The Experiences of Teachers and Administrators with a New Teacher Evaluation System
in a Local School Division

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ABSTRACT

School divisions in Virginia implemented revised or new teacher evaluation systems beginning in 2012. These evaluation systems incorporated teacher portfolios, goal setting, and teacher performance assessment based on student achievement, and they were substantially different from those previously used by both teachers and their evaluators. This study was about how teachers and administrators experienced the implementation of this new evaluation system. Their observations, thoughts, feelings, and learning about themselves, and how they experienced this change were the topics of interest in the study.

The setting for this case study was one elementary school in a small school division in southwestern Virginia. In-depth interviews of two administrators and 13 teachers of varied experience levels were conducted with a researcher-developed protocol by an outside interviewer. Data were analyzed with the constant comparative method.

The experiences of the participants are reported in their own words. Their stories are descriptions of how they experienced the implementation of a second-order change in the evaluation of teachers in this small school division. Their experiences encompassed the entire process of change from the introduction of the change through the assimilation of the purposes and components of the new system and on to the training and support provided throughout the process. They described the changes in their responsibilities, their uncertainties, and their thoughts and feelings about the system as it moved toward institutionalization. And, they shared

some recommendations for change in the process and the system. A model of change was derived from the participants' experiences and labeled the Legg Model of Change.

DEDICATION

To Matt and Madolyn

For the support you have given and sacrifices you have made to help make my dream a reality,

thank you. You have helped me find strength when I thought there was none to be found. I love

you both.

To my Sweet Matthew

For your unconditional love, thank you. I miss you more every day. Nothing compares to your

strength and bravery, and you are an inspiration to me. I would give this all back to hold your

sweet hand once more. I love you to the moon and back.

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provided a tremendous amount of support from child care to inspirational texts, reminded me that I could do what I set out to do. I would like to thank my extended family and friends, too numerous to mention, for believing in me when I did not believe in myself. I am blessed to have the support of so many.

This journey has been difficult, not only because of the nature of the process, but because life happens. Lives were changed forever on April 16, 2007. On that date, Virginia Tech's spirit was shaken to its foundation by the campus violence that resulted in the deaths of thirty-two innocent students and staff members. Life happened to my family, too, while I was working on my dissertation. On that same day seven years later, April 16, 2014, our family was crushed by the loss of our beloved Matthew. Matthew was an amazing little boy, who endured a lot in his short life. He forever made his mark on this world and on my heart. It is truly amazing to have the support of my family, especially my husband Matt and my daughter Madolyn, when, as a family, we all experienced such loss.

Matt, Madolyn, and Matthew are the reasons I continued with this process when I was not certain that I could, and they are the reasons I continue each day of my life.

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

Teacher evaluation practices were being reevaluated in many states due to federal requirements for the acceptance of Race to the Top grant money and waivers for the 100% proficiency requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001). To receive a waiver, states had to develop and implement new evaluation systems that "use[d] multiple valid measures in determining performance levels, including as a significant factor data on student growth for all students" (United States Department of Education, 2012, p. 19). The effective date for the new evaluation process in Virginia was July 1, 2012, and student growth data provided by the Virginia Department of Education had to be used as one of the performance measures in teachers' evaluations in selected grades and subject areas (Virginia Board of Education, 2011).

While there have been many criticisms of teacher evaluation systems of the past, there were criticisms of the evaluation systems at the time of this study. A few problems identified with past teacher evaluation systems included evaluators who were not trained, checklists that were meaningless, and little feedback to the teacher for making improvements (National Education Association, 2010). While it appeared that those who developed many of the new evaluation systems in response to federal legislation considered and adjusted for these criticisms, there remained issues with the newly developed systems. Some issues with these latest systems included the amount of time involved for evaluators (Baker, 2013), the use of test-score-based evaluations (Boutin, 2011), and the need for related professional development (Boutin, 2011; Tripamer, 2013; Wacha, 2013).

The topic of new teacher evaluation systems was timely. It was timely because of the changes required by both federal and state policies. The federal policy was that states must incorporate student performance measures in teacher evaluations to receive either Race to the Top funds or a waiver of the student proficiency requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act. Given those requirements and the criticisms of evaluation systems, it may be useful to know how teachers and administrators are experiencing these new systems. No research was found to document how teachers and administrators were experiencing these new systems. There may be problems and issues in the implementation of the systems that, if brought to light, may be resolved for others as they implement similar systems of evaluation.

Context of the Study

Teacher evaluation systems were changing across the country. There was much literature on evaluation systems of the past, including criticisms. Major changes were taking place in how teachers were being evaluated. How teachers and administrators experienced these new systems may contribute to the literature on teacher evaluation and might be meaningful for the stakeholders personally.

Academic Context

The history of teacher supervision and evaluation is varied, leading to why it is a topic of interest today. In the early days of schools, the clergy of the community were responsible for making judgments about teachers. In the 1800s, the need for expertise in the various disciplines emerged along with the role of the principal. In the mid-1900s, clinical supervision became the structure of teacher evaluations. In the 1980s, Hunter's seven-step model of a lesson included the observation as a component of supervision. Other perspectives developed in the mid-1980s, including Glatthorn's and Glickman's, constituting an era that "…set the stage for an emphasis

on teacher evaluation" (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011, p. 22). In the mid-1990s, Danielson created a model that "sought to capture—in its full complexity—the dynamic process of classroom teaching" (Marzano et al., 2011, p. 23), and is the basis of many evaluation models that are currently used.

In addition to the criticisms noted with recent evaluation systems, the National Education Association (2010) and the American Federation of Teachers (2012) offered suggestions for improvements. Both organizations believe that teachers should be more involved in the evaluation process, that multiple evaluation methods should be used, and that results of the evaluation should be tied to professional development.

Studies (Tripamer, 2013; Wacha, 2013) were found where researchers examined the perception of teachers regarding the evaluation process or specific parts of the process before the recent changes that have come as a consequence of the acceptance of the NCLB waiver. Since the latest changes have been implemented, little research has focused on the perception of teachers and principals regarding the newer evaluation systems.

Personal Context

Prior to the recent focus on teacher evaluation across the state and nation, the studied division made teacher evaluation a focal point. The administrative team decided to look at the division's evaluation instrument in 2006 because it was believed that the observation and evaluation instruments did not meet the needs of teachers. The administrative team met with teachers who provided input to help devise an instrument that was more than a checklist. There were many places for administrator feedback, and teachers expected feedback to be given. The administrative team discussed the reliability of the instruments and spent time discussing

expectations and honest ratings. Simply completing the instrument to satisfy the requirements of the process and giving valuable feedback to affect instruction was a major change.

As the division was on a path to what they believed were meaningful observations and evaluations, the Virginia Department of Education mandated that student growth data become a part of the teacher evaluation process. This was actually a part of Virginia law for some time, but it was not previously a part of the division's evaluation system.

The new evaluation system for the division was implemented in the 2012-2013 school year. The division had a good working document to use during the first year of implementation, realizing that changes may be made if necessary. This new system met the requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia and was considerably different from the previous evaluation system. This system was yet another major change for administrators and teachers in the area of teacher evaluation. Considering these major changes to the way teacher evaluation was completed in the division, it may be a worthy study to see how these changes were experienced by teachers and administrators.

Statement of the Problem

As a result of the acceptance of the NCLB waiver, the associated requirements were the reason many school divisions were changing their teacher evaluation systems. For many, these changes were significant, adding additional measures to the evaluation process. These changes may have affected how teachers and administrators experienced the evaluation process. This research may contribute to the understanding of how teachers and administrators implemented and experienced the new evaluation systems that were devised as a result of the requirements associated with the acceptance of the NCLB proficiency requirement waiver.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to understand how teachers and administrators experienced the new teacher evaluation system used in this division. Experience is defined as "the process of doing and seeing things and having things happen to you" (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, 2014). The researcher studied how teachers and administrators experienced a new teacher evaluation system to offer suggestions or considerations for future implementations of teacher evaluation systems. These findings may help other schools as they employ new teacher evaluation systems.

