

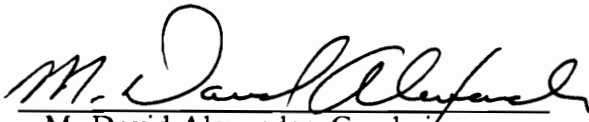
**A Descriptive Study of Teacher  
Assistance Programs in Virginia**

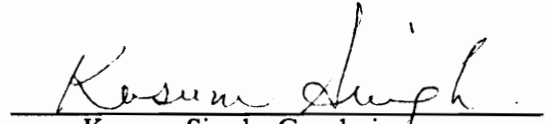
by

Janet M. Andrejco

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in  
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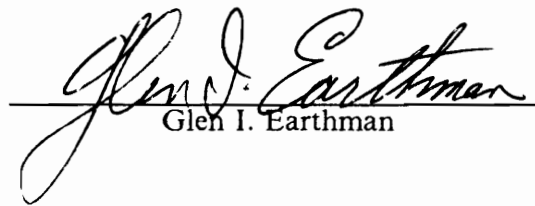
APPROVED:

  
M. David Alexander, Co-chairperson

  
Kusum Singh, Co-chairperson

  
Wayne M. Worner

  
David J. Parks

  
Glen I. Earthman

April 1991

Blacksburg, Virginia

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Kusum Singh, Co-chairperson

Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

The way in which a school division addresses the problem of an unsatisfactory teacher varies. A school division may choose to tolerate the problem, dismiss the teacher, or provide assistance to foster the development of the skills needed to meet minimum performance standards. The design of teacher assistance programs varies in the type of personnel who provide remediation and the extent to which events in the program are documented.

This study describes the status of teacher assistance programs that were operational in Virginia during the 1988-89 school year. A survey instrument was distributed to each school division in the Commonwealth of Virginia. First, all of the existing programs were identified. Each program was classified by degree of formality: informal, semi-formal, and formal. Each program was further classified by the type of staff utilized: school-based and central office-based staff. Secondly, the categories were developed into a model of teacher assistance programs for comparison.

Several questions were explored to determine what differences existed in the various teacher assistance programs.

1. Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?
2. What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?

3. What personnel provide the remedial assistance?
4. What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?
5. How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?
6. What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?
7. What types of assistance are available?
8. Are teachers on probationary or continuing contracts eligible for the remedial assistance?

Survey results revealed a clear trend in established teacher assistance programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Formal or semi-formal teacher assistance programs, requiring some form of documentation, were most often implemented. The majority of the teacher assistance programs were central office-based programs. It is hoped the survey results will be beneficial to school divisions in determining how many school divisions implement teacher assistance programs and what types of programs are implemented.

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

Teachers are no exception to the need for evaluation which is inherent in all organizations. The primary purpose of teacher evaluation is to improve the instructional program for all students. One possible outcome of evaluation is the determination of unsatisfactory teacher performance. Unsatisfactory teacher performance poses a problem for many school divisions in deciding what to do once an unsatisfactory teacher is identified.

An unsatisfactory teacher is defined as one who does not meet the performance standards set by the school division. No one standard criterion or systematic combination of criteria will set apart an unsatisfactory teacher from a satisfactory teacher.

Once an unsatisfactory teacher has been identified, a school division may choose to dismiss or remediate the teacher; or do nothing, tolerate the problem. Tolerating a teacher with unsatisfactory performance may be more detrimental to the students and the school division than remediating or dismissing the teacher. Tolerating an unsatisfactory teacher can negatively affect thousands of students during a teacher's career.

Dismissal of an unsatisfactory teacher may be a costly process, particularly when the teacher elects a fact-finding hearing. In addition to the financial costs, the time contributed by both school-based and central office staffs can be enormous.

Remediating the teacher is the focus of this study. To remediate an unsatisfactory teacher, a school division will have a variety of options, such as the type of staff to utilize or the type of technique to implement.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The ways in which school divisions in Virginia address the problem of an identified unsatisfactory teacher are not clearly known. This study describes the status of teacher assistance programs in Virginia by identifying the programs which were operational in public schools during the 1988-89 school year. Teacher assistance programs are defined as those which provide remediation assistance to teachers who are identified as performing unsatisfactorily. The complexity of the teacher assistance programs in Virginia is unknown. There is little or no information on the type of personnel who provide remediation and the extent to which events in the program are documented.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?
2. What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?
3. What personnel provide the remedial assistance?
4. What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?

5. How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?
6. What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?
7. What types of assistance are available?
8. Are teachers on probationary or continuing contracts eligible for the remedial assistance?

### **Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to describe what types of teacher assistance programs existed in Virginia. The similarities and differences in the processes used in providing assistance to the teacher were compared. The processes identified were compared for consistency with the recommendations found in the literature.

The ultimate goal of education is to benefit the students. It is important that instructional problems are remediated to ultimately benefit the students. Categorizing the diverse types of assistance provided to teachers is an important starting point when determining what processes, used in teacher assistance programs, are effective in remediating performance problems.

Eighteen states require that remediation be provided to a teacher prior to recommending dismissal. The eighteen states are: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, and Washington (Claxton, 1986). Courts have looked favorably on the teacher dismissals when school divisions

provided adequate performance assistance, giving the teacher an opportunity for remediation (Claxton, 1986).

Virginia educational statutes do not require that assistance be provided to the unsatisfactory teacher prior to a dismissal. The literature provided within the last several years has suggested that it is a good practice to provide performance assistance in the form of teacher assistance programs to teachers who have performance problems which place continued employment in jeopardy (Stewart, 1977). The goal of the teacher assistance programs is to assist the unsatisfactory teachers in remediating job performance problems to an acceptable level of competency. If the teacher's performance can be remediated, then the school division, teacher, and students all profit.

Although Virginia statutes do not require a school division to provide assistance to an unsatisfactory teacher, it is a humane practice to emulate. The degree to which the school division assists an unsatisfactory teacher determines to what extent that practice is realized.

The need for teacher assistance programs has been identified and programs have been developed and implemented in other states. The Toledo Plan (McCormick, 1985) and a program in Salt Lake City Schools (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin & Bernstein, 1984) are examples of two programs which have been implemented. No research has been conducted about the types of programs which exist in Virginia school divisions. This study identifies, describes, and analyzes the characteristics of teacher assistance programs which were operational in Virginia during the 1988-89 school year. The descriptions of the teacher assistance programs evolve into a classification system based on several dimensions to be discussed later.

## **Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited to the existing teacher assistance programs in only those school divisions in Virginia that responded to the survey request. The study was further limited to the outcomes of those teacher assistance programs reported to be utilized. It was not determined if the identified teacher assistance programs were actually implemented the same way in which they were reported. This study did not attempt to evaluate the quality of the assistance provided by each of the programs. It was possible, however, to determine if each teacher assistance program contained the essential elements of the teacher assistance program according to the literature.

## **Method**

To identify the various types of teacher assistance programs, a survey instrument was developed for distribution to all school systems in Virginia. Following the initial design of the survey instrument, a pretest was conducted. The survey instrument was given to three personnel administrators for the purpose of identifying confusing and unclear questions and instructions. The three personnel administrators selected represented urban, suburban, and rural Virginia school systems. Dr. David E. Jones, Norfolk City Schools, Mrs. Linda D. Palombo, Chesapeake City Schools, and Dr. Raymond E. Leonard, Carroll County Public Schools, reviewed the survey instrument. A telephone conversation with and written comments from each personnel administrator resulted in the revision of the survey instrument.

Following the pretest, the revised instrument (Appendix A) was distributed to all 136 school divisions in Virginia. A cover letter (Appendix B) included a request for the



survey instrument to be completed by the administrator responsible for personnel or the person responsible for teacher evaluation and remediation. A copy of the school system's existing teacher evaluation instrument and evaluation procedure, the assistance program description, school board policies, and school board regulations relating to the evaluation and remediation process were requested.

## **Analytical Framework**

The analytical framework used to classify teacher assistance programs for this study was two dimensional. The first dimension of the study was the type of staff utilized and the second dimension was the degree of formality of the program. There were two types of staff utilized:

School-based teacher assistance programs utilized only school staff (principal, assistant principal, or other teachers).

Central office-based teacher assistance programs utilized only central office staff or a combination of central office staff and school staff.

Teacher assistance programs may be identified in one of three degrees of formality:

Informal teacher assistance programs were defined as programs providing unwritten assistance to the teachers.

Semi-formal teacher assistance programs were defined as programs providing one to five of the following written elements: written goals, measurable objectives, progress

notes, procedures or suggestions for improvement, timelines, and the identification of the person responsible for implementation of an assistance plan.

Formal teacher assistance programs were defined as programs which provide six written elements: written goals, measurable objectives, progress notes, procedures or suggestions for improvement, time lines, and the identification of the person responsible for implementation of a formal plan.

The two dimensions, type of staff utilized and degree of formality of the program, were integrated to classify the teacher assistance programs. As described, the type of staff utilized has two components and the degree of formality has three components. When integrated, the two dimensions have the potential for six classes of teacher assistance programs.

Informal School-Based Programs

Semi-Formal School-Based Programs

Formal School-Based Programs

Informal Central Office-Based Programs

Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs

Formal Central Office-Based Programs

## **Organization of the Study**

Chapter II contains a review of the current literature related to teacher assistance programs. The need for evaluation and accountability by school divisions is discussed. Various ways in which a school division can deal with an unsatisfactory teacher are deliberated. Key elements of a teacher assistance program, length of remediation, and the

type of teacher selected to participate are presented. Causes of failure in the evaluation process and implementation of the teacher assistance programs are discussed. A summary of teacher assistance programs documented in the literature is included.

The methodology is presented in Chapter III. This chapter includes a description of the subjects, the questionnaire, an analysis of the questionnaire, and procedures used in this study.

Chapter IV includes an analysis of the data. Data are reported, presented in tables, and interpreted.

Chapter V presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The conclusions include the categories of teacher assistance programs, the significance of the categories, and recommendations and implications for further study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### ***The Literature***

#### **Introduction**

This study is designed to describe the types of teacher assistance programs in Virginia. This chapter includes relevant literature on the need for accountability and evaluation, formative and summative evaluation, dealing with problem teachers, design of teacher assistance programs, length of remediation, characteristics of teacher participants, implemented teacher assistance programs, attitude of teachers, and improvement of performance. A summary of the literature is also included.

#### **Need for Accountability and Evaluation**

Accountability issues about education have been raised in the past decade as a result of federal, state, and local reform attempts. Factors other than the education reform movement have caused school divisions to become more accountable and improve the teacher evaluation process. Drake (1984) identifies three factors contributing to the change toward improved teacher evaluation practices. First, as a result of the demand

for improved programs, teachers are required to demonstrate new attitudes and skills to implement these improved programs. Second, retraining of teachers is needed to present the new technological discoveries and teaching approaches. Finally, some school systems have declining enrollments or a low rate of teacher turn-over. These school systems must provide professional development for the existing staff to meet the demands of the present and future. Failure to address the issue of accountability may undermine the political support of parents and taxpayers, lower the morale of the best teachers, and limit the educational opportunities of some students (Bridges, 1984).

As in all professions the quality of service delivered varies from one professional to another. Recognizing the need to monitor the quality of service delivery, some teacher unions have begun to police the teaching profession (McCormick, 1985). Certain school divisions, employing teachers who recognize this need, have allowed teachers to become involved in the evaluation of their peers. In the Salt Lake City schools, two teacher association representatives work with the principal as a team to provide assistance to teachers placed on remediation (Neil, 1978). This effort has been quite controversial. Some administrators do not believe that teachers should become involved in personnel matters of colleagues. On the other hand, teachers generally view this team approach as a method of policing the profession. Teachers are more likely to trust a colleague rather than an administrator (Manning, 1988). While working with a colleague, the environment contains less fear of the evaluation process than while working with an administrator.

