3	14	18	86
Timing																
Need to observe peers	0	0	1	5	9	45	10	50	4	19	5	23	7	33	4	19
Formal evaluations held twice a year	2	10	3	15	7	35	7	35	7	33	4	19	9	43	0	0
Scheduling																
Scheduling observations is difficult	0	0	4	20	7	35	9	45	5	23	10	47	4	19	1	5
Evaluations are " one more thing to do"	2	10	6	30	8	40	4	20	5	23	12	57	4	19	0	0
Authenticity																
Is evaluation a realistic representation of teaching?	0	0	4	20	12	60	4	20	6	28	10	47	3	14	1	5
No evaluation from outside sources	1	5	5	25	12	60	2	10	11	52	9	43	1	5	0	0
No follow up on weaknesses after the post conference	4	20	6	30	7	35	2	10	7	33	8	38	4	19	1	5

Note. The scale was 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree

VITA

Jean Robinette Green was born in Bristol, Virginia, the fifth of seven children. She received a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from Queens College, Charlotte, NC in 1972. She earned a Master of Education degree from Goucher College, Towson, MD the same year. In the winter of 1989 she received a Master of Pastoral Studies degree from Loyola University in New Orleans, LA. Jean was awarded her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA in December 2001.

Jean has a variety of experiences in the field of education. She taught elementary or middle school in Baltimore, MD, Richmond, VA, and Hanover County, VA public schools. She has taught and served as principal in her former elementary school in Bristol, VA. Jean has taught courses in computer technology through the University of Virginia.

Jean is married to a physician, John Green, MD. Together they have raised three children and currently have one grandchild.