Significance of the Study

As an administrator, I believed this school division had taken great strides to make the teacher evaluation system meaningful. Even with the new teacher evaluation requirements and the changes to our system, I felt confident that what we were doing was effective. It was not until I met with a teacher to discuss her final evaluation using the new system that I realized my thinking may have been incorrect. I still believed that we were on the right track, but this teacher had some concerns that I did not realize until she voiced them to me. After speaking with her, I wondered how other teachers were experiencing the process and felt that it was important to give them their voice. Since this was an assessment process that affected teachers, it must have been meaningful and fair for them if they were to use the process to help them grow.

Research Questions

There were two sets of research questions that guided this study, one for participating teachers and one for participating school administrators.

Research Questions for Teachers

1. How do teachers experience the implementation of a new evaluation system?

a. What is the psychological experience of teachers as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?

b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

d. How did the amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how teachers experience the implementation of the system?

e. What are the expectations of teachers for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?

f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system experienced by teachers?

g. How do teachers experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation system?

h. How did teachers experience other components (to be discovered in the interview data) of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

Research Questions for Administrators

2. How do administrators experience the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

a. What is the psychological experience of administrators as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?

b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

d. How did the amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how administrators experience the implementation of the system?

e. What are the expectations of administrators for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?

f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system experienced by administrators?

g. How do administrators experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation system?

h. How did administrators experience other components (to be discovered in the interview data) of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?

Assumptions and Delimitations

The researcher assumed that all participants would answer interview questions honestly about their own experiences with the new teacher evaluation system. This study was conducted in a small school division in southwestern Virginia; therefore, the scope and generalizability of this study were limited to one school and one school division in a rural setting in a southern state.

Chapter Summary and Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 contains the context of the study, the problem, the purpose, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature related to the problem prompting the study. Chapter 3 contains the methodology for this study including the overall design, selection of and gaining access to the school site, selection of participants, data collection, data management, and data analysis. Chapter 4 is a report of the

findings of the study. Chapter 5 is a summary of the results and includes conclusions and

recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

With the possible reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) and Virginia's acceptance of funds under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (2009), rigorous teacher evaluations based, in part, on student performance were implemented in school divisions across Virginia. The effective date for the new evaluation process was July 1, 2012, and student growth data provided by the Virginia Department of Education had to be used as one of the performance measures in teachers' evaluations in selected grades and subject areas (Virginia Board of Education, 2011).

The literature that follows presents research and commentary that support the implementation of a teacher evaluation system as prescribed by the Commonwealth of Virginia in one school in one Virginia school division. For the successful implementation of a newly developed teacher evaluation system, both evaluators and those being evaluated must understand the purposes, expected outcomes, criteria, and processes of teacher evaluation. Current evaluation systems that are considered to be effective are included, as are policy issues related to teacher evaluation. Teacher, student, and evaluator variables that that affect teacher evaluation are examined. Finally, implementing a new evaluation system requires change so the leader's role in the change process is examined.

The Meaning of Evaluation

Many times the phrases "teacher observation" and "teacher evaluation" are used interchangeably although they are not the same. An observation is when the administrator visits the classroom to collect data as an assessment. This assessment is non-judgmental. It is simply based on what is observed (or not observed) on one particular day during one observation. An

evaluation is when the administrator uses the assessment data from various formal and informal observations to make a judgment about a teacher's performance. The judging or valuing process by the administrator is an evaluation. In an ideal situation, a teacher's evaluation by an administrator will be based on multiple data collected from many formal and informal observations over a lengthy period of time. Moreover, teachers will be fully aware and understanding of all aspects of their evaluation process.

Purposes and Expected Outcomes of Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation serves two primary purposes. The purposes are (a) the improvement of instruction and student learning (formative evaluation) and (b) the determination of the employment status of the teacher (summative evaluation).

Teacher evaluation as a means of improving instruction and student learning (formative evaluation) is supported by the work of Danielson (2012), Looney (2011), and Marzano (2012). Looney concluded from several studies "…that well-designed teacher evaluation systems, aligned with professional learning and development, can contribute to improvement in the quality of teaching and raise student achievement" (p. 440). The National Education Association (NEA) (2010) echoed these sentiments with the belief that evaluation should "strengthen the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and classroom practices of professional educators" (p. 2). Marzano defined this purpose of evaluation as teacher development because it is designed to help teachers improve.

Teacher evaluation as a means of improving the teaching force by removing ineffective teachers (summative evaluation) is supported by the National Education Association (2010) and Marzano (2012). The National Education Association believes that after support and intervention, the summative evaluation could begin the process of removing ineffective teachers.

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Summative evaluations should be based on clear performance standards that are used throughout the summative process. Teachers who need to improve "should receive intensive intervention, support, and individualized professional development" (National Education Association, 2010, p. 4). Marzano defined this purpose of teacher evaluation as measurement because it shows how the teacher is performing in the classroom.

Teacher evaluation can result in several outcomes. It is expected that conversations take place between the teacher and the evaluator as a part of the evaluation process. One outcome of an evaluation discussion might be administrator suggestions for improved instructional strategies by the teacher in order to better promote leaning opportunities for children (formative evaluation). Good examples of formative evaluation should illustrate for the teacher specifics of improved instructional strategies and appropriate ways that the teacher might best acquire those skills. A good evaluation system must be supported by professional development and training. For some teachers, a Plan of Improvement might be an outcome of an evaluation. For other teachers, where an appropriately-implemented Plan of Improvement has not been effective, the outcome might be the recommendation for dismissal or non-reappointment of the teacher (summative evaluation).

Criteria Applied in Teacher Evaluation

Many different evaluation systems are used in school districts across the United States. Each evaluation system has a set of criteria adopted by the school district. The criteria are selected to fulfill the purposes of the evaluation system, which could be formative, summative, or a combination of the two.

Evaluation systems that focus on teacher development (formative evaluation) are designed to help teachers improve (Marzano, 2012). This type of evaluation system might

include classroom behaviors associated with student achievement, such as communicating learning goals, celebrating student successes, helping students interact with new material, and establishing relationships with students (Marzano, 2012). Two examples of evaluation systems that focus on development are the *Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model* (Learning Sciences International, 2013b) and Danielson's (2012) *Framework for Teaching*.

The *Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model* (Learning Sciences International, 2013b) is based on Marzano's research and experience and is "a complete set of practices directly related to improved student performance" (Learning Sciences International, 2013b, para. 3). The *Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model* has 60 elements that fall into the following four domains: (a) classroom strategies and behaviors, (2) preparing and planning, (3) reflecting on teaching, and (4) collegiality and professionalism (Learning Sciences International, 2013a).

The *Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2012), meets the need Danielson sees for specific criteria in the observation and evaluation process. The *Framework for Teaching* has 76 elements organized into four domains that are similar to those of Marzano (Learning Sciences International, 2013a): (1) planning and preparation, (2) classroom environment, (3) instruction, and (4) professional responsibilities (Danielson Group, 2011).

Evaluation systems that focus on measurement (summative evaluation) are designed to help administrators determine teacher competence in the classroom (Marzano, 2012). An example of an evaluation system with a summative purpose is the *Rapid Assessment of Teacher Effectiveness (RATE)* (Marzano, 2012). This model has categories of teacher behavior that may be used to rate teachers on such classroom behaviors as providing feedback, giving examples and non-examples, clearly explaining concepts, and keeping students engaged.