Assuming that teachers enter the profession with at least a minimal skill level to perform the required tasks, different skill level standards still may be set by individual school divisions. Evaluation is the means by which school divisions determine if teachers are meeting those minimal skill level standards.

According to McLaughlin (1986), accountability through evaluation of minimal standards is not enough. School divisions must assist teachers to improve, at all skill levels, if accountability is to be practiced.

Evaluation systems are promoted with the explicit purpose of improving teacher performance. This purpose presents the assumption that improving teacher performance is a simple process which naturally follows an observation and evaluation cycle. Bridges (1984) questions if classroom observations are even valuable in promoting teacher improvement. McLaughlin and Pfeifer (1988) report that reflection, motivation, and integration of individual and institutional goals, coupled with resources for development are necessary conditions to activate improved teacher performance. Teachers have little time for the first step, to reflect daily on what occurs in the classroom.

Expert feedback may provide teachers with the opportunity to analyze the act of teaching and plan for change. An opposing view comes from Bridges (1984) who found no empirical evidence to support the notion that feedback provides a positive effect on teachers' behavior. One study, conducted in 1968 by Tuckman and Oliver, reported that feedback from supervisors did more harm than good (Bridges, 1984).

The need for expert feedback should not be underestimated. "John Wooden of UCLA, one of the most successful college basketball coaches in history, was famous for the frequent and detailed feedback he gave his players. Teaching differs in important ways from an athletic contest, but the principles by which teachers and athletes learn to be more effective are similar" (Seyfarth & Nowinski, 1987, p. 47). According to Seyfarth and Nowinski (1987), feedback is the most critical part of the change process, because "it will open one's mind to evidence that challenges present beliefs" (p. 49). Sweeney (1983) agrees and adds that feedback provides the direction for change to be attempted. If a teacher does not know specifically what was done incorrectly and specifically what

must be demonstrated to be considered “improved”, then it is unlikely that the desired change will take place.

Teacher evaluation can be a powerful feedback mechanism (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988). To be effective, feedback must be presented with timeliness, specificity, credibility, and good intent. Feedback must be provided soon after the activity or behavior is performed and provided without interpretations, but with concrete data. The source of the feedback must be respected and be viewed as credible by the teacher. The source must also be viewed as having good intent, not punitive intent (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988).

Most teachers do have the internal motivation to improve, but they will admit that an external push, like evaluation, is needed to effect the change (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988). As a gauge for performance, evaluation must integrate the individual and institutional goals to keep teachers on the right track. With reflection, motivation, and integration of goals in tact, a teacher should not be expected to effect change unless the resources needed to facilitate the change are made available.

Although the need for accountability and evaluation is recognized, the process of evaluation is supported by different views. The evaluation may be conducted by administrators or a combination of teachers and administrators. Reflection, motivation, integration of individual and institutional goals, resources, and feedback are important parts of the improvement process.

## **Formative and Summative Evaluation**

A clear distinction exists between formative and summative evaluations. The personnel recommended to implement the two types of evaluations are discussed extensively in the literature.

Formative evaluations should be conducted periodically throughout an evaluation cycle as a means of promoting growth. Each formative evaluation should provide specific feedback on the strengths observed and the areas needing improvement. A summative evaluation is conducted once during each evaluation cycle, usually at the end of an academic year or when a teacher is separating from employment. The summative evaluation summarizes the areas of strength and areas needing improvement for that evaluation cycle and is used to determine employment status.

A difference of opinion exists about what personnel should be assigned the responsibility of conducting the formative and summative evaluations. Traditionally, both formative and summative evaluations have been the responsibility of the principal or assistant principal. Tension, created by insufficient time and lack of technical expertise, has led to a distinction between the responsibilities of an evaluator and a supervisor. Manning (1988) believes that formative evaluations should be conducted by someone other than the person who conducts the summative evaluation. Manning's opinion is shared by Acheson and Smith (1986), Freer (1987), Redfern (1980), and Rothberg (1984). Powell (1988) argues that the principal should, as the instructional leader of a school, provide the assistance to teachers which is an essential component of formative evaluations, and conduct the summative evaluations. Principals are capable of evaluating instruction (Jackson, 1986) and should set teacher evaluation as a priority. If time or other priorities restrict a principal from conducting teacher evaluations, Bridges



(1985) suggests that trained department heads, assistant principals, and supervisors carry out the responsibility of teacher evaluation under the direction of the principal.

Outside of the realm of education, performance improvement experts also disagree on this issues. Baker (1988) presents comments from Douglas McGregor. McGregor, in a 1957 article of the Harvard Business Review, argued that the roles of a counselor (formative evaluation) and a supervisor (summative evaluation) are incompatible. He views the counselor as an independent third party who assists the employee to improve performance and should not also be the judge to critique the performance. Other experts in the field believe that it is the job of a supervisor to be directive in identifying weaknesses and take action to help the employee improve performance (Baker, 1988).

### **Dealing with Problem Teachers**

Evaluation instruments can and should be used to deal with problem teachers. An evaluation instrument is subjective. "Subjectivity ought to suggest flexibility" (p. 3) which sets the stage for the teacher and the evaluator to learn (Andrews & Knight, 1987). Although an evaluation instrument is designed to assist the evaluator in making some judgments about performance, it does nothing to assist in identifying the cause of and cure for the problem. Knowing why a teacher performs poorly, according to Stewart (1977), is the first step to prevention and cure. The importance of determining a cause of an unsatisfactory teacher cannot be overstated, according to Bridges (1985). Different causes require different treatments.

Poor performance may be manifested by problems in one or any combination of the following areas: ability, skill, emotional stability, motivation, physical character-

istics, family situations, work groups, the organization, external influences, or ethical considerations. Bridges (1985) identifies five categories of failure in which unsatisfactory teachers may be involved: (1) technical failure such as incorrect teaching techniques, (2) bureaucratic failure, (3) ethical failure, (4) productive failure, and (5) personal failure. About eighty percent of the tenured teacher dismissal cases involve technical failure, followed in order of frequency by bureaucratic, ethical, productive, and personal failure (Bridges, 1985).

“Remediation is truly the intellectual Sahara of the voluminous literature on teacher evaluation and dismissal” (Bridges, 1984, p. 30). Once an unsatisfactory teacher is identified, the first decision a school administrator faces is to determine if the behavior is remediable. Committing a crime or displaying character faults which are unacceptable are behaviors which school divisions are not generally expected to assist a teacher in correcting. The Illinois Supreme Court decision in Board of Education v. Illinois State Board of Education provides administrators with the following four guidelines when determining if a behavior is irremediable: (1) the behavior has no legitimate professional purpose; (2) the behavior has diminished a teacher’s effectiveness or has permanently damaged students, faculty, or the school; (3) the behavior could not have been corrected even if the teacher would have been warned by the principal; or (4) the behavior existed for a long time and is now irremediable (Claxton, 1986).

Not all states require that a teacher be provided remediation assistance prior to dismissal. Providing assistance is only required in eighteen states (Claxton, 1986). In addition to the eighteen states requiring assistance, many states have adopted that spirit of providing assistance.

Aside from the legal implications of providing assistance to unsatisfactory teachers, the extra work reaps rewards in students’ progress. The Lake Washington School District in Kirkland, Washington, implemented a teacher assistance program and

in five years raised the scores on statewide achievement tests from the fiftieth to the ninety-ninth percentile (Bridges, 1985).

Several options for dealing with a problem teacher are available to school divisions. Remembering that the cause will determine what options are appropriate for the teacher, an administrator may choose one or a combination of the following options when dealing with problem performance: tolerating the problem, training and development of the teacher, participating in counseling, changing the position assignment of the teacher, inducing the teacher to resign, or terminating the teacher's employment.

Tolerating the problem is a detriment to the students and the community and can create a situation in which the performance of the administrator is subsequently questioned. "Tolerating the problem allows for the unsatisfactory teacher to manage the administrator rather than the administrator to manage the unsatisfactory teacher" (Stewart, 1977, p. 123). Once any of the intervention options are selected, an administrator must be open-minded and positive in the approach to remediation.

Training and development models may be successful if the key elements of goal setting, feedback, and reinforcement are provided to the teacher. Teacher evaluation systems, used to evaluate satisfactory and unsatisfactory teachers, may have these key elements built into the model. However, most school divisions identified in the literature only utilize all of these elements for unsatisfactory teachers. Optimistically stated by Stewart, (1977), "Over the years that we have been concerned with appraisal systems we have noticed a change in emphasis, from discipline, control, and record-keeping, towards development, self-development, and growth. Long may this trend continue" (p. 175).

School divisions using a training and development model for unsatisfactory teachers have a teacher assistance program in place. The formality of the programs and

the type of staffs providing assistance may vary. The type of assistance may vary between schools within the same school system.

Involving an unsatisfactory teacher in counseling may be a necessary option if outside influences are interfering with the teacher's job performance. Counseling, which is recommended and paid for by the employing school division, may only be used as an option if an employee assistance program is operational. The trend of employee assistance programs is just beginning to emerge in public schools.

Changing the position assignment of an unsatisfactory teacher as a means of dealing with the problem has sometimes been questioned and should be used with caution. As Manning (1988) states, incompetence in one situation does not mean incompetence in another situation. Particularly in a school division which serves a diverse student population, a teacher may work better in one community than in another. Reassignment of a teacher is a final effort toward improvement, and should be carried out carefully and only in rare situations. Reassignment may be appropriate when motives by administrators for using other options may be misinterpreted, success in a dismissal is questionable, or time and money for a dismissal is not available (Manning, 1988).

If training and development models, counseling, and changing the position assignment of the unsatisfactory teacher do not resolve the problem, inducing the resignation or termination of the unsatisfactory teacher are alternative solutions available to administrators. Inducing the resignation of a teacher is a delicate and easily challenged option. Terminations are generally upheld in court when the terminations are preceded by training and development.

Bridges (1984) provided school divisions with the following eight point strategy to deal with incompetent teachers:

1. Establish "excellence in teaching" as a district priority.

2. Adopt and publish reasonable criteria for evaluating teaching.
3. Establish sound procedures for determining whether teachers satisfy the criteria.
4. Undertake remedial action and provide reasonable time for teachers to improve.
5. Ensure that supervisors have the requisite evaluation competence.
6. Provide the necessary resources for supervisors to fulfill their responsibilities for evaluation of the instructional staff.
7. Hold supervisors accountable for the quality of their teachers' performance.
8. Provide a fair hearing to the incompetent teacher prior to dismissal (p. 9).

### **Teacher Assistance Programs**

If a teacher assistance program is desired, a school district should develop a consistent, system-wide approach to the program. Consistency is necessary for the implementation of fair personnel practices related to teacher employment.

The most effective teacher assistance programs are school-based rather than college-based, and are self-instructed by teachers (Gudridge, 1980). The site where the assistance is delivered to the teacher determines whether it is a school-based or a college-based program. Teachers must play an active rather than passive role in the teacher assistance program. To be successful, teachers should choose goals and activities designed to meet their needs. Working with another teacher on demonstrations, supervised trials, and feedback will provide on-going support rather than a one-shot approach (Gudridge, 1980).

Kirkpatrick (1982) identifies five conditions necessary for a teacher to bring about change: desire, knowledge and skill, climate, help and support, and rewards. A

teacher assistance program should be practical, time-oriented, specific, and involve commitment (Kirkpatrick, 1982).