Some evaluation systems are designed to serve both formative and summative purposes. An example of such a system is the Commonwealth of Virginia's *Teacher Performance Evaluation System.* This system has seven categories, which are similar to the domains in the models of Marzano (Learning Sciences International, 2013a) and Danielson (Danielson Group, 2011). The categories are (a) professional knowledge, (b) instructional planning, (c) instructional delivery, (d) assessment of and for student learning, (e) learning environment, (f) professionalism, and (g) student academic progress. Each category has a standard and a set of performance indicators. The system has 48 indicators or criteria that may be used by school divisions in the development of their local evaluation systems.

Methods Applied in Teacher Evaluation

Several methods are used to evaluate teachers. Combinations of these methods are used in multiple-measure teacher evaluations. Multiple-measure evaluation systems have more than one source of data. While researchers have different ideas about what data sources should be included, all of the sources are considered to be useful in teacher evaluation (Hanover Research, 2012). For example, Little, Goe, and Bell (2009) discussed the following methods and data sources in a recent report for the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality: the use of data in evaluations (value-added models), classroom observations, classroom artifacts, portfolios, teacher self-evaluations, and student evaluations. For the purposes of this paper, I discuss the aforementioned methods briefly and associate each with student achievement. The role of the principal and the use of feedback in evaluation are explored.

As with anything in education, it is difficult to determine a direct relationship between any one variable and student learning. There are intervening variables that might have an effect. By using these methods of teacher evaluation, the teacher may be motivated in some way, which

in turn motivates the student to perform better or learn more. It is not the actual process of teacher evaluation that affects student learning, but learning is an indirect result of the effects of the evaluation process on the teacher.

Use of Data in Teacher Evaluation, Including Growth and Value-Added Models

Virginia law requires the use of measures of student academic progress in the evaluation of teachers, as stated in Article 2, §22-1.293 of the *Code of Virginia* (Commonwealth of Virginia, 2011). The Virginia Board of Education requires that student academic progress account for forty percent of a teacher's summative evaluation. For the evaluation of teachers, the Virginia Board of Education recommends using multiple measures of student academic progress, but it requires as one of those measures the use of student growth percentiles in the subjects and grades for which data are available from the Virginia Department of Education (Virginia Board of Education, 2011).

Student growth models and value-added models are not the same. Value-added models are used to estimate the effect that a school or teacher has on student learning over time. Growth models are used to estimate the progress an individual child has made over time. Student academic progress must be used in the teacher evaluation process in Virginia, including student growth percentiles (SGP) for those teachers where they are available.

The use of student learning outcome data as a component of teacher evaluation is controversial. The National Education Association (NEA) (2010) noted several concerns with the use of student learning measures or "value-added" analyses of standardized test scores for making summative decisions about teachers. One NEA concern is that one test score cannot represent student learning. Another concern is that one teacher cannot account for all that a student learns. Thirdly, there are many areas in which no student learning outcome data are

available. While there are many limitations of using value-added methods, many states, localities, and teacher associations are supporting their use because money is tied to those methods through federal grants. The National Education Association advocates the use of value-added measures only "within a clear and meaningful system of multiple measures of evidence" (p. 9). Looney (2011) noted "value-added assessments are indeed valuable, but should supplement evaluations conducted by competent supervisors and peers" (p. 447).

Multiple sets of data become a necessity because student growth data are not available for all subject areas or grades and because of the complex nature of teachers' work (Virginia Department of Education, 2013). Through his research on various assessments, Papay (2010) encouraged the use of multiple sources of information to provide a better sense of teacher performance on a wider range of domains (p. 189). All of the examples provided by Tucker and Stronge (2005) had some form of data on student performance in teacher evaluation but only as one of many measures (p. 25). Toch (2008) agreed that test scores should play only a supporting role in teacher evaluations (p. 36). Finally, Peterson, Stevens, and Ponzio (1998) recognize the need for multiple data sources "…because good teaching comes in a variety of forms and styles" (p. 124), suggesting that one data source would not be appropriate.

Classroom Observations in Teacher Evaluation

Classroom observations are commonly used in teacher evaluation, but observation instruments can vary as much as the number of districts that use them. Many observation instruments are created by the district, although some may be purchased. The instruments may be completed by the building administrator, someone from the district's central office, or by an outside evaluator. Observations may be scheduled or unannounced. One example of a

classroom observation protocol is Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, which numerous school districts have used as a model in the development of their own observation instruments.

Classroom observations and subsequent observation conferences can help to promote gains in student achievement. In a recent report by the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project (Kane & Staiger, 2012), a research project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, researchers studied five observation instruments (*Framework for Teaching, Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Protocol for Language Arts Teaching Observations, Mathematical Quality of Instruction*, and *UTeach Teacher Observation Protocol*) and found that they were associated with student achievement gains in math and English. The observation instruments measure different competencies. Kane and Staiger (2012) stressed averaging scores over multiple observations and found greater reliability when combining observation scores with the current group of students, evidence of student growth attained by the teacher with another group of students, and student feedback from the current group of students. While this conclusion was based on a large amount of data, the researchers warned that the study was conducted under special research conditions and cautioned generalizing the results. For example, trained evaluators with no personal connections to the teachers completed four observations by watching videotaped lessons. Student growth data were used, as were multiple sources of data, including tests with high levels of reliability. An implication noted in the report was that "each of the observation instruments is related to student achievement gains, but the correlations were modest when observations were used alone" (Kane & Staiger, 2012, p. 57).

Teachers who show improvement on observation instruments show improvement in student learning (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011). Researchers focusing on a specific teacher observation instrument (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011) found "that evaluations

based on well-executed classroom observations *do* identify effective teachers and teaching practices" (p. 588). In a study of Cincinnati's Teacher Evaluation System (TES), Kane, Taylor, Tyler, and Wooten (2011) suggested that increasing a teacher's score by one point on the observation instrument is associated with an increase of one seventh standard deviation in reading achievement and one tenth standard deviation in mathematics achievement. In this study, researchers used evaluation data combined with student achievement data from the years before and after the teachers' participation in the evaluation to address constraints of the evaluation system. The authors of the report concluded that teachers' classroom practices as reported on the observation instrument, do predict differences in student achievement growth, however small. The observation is an instrument in the evaluation process where teachers' skills are measured, and the authors of this study suggest that student achievement would benefit from an effort to improve these skills as measured by the evaluation. Kane et al. (2011) concluded that evaluations like Cincinnati's are valuable because they focus on areas of practice that should help improvement efforts overall.

Classroom Artifacts in Teacher Evaluation

By looking at a variety of classroom artifacts, such as lesson plans, assignments, and assessments, evaluators may gain a better understanding of how a teacher creates learning opportunities for students. Classroom artifacts may include the above listed items as well as rubrics and examples of student work. These items should be easy to pull together as they already exist and are in use in the classroom.

When reviewing artifacts, one must remember that while the lesson plan is important, it is what the teacher does with the lesson plan that makes the difference. Metcalfe (2011) evaluated Learning-Focused Strategies embedded in a lesson-plan format with fifth-grade teachers to

determine if the lesson-plan format affected student achievement. The teachers' lesson plans were rated using a rubric to evaluate how they were following the Learning-Focused Strategies, including Essential Questions, Assessment, and Teaching (EAT) methods. Metcalfe found no relationship between the use of the lesson-plan format and student achievement. Metcalfe noted that observations could have provided more information on the implementation of the lesson plan, which is an important point. Even though the lesson plan aligned with the rubric, if teachers were not confident in what they were teaching, they might not have been able to accurately convey information to students (Metcalfe, 2011).

Portfolios in Teacher Evaluation

Portfolios are a collection of materials by teachers used to show how they have met certain criteria in the evaluation process. The teacher chooses the materials to demonstrate his or her work as it relates to a particular standard. A portfolio may include personal reflections. Little et al. (2009) warned that portfolios may be time consuming, "so built-in time to develop portfolios should be provided to teachers if portfolios are required as part of a school evaluation or improvement system" (p. 11).

While developing a portfolio may be time consuming for the teacher, portfolios may be an important part of the evaluation process. Through portfolios, teachers are provided focused time for reflection on their practice, and they have some control over their evaluation process. Attinello, Lare, and Waters (2006) found that portfolios are perceived by teachers and administrators to be more accurate than traditional observations and that teachers and administrators believe portfolios can have an effect on teaching practices. They concluded that portfolios show promise as a tool in teacher evaluation. Portfolios, when supplemented with

classroom observations, may lead to more focused discussion between the teacher and evaluator regarding instructional practices.

While there may be teaching benefits associated with the use of portfolios, building the portfolio alone is not necessarily the answer to better teacher evaluation systems. Much thought and consideration must be given to the process. Portfolios require significant amounts of time to be developed by the teacher and to be reviewed by the administrator. This time must be given to both (Attinello, Lare, & Waters, 2006). If time is given to reflect and communicate on the practice of teaching with other teachers and administrators, the portfolio can be a valuable tool. Attinello et al. (2006) recommended clear guidelines for portfolio development, training for teachers and administrators, administrator buy in, built-in time for administrative review and feedback, and, finally, the use of the portfolio as only one piece of the data-gathering process for teacher evaluation.

It is difficult to say what effect teacher portfolios have on student achievement. Attinello et al. (2006) spoke only to the value of portfolios in teacher evaluation and professional growth. Bratcher (1998) studied the effect teacher portfolios have on teacher performance and student achievement. Five teachers were studied. Bratcher reported that teachers perceived student achievement was positively affected as a result of the teacher growth from the use of portfolios and the data collection process involved in building a portfolio. The author asserted that by analyzing the data that they were collecting for the portfolio, the teacher's attention was drawn to areas in which they could help students improve. Teachers examined their current practices and modified those according to students' needs. Bratcher noted that student achievement is a complex issue and that teachers perceived "continual enhancement of professional performance

and data analysis to better align instruction to individual student needs…[as] two factors that seem to positively influence student achievement" (p. 165).

Teacher Self-Reporting in Teacher Evaluation

Teacher self-reporting is simply that; teachers report on what they are doing in their classroom. This can be in the form of a survey, interview, or instructional log covering a broad or specific topic. Self-reports may help the evaluator by getting into the mind of the teacher, as only the teacher understands the intent of his or her lessons and the composition of his or her classroom, but self-reporting may be biased. For example, a teacher could report on a strategy that he or she is using incorrectly in the classroom, although the teacher's perception might be that he or she is implementing that strategy appropriately.

Self-reports are widely used and easy to administer, but might not provide valuable information when they are applied to broad categories such as "effective instruction" (Berger, 2010). Berger (2010) refers to effective instruction as what teachers do in the classroom that affects student achievement. Berger used a self-report measure, the *Instructional Practices Scale*; student grades; and standardized test scores to estimate the effects of teacher practices on student achievement. Three limitations of the study were that the survey was revised throughout the study, that student grades may not have been a good measure of student achievement, and the standardized tests may not have measured what was actually taught. Further, Berger acknowledged that the *Instructional Practices Scale* could have captured teachers' beliefs about teaching rather than what they actually did in the classroom. With these limitations, Berger suggested that self-reports continue to be refined and that other self-reports, such as teacher logs, may be a better measure of what teachers do in the classroom that affect student achievement.

Self-reports can provide support for other forms of data. In a study focused on one teacher's use of a portfolio, the researcher used self-reports from other teachers to support the first teacher's claims regarding the effects of the portfolio on teaching and learning (Athanases, 1994). In this case, the researcher compared self-reports from 18 other teachers to look for themes regarding the use of portfolios. The self-report does not affect achievement directly but may support data from other data sources.

Student Evaluation in Teacher Evaluation

Student evaluations as part of a K-12 teacher evaluation system have mixed reviews. Little et al. (2009) recognized some concerns with student evaluations, including that students may rate teachers based on personality and that students are not qualified to rate teachers on curriculum or content knowledge. Peterson et al. (1998) stated that "students are good judges of some parts of teaching (Is new and interesting material available?), but not others (Does this teacher know his subject matter?)" (p. 124). One of the initial findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project (MET Project) was that "the average student knows effective teaching when he or she experiences it" (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010b, p. 5). The MET Project used Cambridge Education's Tripod Project surveys[1] to measure teaching practices called the "Seven Cs": caring, captivating, conferring, controlling, clarifying, challenging, and consolidating (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010a). The MET Project explained that in another administration of the Tripod surveys, "classrooms in which students rated their teachers higher on the Seven Cs tended also to produce greater achievement gains" (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010a, p. 2).

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[1] Cambridge Education is an education consultant firm. The Tripod Project is a consortium of schools and districts with the goal of raising student achievement while narrowing achievement gaps. The belief is that this can happen by helping teachers improve in the areas of content knowledge, pedagogy, and relationships (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010a).

The Principal's Role in Teacher Evaluation

In many evaluation systems, the principals' observation is a major part of teacher evaluation. The observation of teachers by principals may be formal, as in using an observation instrument, or informal, such as an unannounced visit that provides a snap shot of what the teacher is doing (Little et al., 2009). Principals conduct evaluations for two purposes: making decisions about teacher retention or dismissal and giving feedback to improve instruction.

The reliability and validity of the observation instruments are important considerations. Principals should be properly trained to use the observation instrument, and observations should be conducted several times throughout the year to ensure reliability. It appears that Little, Goe, & Bell (2009) refer to validity in terms of credibility. Little et al. suggested a combination of announced and unannounced visits and a combination of principal and peer raters to increase credibility. Other ways to increase reliability and validity are informing teachers of the criteria prior to the evaluation, providing feedback on their performance, and offering support in the areas in which improvements can be made (Little et al., 2009).

Principal evaluations can be useful for sorting teachers along a continuum of effectiveness but they come with some areas of concern. In a study by Jacob and Lefgren (2008), principals were asked to rate teachers in a variety of areas to see how well they could distinguish between more and less effective teachers as measured by student achievement. They concluded that principals have the ability to identify teachers at both the top and bottom, but they are not as successful in identifying teachers in the middle. Jacob and Lefgren suggested that the principal's overall rating of a teacher captures something different from other measures of teacher performance and that the principal's rating, along with value-added measures, can be a predictor of student achievement in reading and math. Those in education can recognize good

teaching. While principal evaluations might be a good indicator of a teacher's ability to improve student achievement, there is still concern with favoritism and the ability to accurately evaluate those in the middle.

Teachers look for their principals to be leaders in the evaluation process. Peterson (2004) maintained that educational audiences consider the principal to be the key teacher evaluator. Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton (2003) studied teacher perceptions of an effective evaluation process. The researchers found that teachers believe the following to be part of a successful evaluation system: principal/teacher interactions (communication and feedback), consistency in evaluation (use of valid and reliable instruments and objectivity), knowledge about pedagogy and evaluation (an experienced educator), and commitment to the process (devotes the necessary amount of time). In the researchers' opinions, skilled principals can conduct effective evaluations that could lead to increased student achievement through improved teacher performance.

Role of Feedback in Teacher Evaluation

Effective feedback is characterized by thoughtful, specific conversation between a teacher and an evaluator following an observation. Part of the feedback component involves the evaluator's ability to offer suggestions for improved instruction. Evaluators may observe classrooms daily, but if they do not communicate with teachers, it does not matter how long or how often they visit. Teachers have long wanted more than the dreaded checklist that marks them as satisfactory or not, with no explanation or suggestion for ways to improve their teaching. Feedback can be a valuable part of the evaluation process (National Education Association, 2010).