A review of the literature reveals six major elements of a teacher assistance program: clear goals, feedback, procedures/suggestions, measurable objectives, time lines, and the identification of the person responsible for implementing the program (Bridges, 1985; Stow, 1988; Redfern, 1980; Kelleher, 1985; Bula, 1983; Sweeney, 1983; and Kirkpatrick, 1982). These elements are presented in a matrix (Figure 1). Although teacher assistance programs differ, these six major elements should be present in all programs.

The procedure for implementing a teacher assistance program should be written and available for review by administrators, teachers, and teacher association representatives. One suggested teacher assistance program may include three parts to the written individual plan. Part one of an individual plan written for a teacher involved in the program should include the name, school, and grade level or subject area to which the teacher is assigned. A statement characterizing the teacher's present performance should include areas of strength and areas needing improvement (goals). Part two should include what specific objectives will be accomplished, what procedures or actions should be taken to facilitate the stated objectives, who should carry out those procedures, what method of feedback will be used, and a time line identifying when the procedures will be carried out. Space should be provided for progress notes. Dates when the procedures are actually implemented should be recorded. Dates when the objectives are met and progress notes should be recorded. Part three should include a statement of agreement between the teacher and the person administering the program to commit to the implementation of the program for the purpose of improving the teacher's performance. The agreement should be signed by the teacher and the person administering

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Clear expectations (goals)	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Feedback	x	x	x	x		x		x
Instructional input (procedures)	x	x	x				x	
Measureable objectives		x	x		x			x
Time lines		x		x	x		x	x
Modifications allowed			x					
Statement of problem				x				
Who is responsible					x		x	
<hr/>								
A - Bridges, Edwin M. (1985)				F -	Walters, Cheryl M. & Wyatt, Terry L. (1985)			
B - Stow, Shirley B. (1988)								
C - Redfern, G. B. (1980)				G -	Kirkpatrick, Donald L. (1982)			
D - Kelleher, Paul (1985)								
E - Bula, Ronald J. (1983)				H -	Sweeney, Jim (1983)			

**Figure 1. Matrix of Identified Elements of Teacher Assistance Program Components**

the program. Once the program is completed, a final report or summary of the final performance should be written.

Actual implemented programs use varying personnel to administer the program and carry out the procedures set forth in the plan. Some programs use peer evaluators or teacher trainers, building level administrators, or central office staff. Other programs use any combination of the above personnel categories to administer and execute the plan. Opinions differ about what staff should be utilized.

Peer evaluators, or teacher consultants as they will be referred to hereafter, were the corner stone of the Toledo Plan (Waters & Wyatt, 1985). The Toledo administration was pressured by a strong teacher union to address the problem of inadequate evaluation. Teacher consultants received much of the same training in teacher evaluation as the principals had received and were charged with the responsibility of remediating unsatisfactory teachers. The Toledo Plan was a commitment by the administration to allow the necessary number of teacher consultants to devote full-time to remediation of unsatisfactory teachers.

Peer evaluators may be school-based or central office-based personnel. Full-time teachers who are periodically released from classes to consult with teachers about their performance are school-based staff. Teachers who are released from their regular teaching assignments for a temporary period of time to consult with teachers in several schools about their performance are central office-based staff.

Manning (1988) clarifies the role of teacher consultants as formative evaluators. Teacher consultants only identify the strengths of other teachers and file a report with the principal. The principal is the only person who can conduct both formative and summative evaluations. The principal can not use peer input to make summative evaluation decisions or to gain inside information. A principal and assistant principal are



considered school-based staff. Administrative staff from outside of the building (supervisors, etc.) are considered central office-based staff.

Unlike the Toledo Plan, Kirkpatrick (1982) does not recognize the role of teacher consultants. The supervisor and subordinate should develop and implement the improvement plan. A training and development professional may provide additional subject matter expertise or resources when necessary.

Before deciding who should administer a teacher assistance plan, administrators should review the advantages and disadvantages of involving the administrator and the teacher consultant. When considering the use of an administrator, a decision must be made to determine which administrator will be used. A principal, assistant principal, or central office administrator may be designated to be responsible for implementing the teacher assistance plan. The advantage of designating an administrator is the traditional expectation that teacher evaluation is part of that job responsibility. Disadvantages of designating an administrator to be responsible for implementing the teacher assistance plan include: (1) teachers fear the administrator will lose objectivity; (2) teachers fear the harsh image of an administrator; and (3) administrators fear loss of respect (Brighton, 1965). Designating a teacher consultant to implement the teacher assistance plan reduces the threat associated with evaluation. The disadvantage of using teacher consultants to implement the teacher assistance plan is that teachers are often reluctant to formally evaluate their peers' performance (Brighton, 1965).

The literature reveals six major elements of a teacher assistance program: goals, feedback, procedures, measurable objectives, time lines, and the person responsible. A variety of personnel who may implement the program are also identified: peer evaluators, building level administrators, or central office staff.

## **Length of Remediation**

In some states, statutes stipulate the length of time a school division must allow an unsatisfactory teacher to improve his performance. When stipulated in state statutes, the length of time is usually ninety days (Bridges, 1984). Some states stipulate a maximum length of time to be one, two, or three months, or one year (Claxton, 1986).

When the length of time is not stipulated, as in the state of Virginia, a reasonable period of time should be provided. The unique circumstances in each case should be used to determine what is reasonable. Some of the unique circumstances may involve total years of teaching experience, total years of service in the district, and quality of teacher performance while in the district (Bridges, 1984). As a general rule, Bridges (1985) and Kelleher (1985) suggest that a principal spend at least one year working with one unsatisfactory teacher to improve his performance.

The Toledo Plan uses a non-numerical guide to determine the completion of a teacher assistance plan. The plan of assistance ends when one of the following conditions is met: the review panel determines that the teacher has attained a satisfactory level of performance; the teacher consultant determines that the teacher can no longer benefit from assistance; or the teacher consultant is unable to improve the teacher's performance after a reasonable period of time (Waters & Wyatt, 1985).

## **Teacher Participants**

What do unsatisfactory teachers look like? How can they be identified? Identification of unsatisfactory teachers is a difficult task. According to Stewart (1977), un-

satisfactory teachers are of two types: the ones you know you have, and the ones you're not sure you have.

Teacher evaluation processes may vary from one school division to another. A clear teacher evaluation process will limit subjectivity and increase the reliable judgments used to identify unsatisfactory teachers.

An unsatisfactory teacher recommended for a teacher assistance plan is usually facing improvement or termination. When termination is the option of choice, the unsatisfactory teacher is considered incompetent. Incompetence, although widely used to describe unsatisfactory teachers, has been defined. Kelleher (1985) provides a succinct, representative description of an incompetent teacher: "inability to meet minimum standards of performance over a number of years" (p. 362). Judges have generally allowed administrators to determine the definition of incompetence as long as the criteria were communicated to teachers and the teachers were told specifically what they did to meet those criteria (Bridges, 1985).

### **Implemented Teacher Assistance Programs**

From conception to implementation, one teacher assistance program required eight years of planning. Toledo, a union town in Ohio supporting a school system of 2,300 teachers, developed a teacher assistance program called the Toledo Plan (McCormick, 1985). The plan requires a corps of trained teacher consultants to work with conspicuously incompetent teachers in the system.

Consulting teachers are selected based on five favorable references and at least five years of teaching experience. Full-time consulting teachers are released from regular

teaching responsibilities to work with six to eight teachers each year and receive a salary supplement of \$2,500.

A school-based union committee and the principal must recommend a teacher for involvement in the Toledo Plan. Once a consulting teacher is assigned, meetings are held for one or two hours each week before and after school or during the teacher's planning time.

There is no minimum length of time set for the intervention which usually lasts one and one half years. The decision to end the intervention is made by either the teacher or the teacher consultant once it is determined that all of the goals were achieved or that improvement cannot be achieved. The teacher consultant writes a summary report to a review panel. The review panel recommends termination of employment, termination of the intervention, or continued intervention.

Salt Lake City schools, Utah, uses a management by consensus process to develop a teacher assistance program (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984). As a first step, prior to the use of the formal process, a principal provides a written plan of action to a teacher who is performing poorly. If this first step in remediation is unsuccessful, the principal initiates a more involved assistance process. The assistance process is conducted by a four-member Remediation Team composed of two teachers, the principal, and one central office administrator (Duke, 1986). The assistance may last from two to five months. At the conclusion of the formal, central office-based assistance process, the principal provides a recommendation for termination of employment or continued employment.

Using the Salt Lake City teacher assistance program as a model, the Santa Clara Unified School District in California developed a slightly different Remediation Team. The teacher, referred to the Remediation Team for formal remediation by the principal, and the assistant superintendent for personnel select two or three teachers to serve on

the Remediation Team. The team members may recommend a variety of district resources to assist the teacher in improving his performance. The remediation period may last up to sixty days. At the end of that sixty-day period, the school-based Remediation Team provides a recommendation for termination of employment or continued employment (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988).

In Oak Ridge, Tennessee, an informal, central office-based teacher assistance program has been used. By mid-year principals identify teachers who are in danger of contract non-renewal. The principal, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, and an instructional specialist provide intensive assistance to the teachers. The principal conducts a summative evaluation at the end of the year and formulates a recommendation for continued employment, freezing on the salary scale, or dismissal (Neil, 1978).

### **Attitude of Teachers**

Teachers who perform poorly usually are not happy about their employment situation or about themselves. It is hard for teachers to admit that their work is below the school system's standards. They can be protective, defensive, and anxious when hearing someone discuss their teaching (Acheson, 1986). Until the teacher admits that a problem exists, it is almost impossible to help the teacher effect change.

Teachers can improve their knowledge and skill and thus their feelings about themselves (Andrews, 1985). With a trusting relationship built between the teacher and the person implementing the teacher assistance plan, the teacher, more often than not, will begin to face the reality of his performance. The trusting relationship, according to

Acheson (1986), could come if the principal devotes the necessary time in formative evaluation and growth-oriented activities with the teacher.

## **Improvement of Performance**

“In three polls conducted by the AASA in 1974, 1976, and 1977, school administrators ranked ‘incompetent staff’ as one of the top three administrative problems” (Neil & Custis, 1978, p. 6). Identified incompetent staff often are allowed to continue their employment. Reasons for the continuation of the problem were given by school administrators: limited funding, difficult planning, and a general lack of belief that improvement could actually occur. School administrators, in that same poll, expressed that there was no pressure to withhold salary increments when performance was below standard. Baker (1988) identifies other causes of failure when helping employees to improve performance: insufficient time, too much paperwork, too many employees to supervise, too many other duties, and too many problems to solve that require immediate attention. Other reasons given for lack of improvement of job performance are low visibility of the supervisor which sends the message that a high level of performance is not important enough, the supervisor not knowing enough about the specific job to evaluate performance properly, and lack of training or poor training of principals in the area of evaluation (Baker, 1988; Neil & Custis, 1978).

Talking about poor performance can be an unpleasant task for a principal. It can be more unpleasant than breaking the news to a student who will be retained. In the case of a teacher who is performing poorly, the teacher may lose an income which would affect him and his family.

The literature does not address the success of teacher assistance programs. Although several programs are operational and are reported to be satisfying the intended purpose, the effectiveness of these teacher assistance programs has not been determined.

## **Summary of Literature Review**

Evaluation of teachers is a result of the need for accountability. Whether a teacher is evaluated on a set of minimal standards or some higher set of standards, the standards may still vary from one school division to another.

Information on the process of feedback as a means to improve teacher performance has been refuted in the literature. If evaluation is to be a change agent, feedback appears to be a critical element of the evaluation process.

Formative and summative evaluation should be used when conducting teacher performance evaluations. A difference of opinion exists when determining who should conduct the evaluations. Some evaluation experts believe that the roles of the formative evaluator and the summative evaluator are incompatible. Other experts believe that the principal, as the instructional leader of the school, should conduct both formative and summative evaluations.