Effective feedback has several characteristics: it is direct, specific, personal, timely, actionable, on-going, and goal-referenced among other things (Wiggins, 2012). Tomlinson's (2012) examples of helpful feedback included being specific, personal, and timely. Wiggins' (2012) recommendations for feedback to students may be applied to feedback for teachers. Wiggins defined feedback as information related to efforts in goal attainment, noting that feedback is not the same as giving advice or making a judgment. For feedback to be useful, Wiggins stated that it needs to be user-friendly, actionable, timely, and ongoing. Feedback has to be related to a goal and should have meaning for the person receiving it. After visiting a classroom, the evaluator and teacher must talk about specific observations relating to the teacher's goals that are within the teacher's capacity to improve upon daily. The evaluator should share information about observations, rather than value-judgments. For example, instead of saying that students do not seem engaged, the evaluator should give specific examples of students being off-task or disengaged. Good feedback is descriptive rather than judgmental.

Teachers believe that feedback assists them in improving their teaching practices provided it is frequent (La Masa, 2005). In La Masa's (2005) case study, a conflict arose in the interview responses from teachers devaluing administrator feedback and placing more value on their own personal reflections. One issue the teachers noted was that it was difficult for the administrator to supervise effectively because of the number of things that pulled on his or her time daily. One teacher commented that "outside evaluation, there is very little feedback" (La Masa, 2005, p.91). In this particular school, teachers believed feedback was important, but that effective feedback didn't happen often.

The content of the feedback is more valuable to teachers than the frequency of observations. Administrators must be aware that teachers expect increased communication and

appropriate feedback (Zimmerman & Deckert-Pelton, 2003, p. 29). In a study on informal classroom observations, Ing (2010) concluded that the frequency of the observations was not related to teacher perceptions of improving instruction, but that follow up by the administrators (as feedback) did relate to teacher perceptions of improving instruction (p. 354). Ing found no significant correlation between the frequency or duration of informal classroom visits and the instructional climate (defined as improvement of instruction) of the school.

An Example of a Multiple-Measure Teacher Evaluation System

An example of a multiple-measure teacher evaluation system is Virginia's *Teacher Performance Evaluation System,* which uses a combination of the methods and data sources listed above. Rubrics are used to aid evaluators in the assessment of each of the seven performance standards. Rubric ratings are listed as exemplary, proficient, developing/needs improvement, and unacceptable, with proficient being the expected rating. Effective performance is recognized at the two highest levels (exemplary and proficient), and ineffective performance is recognized at the two lowest levels (developing/needs improvement and unacceptable). The proficient category includes teachers who meet the standard according to the division's goals. A teacher with an exemplary rating consistently performs above expectations. A teacher who is developing or needs improvement is inconsistent in meeting the division's goals. A teacher with an unacceptable rating consistently performs below the division's expectations (Virginia Board of Education, 2011). Stronge (2012) recommended the use of multiple data sources, including observations, documentation logs, student surveys, and measures of student progress. Measures of student progress include the use of student growth percentiles and goal setting for student achievement. All teachers must set at least one specific,

measurable, appropriate, realistic, and time-bound (SMART) goal. Strong included sample

forms that may be modified to meet the needs of any school division.

<div align="center">**Variables Associated with Teacher Evaluation**</div>

Several variables can be associated with a teacher evaluation system. These variables

relate to the people involved in the evaluation process, including teachers, evaluators, and

students. While many parts of the evaluation process are objective and can be based on observed

behaviors, the evaluation process itself still remains a subjective process.

Teacher Variables

The evaluation process may not be viewed in the same way by all teachers. Being

evaluated on job performance can create stress and anxiety for some teachers. Opinions on the

evaluation process could vary due to the experience level of the teacher, the teacher's belief in

the credibility of the evaluator, or the teacher's past experiences with being evaluated by an

administrator.

Teacher perceptions and effectiveness of teacher evaluation. Teacher perceptions of

the effectiveness of teacher evaluation are varied, even within one study. La Masa (2005)

concluded from teacher responses to interviews that the evaluation process had little effect in the

classroom on a daily basis. A majority of teachers participating in the study believed they knew

quality teaching and did it daily, and that the more experienced they were, the less effect the

evaluation had on their practice. La Masa, however, reported that 88.2% of the teachers agreed

that the evaluation process led to professional growth.

Fear, stress, and effectiveness of teacher evaluation. Often, the evaluation process is

associated with a feeling of fear or stress to even the most experienced educators. For some

people, the term "evaluation" alone causes stress. Teachers are aware evaluations are not only

used for professional growth, but for employment decisions. Teachers may not see the evaluation process as fair or worry that they will be judged over items they cannot control. Conley and Glasman (2008) listed ways to reduce the fear associated with teacher evaluation, which include union participation and changing the tone of the evaluation. A union may help a teacher who believes his or her evaluation is unfair. An evaluation system that allows those involved to take risks might decrease the amount of fear associated with the system.

Another way to diminish fear and stress and provide more teacher control is to allow teachers more involvement in the evaluation process. Peterson (2004) explained that principals can help teachers actively participate in the evaluation process by explaining the purposes of the evaluation system and showing teachers how to collect data for the process (p. 63). Peterson added that "teachers are good guides to the selection of elective data sources for their own situation" (p. 63). Teacher selection of data sources is useful because no single data source is valid or available for every teacher (Peterson, 2004, p.63). By selecting their own data sources, teachers are more involved and have more control of the evaluation process.

The Commonwealth of Virginia is making the necessary changes to improve the evaluation process, with each school division making the necessary changes that could give teachers more control of the process. When teachers have a feeling of control in the evaluation process, they may view that process as more meaningful and less threatening.

Evaluator Variables

School administrators play an important role in the evaluation process. Most often, the principal or assistant principal is the evaluator of teachers. A teacher's view of his or her principal's overall credibility affects how he or she views the evaluation and the evaluation process.

Transformational leadership and effectiveness of teacher evaluation. Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton (2003) suggested that "the principal can be the catalyst for successful teacher evaluation leading to a consistent and flourishing system of school improvement" (p. 29). Transformational leadership is key. The qualities of transformational leadership as they apply to the concept of teacher evaluation are the principal's ability to increase organizational commitment, capacity, and engagement in meeting goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003; Moolenaar, Daly, & Sleegers, 2010). These qualities are reinforced by studies on transformational leadership in education where the focus is on vision building, consideration of individual (teachers') feelings, and providing intellectual stimulation and professional development (Moolenaar et al., 2010).

It is the principal's responsibility to ensure the successful implementation of a teacher evaluation system. Moolenaar, Daly, and Sleegers (2010) found that "the more teachers perceive their principal as a transformational leader, the more the principal was nominated as a source of work-related advice and as a person whom teachers approach for guidance on more personal matters" (pp. 644-645). The more value a teacher gives to his or her principal, the more the teacher looks to the principal for advice, thus the more meaningful his or her evaluation will likely be.

Adequate evaluator training. One issue found with current evaluation systems is that evaluators do not receive adequate training regarding the evaluation process (National Education Association, 2010). Many evaluators are given the observation and evaluation instruments along with a list of due dates and are left to make major decisions about their teachers without any form of training. A teacher might receive glowing marks from his or her assistant principal one

year, only to find that he or she has many areas in which to improve when evaluated by the principal.

Proper training of evaluators can result in consistent scoring of teachers and more effective teacher evaluation. This has been a focus of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) (Wexler, 2013). DCPS recognized that two evaluators might rate the same lesson differently. Using grant money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, DCPS are training their evaluators. Evaluators are watching video-taped lessons together and talking about what they are seeing. By working together to align their scores, evaluators are able to learn about their own biases. When an evaluator's score varies significantly from what is determined to be the "anchor rating," that person receives individual training (Wexler, 2013).