Causes of poor teacher performance can vary. One factor or a combination of factors may interfere with a teacher's performance. The methods used to improve the teacher's performance will vary depending on the causes(s) of the poor performance. Tolerating the problem, training and development, counseling, changing the position assignment, inducing a teacher to resign, and terminating the employment are options available for school administrators to use when dealing with a teacher who is performing poorly.

The design of the teacher assistance process can take many forms. The advantages and disadvantages of essential elements which are included in the written teacher assistance plan should be considered along with who provides the assistance before deciding the design of a teacher assistance process. There is no evidence to support any one design.

A reasonable amount of time should be provided for a teacher to work on improving his performance. The recommended time frame and time required by some state statutes vary. The determination of poor performance remains as a decision to be made by the principal.

Several formalized teacher assistance programs have been implemented in public schools. The Toledo Plan and remediation teams in Salt Lake City, Santa Clara, and Oak Ridge have been operational for several years. In these plans teachers, principals, and other staff work cooperatively to improve the teachers' performance.

Teachers can improve their knowledge, skill, and feelings about themselves (Andrews, 1985). A trusting relationship, built by the principal spending time in formative evaluation and growth-oriented activities (Acheson, 1986), is the basis for effecting change in teachers' performance.

Incompetent teachers are able to continue employment due primarily to bureaucratic problems. When action is taken and teachers are placed on teacher assistance plans, incompetent teachers have an opportunity to change.



# CHAPTER III

## *Methodology*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to describe the status of teacher assistance programs in Virginia. To collect the necessary data, a survey method was chosen. A survey instrument allowed for the collection of data which outlined the processes used in re-mediating unsatisfactory teachers.

### **The Population**

All 136 school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia were surveyed. The survey instrument was mailed to each school division's director of personnel. If the school division did not have a director of personnel, the survey was sent to the official with the responsibility of personnel: assistant superintendent or superintendent.

## **Data Gathering Procedures**

The revised survey instrument (Appendix A) was mailed to all 136 school divisions in Virginia on March 28, 1990. A cover letter (Appendix B) and self-addressed, stamped envelope were included in the envelope.

The cover letter was addressed to the director of personnel. If the school division did not have a director of personnel, the letter was addressed to the official with the personnel responsibility. The addressee was requested to complete the survey instrument. If the addressee believed that another administrator had a better understanding of the process used to assist unsatisfactory teachers, the addressee was instructed to ask that administrator to complete the survey instrument. The cover letter also included a request for a copy of the school system's existing teacher evaluation instrument and evaluation procedure, the assistance program description, school board policies, and school board regulations relating to the evaluation and remediation process.

A second mailing to all 136 school divisions was conducted on April 4, 1990. This mailing consisted of a postcard (Appendix B) reminding the administrator to complete the survey instrument. Of the 136 school divisions, 85 responses were received after the second mailing.

A third mailing was conducted on April 18, 1990. This mailing was sent to the 51 non-respondents. A new cover letter (Appendix B), a second copy of the survey instrument, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope were included. Fifteen responses were received as a result of the third mailing.

Thirty-six school divisions did not respond to any of the three mailings. Telephone contacts were made with each of the 36 school divisions. Twenty of the 36 school divisions returned a survey following the telephone contact. Of the 136 surveys mailed,

a total of 120 surveys were returned for a response rate of 88 percent. The number of overall usable surveys was 116, for a usable return rate of 85 percent. Of the 116 usable surveys, 111 school divisions had teacher assistance programs.

## **Data Analysis**

The design and purpose of the study, to describe the status of teacher assistance programs, were the factors which led to the decision to present the research results as descriptive statistics. The responses, or non-responses, to all survey items for all returned surveys were transferred manually to a chart. A calculator was used for computation. Frequency distributions were placed in tables and are presented in Chapter IV. Responses to open-ended questions were recorded and reported when appropriate.

## **Design of the Instrument**

The initial survey instrument was designed to gather specific information about what types of personnel (school-based or central office-based) were responsible for implementing teacher assistance programs, what parts of the assistance were written and given to the teacher, and what specific types of assistance were provided. Following the initial design of the survey instrument, a pretest was conducted. The survey instrument was given to three personnel administrators for the purpose of identifying confusing and unclear questions and instructions. The three personnel administrators selected represented urban, suburban, and rural Virginia school systems. Dr. David E. Jones, Norfolk City Schools, Mrs. Linda D. Palombo, Chesapeake City Schools, and Dr. Raymond E.

Leonard, Carroll County Public Schools, reviewed the survey instrument. A telephone conversation and written comments from each personnel administrator resulted in the revision of the survey instrument.

Revisions to the pretest survey instrument consisted of adding questions to clarify who provided assistance during the teacher assistance process. Specifically, clarification was needed to determine exactly what role the central office staff and school staff played in the teacher assistance process. The following areas were the basis for the design of the 18 survey questions:

1. Was assistance provided to teachers experiencing instructional problems?
2. Who provided the assistance?
3. What process was used to provide the assistance?
4. Did the school division submit a copy of a policy or procedure which describes the process?
5. What type of assistance was provided?
6. Was the type of assistance documented?

Additional information was requested regarding what employment activities were implemented while a teacher was receiving assistance during the 1988-89 school year. The survey was designed to determine if teachers on continuing or probationary contracts were eligible for assistance and what specific type of assistance was provided. Each school division was requested to send copies of the teacher evaluation instrument, procedures, policies, regulations, and program descriptions. The returned documents were reviewed to validate the teacher assistance process relative to the survey responses. Each document was also reviewed to determine the school division's purpose for providing a teacher assistance program.

The willingness to be interviewed for the purpose of collecting further data, if necessary, was asked. The request to be interviewed was included in the event that the teacher assistance process would need further clarification. Review of the data led to the determination that further clarification was not needed. A desire for a copy of the research results to be sent to the participants was also ascertained.

### **Existence of Remedial Assistance**

To determine if remedial assistance was provided to teachers who were performing unsatisfactorily, a straightforward question was asked.

Question 1: Does your school division provide remedial assistance to teachers who are identified as performing unsatisfactorily?

### **Staff Providing Remedial Assistance**

Five questions were asked to determine who provided the remedial assistance.

Question 2: Which administrator is usually the first to identify that a teacher is having classroom problems?

Question 3: Who provides assistance first?

Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?

Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.

Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?

Although these five questions were helpful in determining the process used in a teacher assistance program, the primary function was to determine who provided the assistance.

### **Teacher Assistance Process**

Seven questions, questions 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 16, and 17, were asked to determine the process used to provide assistance to teachers. If the answer to Question 1 was yes, indicating that remedial assistance is provided, administrators were asked to send copies of the following which relate to providing remedial assistance: teacher evaluation instrument, procedures, policies, regulations, and program descriptions.

Question 4: If the problem continues following the assistance from the principal or assistant principal and the central office staff is notified, skip question 4 and answer question 5. If the problem continues following the assistance from the principal and the central office staff is not notified, please list what action is taken and skip questions 5 and 6.

Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?

Question 9: If the assistance is not written and the teacher continues to demonstrate instructional problems, what action is taken?

Question 12: What factors determine when any remedial assistance will end?

Question 13: What factors determine how the time limit is decided?

Question 16: Which of the following written documents does your school system have stipulating that assistance will be provided to unsatisfactory teachers?

Question 17: What employment activities can be implemented while a teacher is receiving remedial assistance?

## **Available Types of Assistance**

To determine the type of assistance provided by each school division, five questions were asked.

Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?

Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?

Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher. If no part of the assistance process is written, please skip questions 7 and 8 and continue with question 9.

Question 10: How would you describe the type of assistance provided to the teacher?

Question 18: Select one unsatisfactory teacher who received assistance during 1988-89. If more than one teacher received assistance, select the case you believe to be most severe. Please check the types of assistance which were provided to that teacher.

## **Eligibility for Assistance**

One question was asked to determine what types of staff were eligible for remedial assistance.

Question 15: Which teachers are eligible to receive assistance?

## **Employment Constraints**

One question was designed to determine if teachers receiving remedial assistance were subjected to any employment constraints. Potential employment constraints could be freezing a teacher on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract.

Question 17: What employment activities can be implemented while a teacher is receiving remedial assistance?

## **Actual Assistance Provided**

In addition to determining what types of assistance may be provided, a question was designed to identify if a teacher had received remedial assistance during 1988-89.

Question 18: Select one unsatisfactory teacher who received assistance during 1988-89. If more than one teacher received assistance, select the case you believe to be the most severe. Please check the types of assistance which were provided to that teacher.



## **Analytical Framework**

A classification system was developed to sort the data and group the various teacher assistance programs into similar classes. Two dimensions were used in the classification system.

The first dimension of the classification system was the type of staff utilized. Type I, school-based teacher assistance programs, utilized only school staff (principal, assistant principal, or other teachers) to implement the program. Type II, central office-based teacher assistance programs, utilized only central office staff or a combination of central office staff and school staff.

The second dimension of the classification system was the degree of formality of the program. Three degrees of formality may be identified: informal, semi-formal, and formal. The first degree, informal teacher assistance programs are defined as programs providing to teachers any unwritten element(s) of teacher assistance programs (Fig. 1, p. 20). The second degree, semi-formal teacher assistance programs, are defined as programs providing to teachers, in a written form, one to five of the elements of teacher assistance programs. The third degree, formal teacher assistance programs, are defined as programs providing to teachers, in writing, all of the six elements of teacher assistance programs.

The combination of the two dimensions, two types of staff utilized and three degrees of formality, provide the possibility of six classes of teacher assistance programs. Each of the 111 school divisions with a teacher assistance program was placed into one of the six classes.

## Summary

A survey instrument was mailed to all 136 school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Additional mailings and telephone calls were made. Of the 136 surveys mailed, 120 surveys were returned. The number of overall usable surveys was 116. Of the 116 usable surveys, 111 school divisions had teacher assistance programs.

The survey instrument contained 18 items designed to answer the following questions:

1. Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?
2. What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?
3. What personnel provide the remedial assistance?
4. What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?
5. How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?
6. What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?
7. What types of assistance are available?
8. Are teachers on probationary or continuing contracts eligible for the remedial assistance?

# CHAPTER IV

## *Finding Results*

### **Introduction**

The survey data were tabulated and analyzed. The findings are presented in this chapter. The chapter is divided into the following sections:

1. Research Questions
2. Survey Results
3. Data Analysis
4. Summary of Classifications
5. Document Analysis

### **Research Questions**

Results are reported for the following research questions:

1. Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?
2. What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?

3. What personnel provide the remedial assistance?
4. What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?
5. How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?
6. What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?
7. What types of assistance are available?
8. Are teachers on probationary or continuing contracts eligible for the remedial assistance?

## **Survey Results**

Survey instruments were mailed to all 136 Virginia school divisions. A total of 120 school divisions responded to the survey request for a return rate of 88 percent. One school division without teaching personnel, one school division with a teacher assistance program under revision, and two school divisions providing conflicting and confusing answers on the survey instrument were eliminated from the study for data purposes. The number of overall usable responses was 116, for a usable return rate of 85 percent. Of the 116 usable responses, 111 or 96 percent had teacher assistance programs. In Virginia, at least 82 percent of the 136 school divisions provide some type of assistance to teachers who are experiencing instructional problems.

## **Data Analysis**

Data received for each of the eighteen items of the survey instrument were tabulated and reported, in most cases, in the form of percentages. From the analysis of data, six types of available assistance programs emerged. The classification of each program was determined primarily by the response or non-response to questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 14 (see Figure 2). Six categories were identified.

1. Informal school-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 3).
2. Informal central office-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 4).
3. Semi-formal school-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 5).
4. Semi-formal central office-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 6).
5. Formal school-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 7).
6. Formal central office-based teacher assistance programs (Figure 8).

Data are reported for all six categories and most are presented in tables providing the following information:

1. Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?
2. What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?
3. What personnel provide the remedial assistance?
4. What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?
5. How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?

- Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?
- Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?
- Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.
- Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?
- Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.
- Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?

**Figure 2. Questions Used to Determine Classification of School Divisions**

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Informal School- Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	none
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	none
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	principal or assistant principal
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	principal or assistant principal

**Figure 3. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Informal School-Based Programs**

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Informal Central Office-Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	none
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	none
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff

**Figure 4. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Informal Central Office-Based Programs**



<u>Questions</u>	<u>Semi-formal School- Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	at least one answer
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	principal or assistant principal
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	principal or assistant principal
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	principal or assistant principal

**Figure 5. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Semi-formal School-Based Programs**

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Semi-formal Central Office-Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	at least one answer
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff

**Figure 6. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Semi-formal Central Office-Based Programs**

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Formal School-Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	none
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	goals, measurable objectives, progress notes, methods/procedures, time lines, and person who is responsible for implementation
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	principal or assistant principal
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	principal or assistant principal
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	principal or assistant principal

**Figure 7. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Formal School-Based Programs**

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Formal School-Based Answers</u>
Question 5: What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 6: What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?	any answer
Question 7: When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher.	goals, measurable objectives, progress notes, methods/procedures, time lines, and person who is responsible for implementation
Question 8: Who writes the assistance plan?	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff
Question 11: Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance.	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff
Question 14: Who determines when the remediation should end?	central office staff or principal or assistant principal and central office staff

**Figure 8. Questions and Responses Used to Identify Formal Central Office-Based Programs**

6. What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?
7. What types of assistance are available?
8. Are teachers on probationary or continuing contracts eligible for the remedial assistance?

The identified elements of teacher assistance programs are goals, feedback, procedures/suggestions, measurable objectives, time lines, and identification of the person responsible. These elements were identified through a review of the literature and the development of a matrix to determine the most frequently identified elements of teacher assistance programs (Figure 1, p. 20).

### **Summary of Classifications**

The classification system considers the type of staff utilized (school-based and central office-based) and the formality of the program (formal, semi-formal, and informal). Table 1 displays the results of the teacher assistance programs by categories. Of the 120 returned surveys, 116 were usable. Of the 116 usable surveys, 111 school divisions had some form of a teacher assistance program in operation. Five of the 116 school divisions reported not having any assistance program available to teachers.

Of the 111 school divisions with programs in operation, 13 school divisions or 12 percent had formal school-based teacher assistance programs. Seven school divisions, or 6 percent, had semi-formal school-based teacher assistance programs in place. One school division, less than 1 percent of the total school divisions with programs opera-

**Table 1. Distribution of Teacher Assistance Programs in Virginia by Degree of Formality and Type of Staff Utilized**

	Formal	Semi-Formal	Informal	Total Row
School-Based	11.71% N = 13	6.31% N = 7	.90% N = 1	18.92% N = 21
Central Office-Based	49.55% N = 55	28.83% N = 32	2.70% N = 3	81.08% N = 90
Total Column	61.26% N = 68	35.14% N = 39	3.60% N = 4	100.0% N = 111

\* The columns and rows will not total 100%. Each column represents a total for the particular degree of formality. Each row represents a total for the particular type of staff utilized.

tional, provided an informal school-based teacher assistance program for the teachers. A total of 21 school divisions, 19 percent, provided school-based teacher assistance programs.

Of the 111 school divisions with programs in operation, 55 school divisions or 50 percent provided formal central office-based teacher assistance programs for teachers. Thirty-two school divisions, 29 percent, provided semi-formal central office-based teacher assistance programs. Only three school divisions, 3 percent, provided informal central office-based programs for teachers exhibiting instructional problems. A total of 90 school divisions, 81 percent, provided central office-based teacher assistance programs.

As shown in Table 1, 61 percent or 68 of the school divisions with teacher assistance programs in operation provided formal teacher assistance programs, 35 percent or 39 school divisions provided semi-formal teacher assistance programs, and 4 percent or 4 school divisions provided informal teacher assistance programs. No assistance was provided to teachers who were having instructional problems in 4 percent, or 5 of the 116 responding school divisions.

Most of the programs in Virginia during 1988-89 were central office-based programs and formal. Few programs, only one, were school-based and informal. The second most frequently implemented program was a semi-formal, central office-based program. Of the school-based programs, a formal approach was most often used. The semi-formal and formal programs comprised 96 percent of all teacher assistance programs.

## **Document Analysis**

The purpose of the document analysis is to determine if school divisions provide an assistance program for teachers and what process is used. School divisions providing assistance to teachers who are identified as performing unsatisfactorily were asked to send copies of the following which relate to remedial assistance provided to teachers: teacher evaluation instrument, procedures, policies, regulations, and program descriptions. The documents were requested as a validity check for the data collected by the survey instrument. The content of the documents was compared to survey responses which related to documentation of the teacher assistance procedure and documentation of the actual assistance provided. Fifty-nine school divisions or 53 percent of the 111 school divisions providing assistance to teachers who perform unsatisfactorily returned the information requested.

Table 2 displays the data for each of the six categories related to the materials returned. There was an overall low return rate for materials, 53 percent. The policies, procedures, regulations, and program descriptions returned did not conflict with the survey data (Table 3). The purpose for providing a teacher assistance program was written in the documents returned by 54 school divisions. Many of the school divisions provided multiple purposes. Twenty-seven (46%) school divisions provided the program to improve instruction. Forty-eight (81%) school divisions provided the program to improve teacher performance. Ten (17%) school divisions identified that the purpose of the program was to document non-renewal of a contract when necessary. All 10 of the school divisions identified at least one other purpose. Documentation for dismissal was mentioned as a purpose for any school division, but only in conjunction with other reasons. Two (3%) school divisions provided the program to meet the requirements of



Table 2. Distribution of School Divisions Returning Requested Materials by Degree of Formality and Type of Staff Utilized

	Formal		Semi-Formal		Informal		Total Row	
	R	X	R	X	R	X	R	X
School-Based	7	6	4	3	0	1	11	10
	(53.8%)	(46.2%)	(57.14%)	(42.86%)	(0%)	(100%)	(52.4%)	(47.6%)
	N=13		N=7		N=1		n=21	
Central Office-Based	32	23	15	17	1	2	48	42
	(58.18%)	(41.82%)	(46.9%)	(53.1%)	(33.33%)	(66.67%)	(53.3%)	(46.7%)
	N=55		N=32		N=3		N=90	
Total Column	39	29	19	20	1	3	59	52
	(57.35%)	(42.65%)	(48.72%)	(51.28%)	(25.0%)	(75.0%)	(53.2%)	(46.8%)
	N=68		N=39		N=4		N=111	

\* R = Returned materials

X = Did not return materials

N = Total school divisions

The added columns and rows will not total 100%. The percentages reflect the percent returned within each category, not for the total population (e.g. Thirteen school divisions were classified as formal school-based programs. Only 7, or 53.8% of those school divisions returned materials.)

**Table 3. Comparison of Teacher Assistance Policies, Regulations, Procedures, and Program Descriptions (Materials) With Survey Responses**

School Division	Materials Supported Survey	Materials Only Partially Supported and Did Not Conflict With Survey
1		X
2	X	
3	X	
4	X	
5	X	
6	X	
7	X	
8	X	
9	X	
10	X	
11	X	
12	X	
13	X	
14	X	
15		X
16	X	
17		X
18		X
19		X
20		X
21		X
22		X
23		X
24		X
25		X
26	X	
27		X
28		X
29		X
30		X
31	X	
32		X
33	X	
34	X	
35	X	
36	X	
37		X
38	X	

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

School Division	Materials Supported Survey	Materials Only Partially Supported and Did Not Conflict With Survey
39	X	
40		X
41	X	
42		X
43		X
44		X
45	X	
46		X
47	X	
48	X	
49		X
50	X	
51	X	
52		X
53		X
54		X
55		X
56	X	
57		X
58		X
59		X
Column Totals	N = 29 49%	N = 30 51%
Total Materials	N = 59 100%	

Standard D for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia. Two (3%) of the school divisions provided the program to meet the overall objectives of the school and school division. Five (8%) school divisions did not have a purpose identified.

The percentage of central office-based and school-based responses was approximately the same, ranging from 54 percent for central office-based programs to 57 percent for school-based programs. Similar responses were found with the responses by the school divisions with formal and semi-formal programs. Fifty-nine percent of the school divisions with formal teacher assistance programs provided the material requested. Fifty-one percent of the school divisions with semi-formal programs returned the requested materials. Only 25 percent of the school divisions with informal teacher assistance programs returned the requested materials.

### **Role of Central Office Staff**

The purpose of identifying the role played by the central office staff was to determine if the program was central office-based or school-based. Tables 4 through 15 present the data relevant to the role of the central office staff.

Table 4 displays data based on the total population. Tables 5, 6, and 7 display data based on the formality of the programs: formal, semi-formal, and informal respectively.

Twenty-seven percent of the school divisions with a teacher assistance program provided assistance to the teacher and provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. Thirty-one percent provided assistance to the teacher. Twenty-seven percent provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher.

**Table 4. Distribution of Responses for All Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	All Programs	Percent of Population
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 34	30.63%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 30	27.03%
3. Other	N = 1	.90%
Both 1 and 2	N = 30	27.03%
No Response	N = 16	14.41%
Total	N = 111	100.0%

**Table 5. Distribution of Responses for Formal Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Formal Programs	Percent of Formal Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 20	29.41%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 14	20.59%
3. Other	N = 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N = 23	33.82%
No Response	N = 11	16.18%
Total	N = 68	100.0%

**Table 6. Distribution of Responses for Semi-Formal Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Semi-Formal Programs	Percent of Semi-Formal Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 13	33.33%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 15	38.46%
3. Other	N = 1	2.57%
Both 1 and 2	N = 7	17.95%
No Response	N = 3	7.69%
Total	N = 39	100.0%

**Table 7. Distribution of Responses for Informal Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Informal Programs	Percent of Informal Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 1	25.0%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 1	25.0%
3. Other	N = 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N = 0	0.0%
No Response	N = 2	50.0%
Total	N = 4	100.0%



Of the 68 school divisions with formal programs (Table 5), 34 percent indicated that the central office staff provided direct assistance to the teacher and also provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. Of the same group, 29 percent of the central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher only, and 21 percent of the central office staffs provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal only in helping the teacher.

Of the 39 school divisions with semi-formal teacher assistance programs (Table 6), 18 percent indicated that the central office staff provided direct assistance to the teacher and also provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. Of the same group, 33 percent of the central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher only, and 38 percent of the central office staffs provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal only in helping the teacher. There was no real difference between these two answers.

Of the four school divisions providing informal teacher assistance programs, no school divisions indicated that the central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher and also to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher (Table 7). Of the same group, 25 percent of the central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher only, and 25 percent of the central office staffs provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal only in helping the teacher.

It should be noted that 16 percent of the school divisions with formal programs (Table 5), 8 percent of the school divisions with semi-formal programs (Table 6), and 50 percent of the school divisions with informal programs (Table 7) did not provide information relating to the involvement of central office staff. For the total population, 14 percent did not respond (Table 4). One school division, implementing a semi-formal teacher assistance program, indicated the use of an intervention team of which a central office staff person and a principal or assistant principal were members.