The school division being studied recognized the need for adequate evaluator training over the years. The administrative team worked with experts from local universities in the past, and attended teacher evaluation workshops sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education. At these workshops and in administrative meetings, the administrative team evaluated video-taped lessons and compared results to check for inter-rater reliability. A considerable amount of time was spent talking about the evaluation process and the expectations with the administrative team and the faculties of the schools so that everyone was on the same page.

Student Variables

Another important group involved in the teacher evaluation process is the student group. Not only does student growth data account for 40% of a teacher's summative evaluation, each teacher must write progress (SMART) goals for their students that are considered in the evaluation. Finally, students comprise the audience that responds to the teacher's efforts when the teacher is being observed. Teacher observation is a critical component of teacher evaluation.

Students, however, are not always ready and willing participants in an administrator's observation and evaluation of teachers. Students bring different experiences and expectations with them to the classroom, which could affect how they respond to the teacher. Hattie (2009) reminded us that "students not only bring to school their prior achievement (from preschool, home, and genetics), but also a set of personal dispositions that can have a marked effect on the outcomes of schooling" (p. 40). Hattie shared that some of the student characteristics that influence student achievement can be developed in schools including a student's willingness to invest in learning and being open to experiences.

Comprehensive Evaluation Systems

Little (2009), on behalf of the National Education Association, highlighted five comprehensive evaluation systems that merit description. These are summarized as follows:

The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) focuses on the recruitment and retention of teachers by restructuring the evaluation process within the school. There are four key elements to this model: multiple career paths, ongoing professional development, instructionally focused accountability, and performance based compensation (Little, 2009, p. 1). Teachers may take on more responsibilities within the school by becoming mentor or master teachers. Teachers use student data to determine the necessary professional development. They are evaluated by multiple evaluators, all of whom undergo training. Performance pay is another option.

A second model is The Framework for Teaching (FFT). The Framework for Teaching model is the basis for evaluation systems in several states. The four domains of this model are planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Teachers are rated as Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient, or Distinguished. Here, too, it is recommended that evaluators be trained and that multiple evaluators be used.

The Professional Compensation System (ProComp) is a third model that was reviewed. The Professional Compensation System was designed in Denver, Colorado, by district and union leaders as a performance pay initiative. In the pilot, teachers developed annual objectives based on data and received incentives for meeting their goals. When it was fully implemented, veteran teachers could choose to stay with the traditional salary scale or go forward with the new system. Compensation was based on teacher-made goals, growth data, evaluation results, and participation in professional development, among other ways. The success of this system was attributed to the involvement of all stakeholders.

A fourth model reviewed was the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR). Peer Assistance and Review uses accomplished, veteran teachers as mentors and evaluators of new or struggling teachers. These veteran and new teachers work together to make improvements in instruction for the struggling teacher. The district determines who the mentor teachers will be and provides compensation for their efforts. This system takes the responsibility of evaluation from the principal and gives it to qualified, knowledgeable teachers.

A fifth model is The Beginning Educator Support and Training Program (BEST). The BEST uses portfolios in the evaluation of new teachers. The portfolios focus on instructional design and implementation, assessment, and analysis of teaching and learning. Each portfolio is evaluated by three trained raters with experience in the same discipline. The new teacher must receive a satisfactory score to receive full certification in Connecticut, where this system was devised.

The five programs listed in this section were recognized by the National Education Association for taking a comprehensive approach to teacher evaluation reform (Little, 2009). From these programs, Little noted suggestions needed in order to successfully implement

appropriate evaluation reform, including establishing a meaningful system for all those involved and creating a system that can be tied to professional development and career advancement.

Stronge's (2012) Model of Teacher Evaluation

James Stronge, professor at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia has been engaged with the topic of teacher evaluation in Virginia and the nation for many years. Stronge (2012) was a consultant in the development of the *Teacher Performance Evaluation System* for the Virginia Department of Education and Virginia's public schools. This model was based on a handbook developed by the Orange County Public School Division (Stronge, 2012) and Stronge's *Goals and Roles Performance Evaluation Model*. The purpose of the evaluation system was "to support the continuous growth and development of each teacher by monitoring, analyzing, and applying pertinent data compiled within a system of meaningful feedback" (Stronge, 2012, p. 1).

Perceptions of the Effectiveness of New Teacher Evaluation Systems

The focus on new teacher evaluation systems is generating some discussion about the effectiveness of these systems. James Boutin, a teacher, believes that while teacher evaluations need to be improved, there are "more fundamental changes that need to be made in public education" first (Boutin, 2011, para. 1). Boutin believes that evaluations should include evidence of what a teacher does outside of the brief observation, including communication with parents and students, grading, planning, and collaboration with peers. In Boutin's experience, most evaluators simply want to complete the paperwork required with evaluations and do little to foster professional development. Boutin believes that there are flaws associated with test-score-based evaluations, including that some states are basing evaluations of teachers in non-tested areas partially on how their students perform in tested subjects.

In an article for the New York Times, Baker (2013) looked at how the new teacher evaluation program in New York schools affected principals (evaluators). Baker described the difference in the amount of time dedicated to the evaluation process since the new evaluation process was implemented. He described how principals and assistant principals were visiting classrooms daily, using checklists for good teaching, discussing visits with teachers, and entering data from the visit into a teacher-grading database that did not consistently work. In addition to the time spent by building administrators, talent coaches and retired supervisors had been hired to help. Baker wrote that classroom observations alone equate to 90 hours for the evaluators, not including the paperwork and entering data in to the computer program. While there is hope for an overhaul to the evaluation process with this reform, "the early results in states where new teacher evaluation systems have been in place for more than a year are not much different from the old results, as nearly all teachers have scored in the top tiers" (Baker, 2013, para. 21).

Several recent studies have focused on teacher perceptions of new evaluation systems before the new systems were implemented. The findings of a recent study on teacher perceptions regarding a current evaluation system and a new evaluation model are similar to what has been found in the literature on this topic. Tripamer (2013) used a mixed-methods design to study the perceptions of teachers regarding their current evaluation system and a new state system that would be implemented soon. Tripamer noted several problems with the current evaluation system, including a lack of professional growth associated with the evaluation process and lack of quality feedback. Using the qualitative data from his study, Tripamer concluded that the new state model would be better than the current evaluation model. He suggested training on the new evaluation tools because the new system was so different from what was currently in place.

Wacha (2013) examined teachers' understandings of the effectiveness of the evaluation process. Wacha concluded that most teachers perceived that the current evaluation model did not lead to improvements in teaching. Wacha recommended that teachers become more involved in the evaluation process, including its development and implementation. Like Tripamer, she suggested regular feedback from the evaluation process and professional development specific to teachers' improvement needs.

Pay for Performance

Tying teacher evaluation to teacher pay is a controversial element of teacher evaluation systems (Little, 2009). In her writing on behalf of the National Education Association, Little (2009) listed several systems that incorporate pay for performance as part of their evaluation process. Two of these systems are ProComp and the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). With the ProComp system, veteran teachers can choose whether or not they will participate in the performance pay aspect of the evaluation system. In the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), teachers have the option of multiple career paths that tie compensation to extra responsibilities and teacher performance (Little, 2009).

Due to the accountability movement that has followed the No Child Left Behind Act, many states and localities are considering some form of pay for performance or merit pay to increase teacher performance (Podgursky & Springer, 2007, Protheroe, 2011). Podgursky and Springer (2007) reviewed literature related to pay for performance and shared both positive and negative aspects. The seven studies that were reviewed used different incentive schemes from a pay raise given to all teachers in high-performing schools to a tournament system where teachers were ranked using value-added methods. Podgursky and Springer noted that even when mixed findings were reported, "the incentive scheme always had a positive effect on the behavior that

was incentivized" (p. 565). In some cases, the incentives were only offered for a short time, and gains that were recognized during the program did not continue when the program ended.