Tables 8 through 11 present data relating to the involvement of central office staff for only school-based programs by degrees of formality. It should be noted that this information was not used to classify the school divisions. Of the 21 school-based teacher assistance programs (Table 8), 5 percent of the school divisions' central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher and also to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. Providing direct assistance to the teacher by central office staffs was practiced by 14 percent of the school divisions with school-based teacher assistance programs. Providing direct assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher was practiced by 52 percent of the school divisions with school-based teacher assistance programs. No responses were provided by 29 percent of the school divisions with school-based programs.

Tables 9, 10 and 11 present data for formal, semi-formal, and informal programs, respectively. These tables show the central office staff involvement for formal school-based programs. Only 8 percent of the formal school-based programs provide central office assistance to the teacher and to the principal or assistant principal (Table 9). Thirty-one percent provide assistance to the principal or assistant principal, while 23 percent provide assistance to the teacher only.

Table 10 displays data for semi-formal school based programs. All of the school divisions (100 percent) provided assistance to the assistant principal or principal in helping the teacher. Table 11 presents the non-response for the one informal school-based program.

Of the 90 school divisions categorized as having central office-based programs (Table 12), 32 percent indicated that the central office staffs provided direct assistance to the teacher and to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. Providing direct assistance to the teacher only by the central office staffs was practiced by 34 percent of the school divisions categorized as central office-based. Providing direct as-

**Table 8. Distribution of Responses for Only School-Based Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	School-Based Programs	Percent of School-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N= 3	14.29%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N= 11	52.38%
3. Other	N= 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N= 1	4.76%
No Response	N= 6	28.57%
Total	N= 21	100.0%

**Table 9. Distribution of Responses for Only Formal School-Based Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Formal School-Based Programs	Percent of Formal School-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N= 3	23.08%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N= 4	30.77%
3. Other	N= 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N= 1	7.69%
No Response	N= 5	34.46%
Total	N= 13	100.0%

**Table 10. Distribution of Responses for Only Semi-Formal School-Based Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Semi-Formal School-Based Programs	Percent of Semi-Formal School-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 0	0.0%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 7	100.0%
3. Other	N = 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N = 0	0.0%
No Response	N = 0	0.0%
Total	N = 7	100.0%

**Table 11. Distribution of Responses for Only Informal School-Based Programs With Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Informal School-Based Programs	Percent of Informal School-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N= 0	0.0%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N= 0	0.0%
3. Other	N= 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N= 0	0.0%
No Response	N= 1	100.0%
Total	N= 1	100.0%

**Table 12. Distribution of Responses for Only Central Office-Based Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Central Office-Based Programs	Percent of Central Office-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 31	34.45%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 19	21.11%
3. Other	N = 1	1.11%
Both 1 and 2	N = 29	32.22%
No Response	N = 10	11.11%
Total	N = 90	100.0%

sistance to the principal or assistant principal only by the central office staffs was practiced by 21 percent of the school divisions with central office-based programs. One school division marked "other," but did not provide specific information. No responses were provided by 11 percent of the school divisions with central office-based programs.

Tables 13 through 15 also present data relating to the involvement of central office staff for only central office-based programs by degree of formality. Table 13 presents data for formal central office-based programs. Forty percent of the formal programs provided assistance to both the teacher and the assistant principal or principal, 31 percent provided assistance to the teacher, and 18 percent provided assistance to the assistant principal or principal.

Table 14 displays data for the semi-formal central office-based programs. Twenty-two percent provided assistance to both the teacher and the principal or assistant principal, while 41 percent provided assistance to only the teacher, and 25 percent provided assistance to the principal or assistant principal.

Table 15 presents information on the informal central office-based programs. There was no difference between the school divisions providing assistance to only the teacher and to the assistant principal or principal (33 percent).

## **Written Assistance**

For the purpose of this study, a school division must provide to the teacher, in writing, the six elements of a teacher assistance program to be categorized as a formal teacher assistance program:

1. goals for the plan of assistance;



**Table 13. Distribution of Responses for Only Formal Central Office-Based Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Formal Central Office-Based Programs	Percent of Formal Central Office-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 17	30.91%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 10	18.18%
3. Other	N = 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N = 22	40.0%
No Response	N = 6	10.91%
Total	N = 55	100.0%

**Table 14. Distribution of Responses for Only Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs	Percent of Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N = 13	40.62%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N = 8	25.0%
3. Other	N = 1	3.12%
Both 1 and 2	N = 7	21.88%
No Response	N = 3	9.38%
Total	N = 32	100.0%

**Table 15. Distribution of Responses for Only Informal Central Office-Based Programs of Central Office Staff Involvement**

Type of Involvement	Informal Central Office-Based Programs	Percent of Informal Central Office-Based Programs
1. Provides assistance to the teacher	N= 1	33.33%
2. Provides assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher	N= 1	33.33%
3. Other	N= 0	0.0%
Both 1 and 2	N= 0	0.0%
No Response	N= 1	33.33%
Total	N= 3	100.0%

2. measurable objectives;
3. written progress notes for the teacher;
4. methods/procedures to achieve the objectives;
5. time lines; and
6. person who is responsible for implementation of the program.

All 68 school divisions with formal teacher assistance programs provided the six elements. To be categorized as informal teacher assistance programs, none of the six elements are provided in writing to the teacher. The four school divisions categorized as informal programs indicated that none of these elements were provided in writing to the teacher.

To meet the criteria for a semi-formal program, a school division's teacher assistance program must provide some (one to five) of the six elements, listed above, to the teacher in writing. Tables 16, 17, and 18 list the data relevant to the number of elements for the semi-formal programs by type of staff utilized. Ninety percent of all semi-formal programs used 3, 4, or 5 of the elements (Table 16).

Of the 32 semi-formal central office-based teacher assistance programs, 25 percent utilized three of the elements, 28 percent utilized four of the elements, and 38 percent utilized five of the elements (Table 17). Of the seven semi-formal school-based teacher assistance programs, an equal number of school divisions (29 percent) utilized three, four, and five elements. Approximately 91 percent of the central office-based group used three or more of the elements (Table 17), while approximately 86 percent of the school-based group used three or more elements (Table 18). Approximately 10 percent of the central office-based group used one or two elements (Table 17), while 14 percent of the school-based group used one or two elements (Table 18).

**Table 16. Distribution of the Number of Elements Used in All Semi-Formal Programs**

Number of Elements Elements	All Semi-Formal Programs	Percent of All Semi-Formal Programs
1 of 6 elements	N = 1	2.56%
2 of 6 elements	N = 3	7.69%
3 of 6 elements	N = 10	25.64%
4 of 6 elements	N = 11	28.21%
5 of 6 elements	N = 14	35.90%
Total	N = 39	100.0%

\* The number of elements may include any combination of the following six elements:

1. goals
2. measurable objectives
3. written progress notes
4. methods/procedures
5. time lines
6. person responsible

**Table 17. Distribution of the Number of Elements Used in Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs**

Number of Elements Elements	Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs	Percent of Semi-Formal Central Office-Based Programs
1 of 6 elements	N = 1	3.13%
2 of 6 elements	N = 2	6.25%
3 of 6 elements	N = 8	25.0%
4 of 6 elements	N = 9	28.12%
5 of 6 elements	N = 12	37.50%
Total	N = 32	100.0%

\* The number of elements may include any combination of the following six elements:

1. goals
2. measurable objectives
3. written progress notes
4. methods/procedures
5. time lines
6. person responsible

**Table 18. Distribution of the Number of Elements Used in Semi-Formal School-Based Programs**

Number of Elements Elements	Semi-Formal Office-Based Programs	Percent of Semi-Formal Office-Based Programs
1 of 6 elements	N = 0	0.0%
2 of 6 elements	N = 1	14.29%
3 of 6 elements	N = 2	28.57%
4 of 6 elements	N = 2	28.57%
5 of 6 elements	N = 2	28.57%
Total	N = 7	100.0%

\* The number of elements may include any combination of the following six elements:

1. goals
2. measurable objectives
3. written progress notes
4. methods/procedures
5. time lines
6. person responsible

Table 19 compares the specific elements used by the semi-formal teacher assistance programs. Goals and methods/procedures were used by an equal number of central office-based programs, 72 percent. All of the school-based programs, 100 percent, clearly used goals most frequently. The second most frequently used element of the central office-based group was the person responsible (66 percent). The second most frequently used element of the school-based group was methods/procedures, 71 percent. The least used element of both groups was written progress notes: 53 percent of the central office-based group and 29 percent of the school-based group.

### **Ending Remedial Assistance**

Several answers were given about when remedial assistance should end. When responses of all six groups were combined, the four most frequent responses were: first (24 percent), when the teacher has improved sufficiently to maintain employment; second (12 percent), when the teacher achieves all goals; third (9 percent), when the teacher has improved sufficiently to maintain employment and when teacher achieves all goals; and fourth (8 percent) when a predetermined time limit has expired.

Responses were consistent across all six categories. The remaining 47 percent of the school divisions provided a variety of some fifteen answer combinations.

### **Factors Determining Time Limit**

If a predetermined time limit was set to end remedial assistance, the school division was asked to identify what factors determined the establishment of the time limit.



**Table 19. Specific Elements Used by School Divisions With Semi-Formal Programs**

Element	Central Office-Based	School-Based
goals	71.88% N = 23	100.0% N = 7
measurable objectives	62.50% N = 20	57.14% N = 4
written progress notes	53.13% N = 17	28.57% N = 2
methods/ procedures	71.88% N = 23	71.43% N = 5
time lines	62.50% N = 20	57.14% N = 4
person responsible	65.63% N = 21	42.86% N = 3

\* The columns will not necessarily add to 100%. Any of the school divisions could provide more than one element.

\* Percentages are based on the total number of semi-formal central office-based programs (N = 32) and semi-formal school-based programs (N = 7).

Ten school divisions did not provide information relevant to the factors determining the time limits. Nine school divisions (8 percent) determined the time limit by the severity of the teacher's problem. The remaining school divisions selected many of the other choices or combinations of choices. No school divisions selected the combination of the severity of the teacher's instructional problem and the total number of years of the teacher's experience, or the combination of the total number of year's of the teacher's experience and the total number of years employed in the school system.

### **Eligibility for Assistance**

To identify who was eligible to receive remedial assistance, school divisions were asked to identify the contract status of eligible teachers. All but one school division provided remedial assistance to both probationary teachers and continuing contract teachers. One school division, categorized as providing a semi-formal school-based program, provided assistance to probationary teachers only.

### **Employment Activities**

Freezing a teacher on the salary scale and placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract status are two examples of employment activities which can be implemented while a teacher is receiving remedial assistance. School divisions were asked to identify if either of these employment activities could be implemented as part of the teacher assistance program. Several school divisions provided more than one response to this question. Each response was counted separately for data purposes.

Sixty-two school divisions, 56 percent, implemented some type of employment activity. The most frequently used employment activity was placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, with forty-one (37 percent) school divisions using this method. No responses were given by 21 (19 percent) school divisions. Thirty-nine (35 percent) responses were "other." Eighteen of the 39 "other" responses indicated that no employment activities were used. Of the 39 in the "other" category, 21 school divisions used a variety of the following employment activities:

- evaluation of the teacher, N = 9;
- non-renewal of the teacher's contract, N = 2;
- warning, N = 2;
- attachment of a covenant to the teacher's contract, N = 2;
- placing the teacher on a plan of assistance, N = 2;
- placing the teacher on probation, N = 41;
- removing the teacher from the career ladder, N = 1;
- prohibiting the teacher from transferring, N = 1;
- freezing on the salary scale, N = 18; and
- no sponsorships, N = 2.