There are benefits and disadvantages of a pay for performance system. Protheroe (2011) recognized that pay for performance could improve teacher quality by motivating and attracting higher quality teachers. One disadvantage recognized by Protheroe is that it is difficult to link the efforts of one teacher to students' classroom performance. Podgursky and Springer (2007) suggested that offering merit pay over a long period might be an incentive for teachers to cheat or focus only on tested material. There is no definitive answer to the correct way to offer pay for performance, but continued research and thought should be given to what works for the school district interested in using a merit pay system (Podgursky & Springer, 2007).

Policy and Politics in Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation is a focus of discussion from local districts to state and federal levels. The criticisms of current teacher evaluation systems, union and professional association positions, and the involvement of federal, state, and local education agencies' in teacher evaluation are described in this section.

Criticisms of Teacher Evaluation Systems

Many problems have been identified in teacher evaluation systems, including evaluators who are not trained, checklists that are meaningless, and little feedback to the teacher for making improvements (National Education Association, 2010). Toch (2008) referred to the current system used by most schools as "drive by" evaluations, lacking credible methods for measuring quality student work (p. 32). Tucker and Stronge (2005) noted that current methods of evaluation focus on the act of teaching while suggesting that evaluation should be focused on the results of teaching (pp. 6-7). There is widespread concern about the reliability and validity of

measures for identifying the effectiveness of instruction and teachers (Gallagher, 2004; Looney, 2011; Peterson, 2004; Zimmerman, 2003). Looney (2011) suggested the use of multiple measurements because "no single measurement can capture the full range of teacher performance in different contexts or conditions" (p. 443).

Evaluators bring with them a myriad of past experiences, and these experiences may affect their evaluations of teachers. The evaluator must be aware of his or her part and reflect on the effect he or she has in the evaluation process. This process of self-reflection is known as reflexivity. Evaluators and teachers should be on the same page in considering what good instruction is and what skills are assessed in the observation and evaluation. In some cases, evaluators are given the checklists, enter the classroom for the observation, and check off the list without much thought being given to the meaning behind the process.

Checklists may not be useful observation or evaluation devices. Teachers and administrators are often so hurried to complete required paperwork associated with teacher observation and evaluations that the forms at times are only given cursory attention. This is not to say that the checklist is not helpful or could not be meaningful if carefully developed around effective instructional practices and revised to accommodate current research findings. However, they become "meaningless when…[they] are not designed to depict good practice" (National Education Association, 2010, p. 2).

It is often the case that the observation and evaluation forms are handled "routinely." The observation or evaluation is conducted, and the form is completed by the principal and placed in the teacher's mailbox for a signature with little communication taking place before or after the observation or evaluation. The teacher and administrator sign off on the observation or evaluation, a copy is forwarded to the school board office and placed in the personnel file, and

all are relieved the process is complete until next year. However, signatures alone do not constitute adequate communication between teacher and evaluator.

Issues with evaluation systems are reported by the New Teacher Project (2009). The Project's report was based on a study of 12 districts, 15,000 teachers and 1,300 administrators in four states. A phenomenon known as the Widget Effect is identified in the report. The Widget Effect is the idea that people are interchangeable. In schools, it is the idea that teachers are equally effective and interchangeable. The authors believe that school systems reinforce this effect by rating all teachers as good or great, failing to recognize excellence in teaching, failing to provide adequate professional development, not paying attention to beginning teachers, and not recognizing poor performance (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009, p. 6).

Along with the criticisms of evaluation systems, writers offer suggestions for improvement. Little (2009) recommended a comprehensive approach to evaluation reform with the following components: (a) establishing a meaningful evaluation system that involves stakeholders in the process, (b) using valid measures in which evaluators are trained, (c) using multiple measures, and (d) embedding ongoing professional development. Principals and district leaders must be committed to the process. Little explained that "increased leadership accountability will also help to instill confidence in the system" (p. 18).

It has been suggested that the Widget Effect can be reversed with changes to evaluation systems and "better information about instructional quality that can be used to inform other important decisions that dictate who teaches in our schools" (Weisberg et al., p. 7). One suggestion is to "adopt a comprehensive performance evaluation system that fairly, accurately and credibly differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness in promoting student achievement" (Weisberg et al., p. 7). This would include clear performance standards, frequent

feedback to teachers, and professional development based on teacher needs. Evaluators should be trained. The evaluation system should produce information that is meaningful and used in decision making. The authors believe that by improving evaluation systems students and teachers will both experience growth.

Union and Professional Association Positions

The National Education Association (NEA) has criticized evaluation systems. In a recent report published by the National Education Association (NEA), Little (2009) suggested new evaluation practices to alleviate the criticisms that follow: current evaluation systems do not measure adequately teaching effectiveness, with over 90 percent of teachers being rated as top notch. Very few teachers are rated as unsatisfactory, and the evaluation process does little to improve the art of teaching (Little, 2009). Instruction cannot be improved by rating everyone superior.

Through its work with classroom teachers and those who influence policy, the NEA (2010) stated that it can promote evaluation models that strengthen teaching. The NEA's principles for teacher assessment and evaluation include (a) basing evaluations on clear teaching standards, (b) tying the evaluation results to professional development, (c) using multiple evaluation methods, and (d) including teachers in the development of the evaluation system.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) takes a similar stand to the NEA regarding teacher evaluation. The AFT recognizes problems with current teacher evaluation systems and acknowledges that while teacher evaluation can remove ineffective teachers, it can strengthen good teachers, making them better (American Federation of Teachers, n.d.).

The AFT (2012) has recommendations for the development and implementation of evaluation systems. The union suggested an implementation team with a work plan using

standards and rubrics to guide the implementation of the evaluation system. The AFT advocated the inclusion of multiple measures of data regarding student performance and teaching and learning conditions. Teachers and evaluators should be trained in the process. The AFT stressed the importance of professional development as a result of the evaluation process.

Federal Involvement in Teacher Evaluation Since 2001

Historically, providing a free public education to school-aged children has been the responsibility of the locality. No Child Left Behind was passed by the federal government in 2001 with the lofty goal that every child would reach proficiency status in reading and math by the year 2014 (Ravitch, 2010). Now that it is 2014, it is evident that these goals are out of reach for many. The federal government in recent years has intervened to relieve these requirements. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's Race to the Top was a way to offer grant money promoting educational reform to states that applied and were selected (Ravitch, 2010). States accepting Race to the Top grant money were required to meet a new set of criteria, including evaluating teachers using test scores. As 2014 neared, the Obama Administration offered waivers to states regarding the 100% proficiency requirement (Riddle & Kober, 2012). Virginia applied for and was granted a waiver and must now comply with specified regulations, including making student growth data a part of teacher evaluation.

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Involvement in Teacher Evaluation Since 2001

The Commonwealth of Virginia did not receive Race to the Top funds during the first phase of the grant and chose not to continue during phase two. The state did apply for the No Child Left Behind waiver, thereby agreeing to the terms set forth. In compliance with the waiver, school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia were required as of July 1, 2012, to have a teacher evaluation system in place that included student academic progress. The Virginia

Board of Education (2011), through the *Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria*, requires that 40 percent of a teacher's summative evaluation be based on student academic progress. It should be noted that Article 2, §22-1.293 of the *Code of Virginia* (Commonwealth of Virginia, 2011), has long required that student academic progress be included in teacher evaluation. The Virginia Department of Education provides student growth percentiles for teachers in reading and math in grades 4 through 8. These data may be used for teachers who support instruction in reading and math at these grade levels if the division so chooses. For teachers who have growth percentile data, the data count for 20 percent of the academic progress portion of their evaluation. The other 20 percent comes from other valid measures of student progress. It is a complex system.