### **Types of Assistance Provided**

Various types of assistance can be made available to teachers who are experiencing instructional problems. School divisions were asked to identify the types of assistance provided to a teacher during the 1988-89 school year. Tables 20 and 21 show the frequency distribution of the types of assistance provided to teachers involved in

**Table 20. Frequency Distribution of Types of Assistance Provided in School-Based Programs**

	Formal	Semi-Formal	Informal	Total
no teacher received assistance	3	2	1	6
oral methods/ procedures	34	22	1	57
written comments	45	22	1	68
written plan of assistance	46	16	0	62
university classes	17	2	1	20
seminars	18	1	1	20
peer observation	41	20	1	62
staff development activities	38	13	0	51
other	8	4	0	12
no response	4	5	1	10

\* For central office-based programs there were 55 formal, 32 semi-formal, and 3 informal programs. Each school division may offer more than one type of assistance. The columns will not necessarily add up to the number of programs.

**Table 21. Frequency Distribution of Types of Assistance Provided in Central Office-Based Programs**

	Formal	Semi-Formal	Informal	Total
no teacher received assistance	1	0	0	1
oral methods/ procedures	8	7	0	15
written comments	10	6	0	16
written plan of assistance	9	4	0	13
university classes	1	0	0	1
seminars	4	1	0	5
peer observation	6	5	0	11
staff development activities	4	1	0	5
other	3	2	0	5
no response	2	0	1	3

\* For school-based programs there were 13 formal, 7 semi-formal, and 1 informal programs. Each school division may offer more than one type of assistance. The columns will not necessarily add up to the number of programs.

teacher assistance programs based on type of staff utilized. The four types of assistance most frequently used when compiling data from all teacher assistance program categories were written comments, peer observation, written plan of assistance, and oral methods/procedures. For the central office-based group, staff development activities also had a high frequency. In addition to the response options provided by the survey, school divisions indicated the use of several other types of assistance: assistance by another teacher, department chairperson, supervisor, or instructional specialist; assistance by intervention team; video tape; demonstration lesson; peer coaching; and professional counseling. The two least used types of assistance were university classes and seminars.

## CHAPTER V

### *Summary, Findings and Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations*

#### **Summary**

#### *Introduction*

This chapter addresses the purpose of the study: to describe the status of teacher assistance programs in Virginia. The findings are summarized, conclusions drawn, and recommendations outlined.

#### *Population*

The survey instrument and additional mail and telephone contacts to 136 school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia produced a high response rate of 88 percent. Of the 120 school divisions responding to the survey instrument, 116 surveys were usable.

### ***Data Collection***

The survey instrument was designed to gather specific information about what types of personnel (school-based or central office-based) were responsible for implementing teacher assistance programs, what parts of the assistance were written and given to the teacher, and what specific types of assistance were provided.

The survey instrument was mailed to all 136 school divisions in Virginia. Additional contact was made as needed by sending a second and third mailing, and contacting school divisions by telephone.

### ***Data Analysis and Findings***

The frequency of responses, or no-responses, to the survey items were presented in tables. The data were arranged to correspond with the research questions.

Research Question 1: Is remedial assistance available to teachers in the school divisions of Virginia?

Of the 116 usable surveys, 111 school divisions had some form of a teacher assistance program in place. Approximately 93 percent of the school divisions returning data had a teacher assistance program in operation. Although Virginia state statutes do not require school divisions to provide assistance to teachers, at least 82 percent of all school divisions in Virginia do have some type of program in place.

A review of the policies, procedures, regulations, and descriptions returned by school divisions revealed five purposes for providing teacher assistance programs: improving the teacher, improving instruction, documenting for dismissal, meeting Standard



D for Accrediting Public Schools, and meeting the objectives of the school and school system. The purpose most frequently given was "improving teacher performance."

Research Question 2: What processes are utilized to provide remedial assistance?

Ninety-six percent of the school divisions providing programs required some type of documentation. Only 61 percent had a structured, documented, formal approach to the teacher assistance process.

Most of the teacher assistance programs, 81 percent, were central office-based. When reviewing the data for each classification based on the involvement of the central office staff, no real difference in the purpose of the central office staff involvement was indicated. For the total of all programs, 85 percent of the teacher assistance programs either provided assistance to the teacher (31%), to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher (27%), or both (27%). Fifty percent of the school divisions with informal teacher assistance programs did not respond to the request for a purpose of the central office staff involvement. Eleven school divisions with formal programs, 16 percent, did not respond to this question.

When asked for the purpose of the central office staff involvement, there was a difference between the school-based and central office-based programs. For school-based programs, the purpose of the central office staff involvement most often was to provide assistance to the principal or assistant principal in helping the teacher. For central office-based programs, the purpose of the central office staff involvement most often was to provide assistance directly to the teacher. These results coincide with the primary design of the teacher assistance categories.

A review of the number of elements included in the semi-formal teacher assistance programs revealed that a larger percentage of school-based programs included a smaller number of elements as part of the assistance program as compared to the central office-based programs. Approximately 9 percent of the central office-based programs

provided only one or two elements. Approximately 14 percent of the school-based programs provided only two elements. No school-based program provided only one element.

A comparison of the specific elements used by the school divisions with semi-formal programs revealed that most wrote goals and methods/procedures. It is interesting to note that written progress notes (feedback) was the least provided element in semi-formal teacher assistance programs for both the school-based and central office-based programs. Approximately 51 percent of the semi-formal programs did not provide written progress notes.

Although there were no consistent answers from school divisions about when remediation should end and how the time limit is determined, it is important to note that these decisions were generally based on some predetermined set of standards. Only two of the 111 school divisions ended remediation when a teacher showed little or no progress.

Research Question 3: What personnel provide the remedial assistance?

Most of the teacher assistance programs, 81 percent, were central office-based. These programs required central office staff or a combination of central office staff and school staff to provide the remedial assistance.

Research Questions 4: What policies, regulations, procedures, or program descriptions were available and then provided for analysis to explain the teacher assistance process?

School divisions providing assistance to teachers who were experiencing instructional problems were requested to return a copy of the teacher evaluation instrument, procedures, policies, regulations, and program descriptions. Return postage was guaranteed, but the return rate was 53 percent. The return rate was much lower for informal

programs (25 percent) than for formal (57 percent) and semi-formal (49 percent) programs.

Research Question 5: How formal is the documentation process for the implementation of the teacher assistance program?

Ninety-six percent of the school divisions providing programs required some type of documentation. Only 61 percent had a structured, documented, formal approach to the teacher assistance process.

Research Question 6: What employment constraints, other than freezing on the salary scale or placing a continuing contract teacher on a probationary contract, are available for school division personnel to use?

Of the 111 school divisions with teacher assistance programs, 53 percent provided for the implementation of some type of employment constraint while a teacher received remedial assistance.

Research Question 7: What types of assistance are available?

The most frequently used types of assistance provided to teachers involved in teacher assistance programs were written comments, peer observations, written plan of assistance, and oral methods/procedures. The least frequently provided types of assistance were seminars and university classes. These two types of assistance were the only choices school divisions offered.

Research Question 8: Are teachers on a probationary or continuing contract eligible for the remedial assistance?

Ninety-nine percent of the responding school divisions provided teacher assistance programs to all teachers on probationary and continuing contracts. One percent of the school divisions provided teacher assistance programs to only probationary teachers.

## **Findings and Conclusions**

### ***Conclusions***

The following conclusions were the results of this study.

1. Virginia statutes do not require school divisions to provide assistance to teachers who are experiencing instructional problems. Virginia school divisions also are not required to provide a teacher on a probationary contract with a reason for not issuing that teacher a subsequent contract. Ninety-six percent of the responding school divisions do have some type of teacher assistance program in place. Sixty-one percent are formal programs and 81 percent are central-office programs.
2. The purpose for providing a teacher assistance program was determined through a review of the materials returned. Five purposes were identified: improving the teacher, improving instruction, documenting for dismissal, meeting Standard D for Accrediting Public Schools, and meeting the objectives of the school and school system.
3. Fifty-three percent of the responding school divisions submitted descriptive materials explaining the policy, process, or program.
4. Written progress notes was the best provided element of semi-formal teacher assistance programs.
5. All formal programs (68) utilized six elements of teacher assistance programs. Twenty-five semi-formal programs utilized 4 or 5 of the six elements. Eighty-four percent of all programs used 4, 5, or 6 elements of teacher assistance programs.

6. Freezing on the salary scale and placing a teacher on probation were used most frequently by school divisions as employment activities during a teacher assistance program.
7. The most frequently used types of assistance were written comments and oral methods/procedures.
8. Ninety-nine percent of the responding school divisions provided teacher assistance programs to all teachers on probationary and continuing contracts. One percent provided programs to only probationary teachers.

### *Discussion*

The following discussion is a result of the findings and conclusions of this study.

The return rate for materials (policies, procedures, regulations, and program descriptions) from school divisions was 53 percent. The response of only 53 percent may be interpreted in several ways. One is that the design of the survey may have inhibited the rate of return. Another reason is that formal programs, which had the highest rate of return, are more likely to have a program description available than an informal program, which had the lowest return rate.

The literature supports the use of time lines in teacher assistance programs. Although school divisions gave reasons for terminating a teacher assistance program, only two school divisions ended remediation when a teacher showed little or no progress. These results could be interpreted to be the school divisions' optimistic commitment to work with teachers until improvement is achieved.

The types of assistance provided to teachers in Virginia's school divisions were generally available internally and could be considered available at no additional cost. University classes and seminars are generally offered outside of the school division at an

additional cost. University classes and seminars were used less frequently than other types of assistance. The cost and accessibility are two factors that may effect the frequency of use of these two types of assistance.

The high number of school divisions (96 percent) having teacher assistance programs for the purpose of improving instruction and teacher performance indicates the commitment by the school division to the valued employee. The commitment to teacher assistance programs may also indicate that assistance will produce results.

Eighty-one percent of the school divisions had involvement from the central office staff. A superintendent is designated to recommend renewal or non-renewal of a teacher's contract to the school board. The responsibility may be the reason for the heavy central office staff involvement.

### *Development of a Model*

The six classes of teacher assistance programs are formal school-based, formal central office-based, semi-formal school-based, semi-formal central office-based, informal school-based, and informal central office-based. The six classes can be arranged in a model based on two dimensions: the degree of program formality and the type of staff implementing the program.

The Teacher Assistance Model depicts the six classes of teacher assistance programs through the use of a program assistance grid. The grid compares the programs based on the two dimensions: the degree of formality and the type of staff utilized. The grid (Figure 9.) vertically displays the type of staff utilized to implement the teacher assistance program: school-based and central office-based. The generalized staff, school-based, appears in the lower half of the grid, and the central office-based staff, specialized, appears in the upper half of the grid. The degree of formality is displayed horizontally.

Dimension of Formality				
Dimension of Staff		Informal	Semi-Formal	Formal
	Central Office- Based	1. low degree of formality 2. specialized staff 3. no written assistance	1. some degree of formality 2. specialized staff 3. one to five written elements of assistance	1. high degree of formality 2. specialized staff 3. all six written elements of assistance
	School- Based	1. low degree of formality 2. generalized staff 3. no written assistance	1. some degree of formality 2. generalized staff 3. one to five written elements of assistance	1. high degree of formality 2. generalized staff 3. all six written elements of assistance

Figure 9. Teacher Assistance Model

A low degree of formality, informal teacher assistance programs, are placed on the far left side of the grid. Formal teacher assistance programs with a high degree of formality, are placed on the far right side of the grid. Semi-formal teacher assistance programs fall between the informal and formal programs on the grid. The grid displays the six classes of teacher assistance programs, separating the school-based programs from the central office-based programs, and displays the range of formality from low to high.

### **Recommendations and Implications for Further Study**

An analysis of the survey results and conclusions led to recommendations for Virginia's school divisions and recommendations for further study.

#### ***Recommendations for Virginia's School Divisions***

1. The precedent has been established in Virginia to provide some form of an assistance program to teachers who perform unsatisfactorily. School divisions should consider the results of this study when developing or revising a teacher assistance program.
2. School divisions should clearly state the purpose of the teacher assistance program. Stating the purpose will give a clear direction and common goal for all participants.
3. The notion of feedback and the effect it has on change has been debated in the literature. The evidence on the effect feedback has on change is inconclusive. Teacher evaluation is a form of feedback and will continue to be used by school divisions in the future.



### ***Recommendations for Further Study***

1. The teacher assistance programs were classified according to the type of staff utilized: as school-based or central office-based programs. Differences were apparent between the types of staff utilized and other facets of the programs. It is recommended that further research be conducted to determine if the management style, site-based or central office-based, is directly related to the type of teacher assistance program offered.
2. Further study should include the assessment of the opinion of teachers who participate in teacher assistance programs to determine if the programs are perceived to be beneficial.
3. Further study should include the assessment of administrators' opinions of teacher assistance programs to determine if the programs are perceived to be beneficial.
4. It is recommended that any further study includes a determination of the effectiveness of teacher assistance programs. The following question should be answered: How many teacher participants in a teacher assistance program maintain employment and actually improve the delivery of instruction?
5. Further study should compare the effectiveness of the six classes of teacher assistance programs to determine if one type produces better results than another.

### **Summary**

The quality of teachers' instruction is very important to the education of children. In the absence of quality instruction, some form of teacher assistance program is

clearly necessary. The teacher assistance program should have a clear purpose, and include at least four of the elements of teacher assistance programs.

The design of the teacher assistance program should clearly identify the type of staff who will implement the program. Feedback, whether verbal or in written form, should be provided to the teacher if a change in instructional performance is expected.

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## **Appendix A. Survey Instrument**

**ASSISTANCE PROVIDED  
TO TEACHERS  
DEMONSTRATING  
INSTRUCTIONAL  
PROBLEMS**

A statewide study is being conducted to determine the types of assistance which are provided to teachers who fall below the expected level of performance.

Please return this questionnaire to Janet M. Andrejco, 1805 Volvo Parkway, Chesapeake, Virginia 23320.



1. Does your school division provide remedial assistance to teachers who are identified as performing unsatisfactorily?

1	NO	→	<p>(If no) This questionnaire is designed to study assistance provided to teachers who perform unsatisfactorily. Do not complete the remainder of the questionnaire, but please return it in the envelope provided.</p>
2	YES		

→	<p>(If yes) Please send copies of the following, which relate to remedial assistance provided to teachers in your school division, with the completed questionnaire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) teacher evaluation instrument and procedure</li><li>(2) policies</li><li>(3) regulations</li><li>(4) program descriptions</li></ul>
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2. Which administrator is usually the first to identify that a teacher is having classroom problems?

- 1 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- 2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 3 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who provides assistance first?

- 1 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- 2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 3 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

4. If the problem continues following the assistance from the principal or assistant principal and the central office staff is notified, skip question 4 and answer question 5.

If the problem continues following the assistance from the principal or assistant principal and the central office staff is not notified, please list what action is taken and skip questions 5 and 6.

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5. What is the purpose of the central office staff involvement?

- 1 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF PROVIDES DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO THE TEACHER
- 2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO THE PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN HELPING THE TEACHER
- 3 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the role of the principal or assistant principal at the time of the central office staff involvement?

- 1 PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO THE TEACHER SEPARATE FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 2 PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO THE TEACHER IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 3 CONTINUES TO OBSERVE/EVALUATE TEACHER, BUT DOES NOT PROVIDE ASSISTANCE

7. When assistance is provided, check what parts of the assistance process are written and given to the teacher. (Check all that apply.)

If no part of the assistance is written, please skip questions 7 and 8 and continue with question 9.

	YES	NO
1 goals for the plan of assistance		
2 measurable objectives		
3 written progress notes for the teacher		
4 methods/procedures to achieve the objectives		
5 time lines		
6 person who is responsible for implementation		
7 other _____		

8. Who writes the assistance plan?

- 1 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- 2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 3 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 4 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

9. If the assistance is not written and the teacher continues to demonstrate instructional problems, what action is taken?

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10. How would you describe the type of assistance provided to the teacher?

- 1 INDIVIDUALIZED -- EACH PLAN OF ASSISTANCE IS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER
- 2 GENERIC -- ONE PLAN OF ASSISTANCE IS DESIGNED TO BE USED WITH ALL TEACHERS NEEDING ASSISTANCE

11. Please check to indicate who is responsible for overseeing the assistance and who actually provides the assistance. (Check all that apply.)

	responsible for overall assistance	actually provides assistance
1 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL		
2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF		
3 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF		
4 OTHER _____		

12. What factors determine when any remedial assistance will end? (Circle all that apply.)

- 1 WHEN TEACHER ACHIEVES ALL GOALS
- 2 WHEN TEACHER HAS IMPROVED SUFFICIENTLY TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT
- 3 WHEN TEACHER SHOWS LITTLE OR NO PROGRESS
- 4 WHEN A PREDETERMINED TIME LIMIT HAS EXPIRED
- 5 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

If the answer to question 12 is 1, 2, 3, or 5, please skip question 13 and answer question 14.

13. If the answer to question 12 is 4, what factors determine how the time limit is decided? After answering question 13, please skip question 14 and answer question 15.

- 1 BY THE SEVERITY OF THE TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONAL PROBLEM
- 2 BY THE TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS OF THE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE
- 3 BY THE TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS EMPLOYED IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM
- 4 THE TIME LIMIT IS A STANDARD SET BY THE DISTRICT -- THE TIME LIMIT IS \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 BOTH 1 AND 2
- 6 BOTH 1 AND 3
- 7 BOTH 2 AND 3
- 8 1, 2, AND 3
- 9 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

14. Who determines when the remediation should end?

- 1 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
- 2 CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 3 PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF
- 4 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

15. Which teachers are eligible to receive remedial assistance?

- 1 PROBATIONARY TEACHERS
- 2 CONTINUING CONTRACT TEACHERS
- 3 BOTH 1 AND 2

16. Which of the following written documents does your school system have stipulating that assistance will be provided to unsatisfactory teachers? (You may select more than one answer.)

- 1 SCHOOL BOARD POLICY
- 2 SCHOOL BOARD REGULATION
- 3 SYSTEM-WIDE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
- 4 INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL PROCEDURE
- 5 SCHOOL BOARD-TEACHER AGREEMENT
- 6 ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED, BUT NO WRITTEN DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE

17. What employment activities can be implemented while a teacher is receiving remedial assistance?

- 1 FREEZING ON THE SALARY SCALE
- 2 PLACING A CONTINUING CONTRACT TEACHER ON A PROBATIONARY CONTRACT
- 3 OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

18. Select one unsatisfactory teacher who received assistance during 1988-89. If more than one teacher received assistance, select the case you believe to be the most severe. Please check the types of assistance which were provided to that teacher. (Check all that apply.)

	YES	NO
1 no teacher received assistance during 1988-89		
2 oral methods/procedures for the teacher to follow		
3 written observations or conference summaries which include goals or objectives, methods/procedures, and time lines		
4 overall written plan of assistance which includes goals or objectives, methods/procedures, and times lines		
5 attending university classes		
6 attending seminars		
7 observing other teachers		
8 attending school division staff development programs		
9 other _____		

If a teacher in your school division received assistance during 1988-89, would you be willing to be interviewed for the purpose of collecting further data?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

If yes, please provide your name and address.

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If you would like a copy of the survey results, please provide the following information:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL DIVISION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please use the space on the back of the questionnaire to provide any additional information about the type of assistance you provide to teachers.

Also, please write any additional comments you may have on the back of this questionnaire.

**Additional Information:**

**Comments:**

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it by April 16 to Janet M. Andrejco, 1805 Volvo Parkway, Chesapeake, Virginia, 23320. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided.

## **Appendix B. Sample Letters to Personnel Administrator**



March 28, 1990

Dear :

As a personnel administrator, one of your responsibilities is teacher evaluation. Determining how to help an unsatisfactory teacher can be a problem for all of us. Because helping a teacher to improve is not required in Virginia, school divisions approach the problem using different methods. Determining the various methods which exist will, in turn, be helpful to personnel administrators in developing, reviewing, and revising approaches to assist unsatisfactory teachers.

One personnel administrator in every Virginia school division is being asked to answer questions describing the type of assistance, if any, provided in that division. For this study to represent all of the school divisions in Virginia, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned. If you believe that another administrator in your school division has a better understanding of the process used to assist unsatisfactory teachers, please ask that person to complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaire has an identification number for the purpose of checking your name off the mailing list once the questionnaire is returned. You may be assured of complete confidentiality.

Please circle one answer for each question unless otherwise indicated. When an answer of "other" is selected, please write the appropriate response.

The results of this research will be available to you. There is space provided on the questionnaire to request a copy of the results.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please write or call. The telephone number is (804) 547-0153, extension 307.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Andrejco  
Researcher

Postcard

April 4, 1990

Last week a questionnaire seeking information on assistance provided to teachers demonstrating instructional problems was mailed to you. A questionnaire was also mailed to a personnel administrator in every public school division in Virginia.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, accept my sincere thanks. If not, please complete and return the questionnaire today. It is extremely important for your responses to be included in the study to accurately report on teacher assistance programs in Virginia.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Andrejco, Researcher  
Virginia Tech  
(804) 547-0153

April 18, 1990

Dear :

About three weeks ago I wrote to you requesting information on the types of assistance provided by your school division to teachers who experience instructional problems. A postcard was mailed on April 4 to remind you about completing the questionnaire. As of today I have not received your completed questionnaire.

This research is being conducted to determine what types of assistance, if any, are provided to teachers in Virginia who experience instructional problems. Assistance from a school system is not required by the Code of Virginia. Determining what teacher assistance programs exist may lead to a study on effectiveness of the programs.

I am writing to you again because of the significance each questionnaire has to the study. Although most of the school divisions have responded, a response from each of the 136 school divisions is necessary to study and report the status of teacher assistance programs in Virginia. A response from your school division would greatly add to the comprehensiveness of the study.

In the event that your questionnaire was misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. Please complete the questionnaire and mail it by April 23. Your cooperation and time is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Andrejco  
Researcher

# Vita

Janet M. Andrejco  
1805 Volvo Parkway  
Chesapeake, VA 23320

(804) 479-0828

## Education

- 1974 B.S. in Special Education  
Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA
- 1979 M.Ed. in Special Education  
Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA
- 1989 C.A.G.S. in Educational Administration  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA
- 1991 Ed.D. in Educational Administration  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA

## Experience

- 1975-1978 Special Education Teacher, Educable Mentally Retarded/Emotionally Disturbed, Adults, Selinsgrove Center, Selinsgrove, PA
- 1979 Special Education Teacher, Severe and Profound Handicapped, ages 12-21, C.S.I.U. #14, Lewisburg, PA
- 1979-1983 Special Education Teacher, Emotionally Disturbed, ages 14-21, Chesapeake City Public Schools, Chesapeake, VA
- 1983-1986 Coordinator of Special Education, Chesapeake City Public Schools, Chesapeake, VA
- 1986-1987 Coordinator of Performance Improvement, Chesapeake City Public Schools, Chesapeake, VA
- 1987-1988 Personnel Coordinator, Chesapeake City Public Schools, Chesapeake, VA
- 1988-1990 Staff Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Staff Development, Chesapeake City Public Schools, Chesapeake, VA

1990-1991 Assistant Principal for Instruction, Oscar F. Smith High School,  
Chesapeake City Schools, Chesapeake, VA

  
Janet M. Andrejco