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) recently published a report that reviewed teacher evaluation policies across the United States. The authors (Doherty & Jacobs, 2013) focused on states with evaluation systems that use results in meaningful ways. The NCTQ believed that "states must use the information that teacher evaluations generate about effectiveness to inform teacher policy and classroom practice" (Doherty & Jacobs, 2013, p. 2). The NCTQ recognized that states are in different stages of implementation and analyzed policy in the states where student achievement is a criterion in teacher evaluation. They provided a list of recommendations for states that are in the early stages of teacher evaluation reform, based on successes of those who have been through the process.

The NCTQ summarized Virginia's teacher evaluation system and provided recommendations based on twelve policy areas (Doherty & Jacobs, 2013, p. 83). Virginia's evaluation system is connected to continuing contract status, professional development, improvement plans, teacher dismissal, and layoffs. The NCTQ recommended that Virginia tie

evaluation results to compensation, licensure, licensure reciprocity, student teaching placements, teacher preparation program accountability, and public reporting of aggregate school-level data.

Local Education Agencies' (School Divisions) Involvement in Teacher Evaluation in Virginia

While the Virginia Board of Education (2011) set forth standards and evaluation criteria to be used as guidelines for school divisions in the development of teacher evaluation systems, divisions were allowed some discretion to create an evaluation system that meets the needs of the division as long as the performance standards were addressed. The Virginia Board of Education provided school divisions with a model evaluation system that could be used as presented or adapted to meet the needs of the division. Local school divisions are responsible for deciding how to use student academic progress in their evaluations. Other than student growth percentiles, school divisions are given the latitude to choose what measures are used.

One Local School Division

The Commonwealth of Virginia has 133 school divisions, one of which is a small independent city of approximately 7,000 residents located in southwest Virginia. The school division has approximately 1,330 students, consists of one elementary (530 students), one middle (315 students), and one high school (490 students).

For a few years prior to this recent focus on teacher evaluation across the state and nation, this school division had made teacher evaluation a focus for administrative and teacher discussions. The administrative team decided to look at the evaluation process in 2006 because they believed that the observation and evaluation system did not meet the needs of teachers. The administrative team met with teachers to devise an instrument that was more than a checklist. In the new system, there were many places for administrator feedback, and teachers expected

feedback to be given. The administrative team discussed the reliability of the instruments and spent time discussing expectations and honest ratings. These changes were a complete overhaul to the evaluation process, and it was a major adjustment for all involved to use the new evaluation process appropriately.

As the administrative team of the school system was on the path to meaningful observations and evaluations, the Virginia Department of Education added a mandate that student growth data become a part of the teacher evaluation process. Although the team thought that the process being used in Galax was good, the new Virginia mandate added a student data aspect that had been in Virginia law for some time. Over the past few years, division administrators have been working with teachers to revise the observation and evaluation process yet again to include the student academic progress portion. The division has a working document to use during the first years of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, knowing that change may be made if necessary.

<center>**Leadership and the Change Process**</center>

In most cases involving organizational change, it is the leader or leadership team that helps ensure success. As the leader of my school, it is my responsibility to implement the new teacher evaluation system. There are many who speak to the leadership qualities or characteristics required for successful change, several of whom are discussed in the sections that follow.

Leaders as Change Agents

A change agent is someone who acts as a catalyst for change and who empowers others to be change agents or leaders (Couros, 2013). Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) listed being a change agent as one of the 21 responsibilities of the school leader as determined through

their meta-analysis of 69 studies related to principal leadership. Marzano et al. defined the responsibility of change agent as "the leader's disposition to challenge the status quo" (p. 44). A change agent asks questions and constantly looks for ways to improve.

There are two types of change in education, first- and second-order change (Marzano et al., 2005). First-order change is what one would expect to happen next, what might occur as the next step. Second-order change "involves dramatic departures from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution" (p. 66). Marzano et al. (2005) noted that being a change agent is more important to second-order change than to first-order change because challenging the status quo would not be a characteristic needed for expected changes that are considered first-order. The implementation of the new teacher evaluation process is a second-order change for the division studied. While classroom observation is still a part of the evaluation process, other components have been added that mark a considerable change from the past.

Change Theory

Michael Fullan (2008), well-known for his work with change theory, suggested there are six secrets to change. From loving your employees to the idea that systems learn, these secrets are meant to be used together to facilitate large-scale reform. Fullan's secrets are described and applied to schools in this section.

Love your employees. Leaders must create conditions for employees to learn and succeed (Fullan, 2008, p. 25). The idea is to help employees fulfill their personal goals while meeting the goals of the organization. Fullan pointed out that it is important to pay attention to all stakeholders. In most school systems, student success is the priority, but for students to be

successful, their teachers must be successful as well. School leaders must meet the needs of teachers while serving students so all stakeholders experience success.

Connect peers with purpose. In this secret, Fullan (2008) stressed the need for increased positive purposeful peer interaction. This can happen when the goals of the individual mesh with those of the group or the entire organization and people work together to outdo what they have done previously. It is made possible by openly sharing information about what works while discussing what does not (Fullan, 2008, p. 45).

Leaders have a responsibility to create the conditions for purposeful peer interaction to take place and to step in when things are not going as they should. Through this process, the individual identifies with goals that are bigger than his or her own (Fullan, 2008, p. 49). Administrators can provide common planning times or suggest working lunches. They can purposefully place people together on committees to give them the opportunity to share when they otherwise might not.

Capacity building prevails. We must continue to develop knowledge and skills (Fullan, 2008, p. 57). Here Fullan wrote about people feeling confident to take risks. Problems get solved when people believe they will not get punished for taking risks (Fullan, 2008, p. 60). People do not function well when they are scared. If there is fear of punishment, why wouldn't people play it safe or do as they have always done? Building leaders should encourage others to step outside of the box and stay out there. Educators know they cannot always do what they have always done. If they do not think this way, how will new ideas develop? What results might work. Fullan (2011) suggested that the change leader must get outside the box, to see what can be discovered by visiting other boxes (p. 14).

Learning is the work. A leader must build continuous improvement into the culture of the organization (Fullan, 2008, p. 81). People should learn from their work every day. People must look at their goals and work toward them, all the while learning to get better (Fullan, 2008, p. 76). Where better for this secret to emerge than in a school! Educators should always seek to learn. Teachers do this daily when presenting a lesson; what didn't work well in first period might be tweaked during second, and so on.

Transparency rules. Fullan (2008) noted the importance of assessing, communicating, and acting on data that pertains to the what, how, and outcomes of change efforts (p. 93). Presenting data as it is and being open about results helps develop a sense of trust among stakeholders (p. 98). This secret is important to participatory action research in that it is essential that all information be shared openly. As a participatory action researcher, one must share data with all stakeholders from start to finish.

The use of data in making instructional decisions is more important now than ever. Schools are using data to drive instruction. Student growth data are used as one measure of the teacher evaluation process. The evaluation conference should not be the first time that data are shared or discussed.

Systems learn. In this secret the idea is that everyone is working together as learners and leaders (Fullan, 2008). School leaders should cultivate leaders at all levels and create situations where others can succeed and find happiness and purpose in their work. Kahan (2010), who wrote about change, stressed the value of working together: "Shared value takes place when people get together to construct the meaning of a new idea or application" (p. 1). Kahan wrote about the idea of social construction, where people come together, help one another develop ideas, and make them meaningful (p. 4). Different people have different interpretations of the

world. By coming together, learning together, and leading together, change is possible. In the school setting, this would translate into a professional learning community.

In addition to the secrets, Fullan (2002) wrote about cultural change, much of which goes hand in hand with participatory action research. Cultural change principals "act with the intention of making a positive difference in their own schools as well as improving the environment in other district schools" (Fullan, 2002, p. 17). The goal of participatory action research is to make improvements by working together. Fullan recognized that working together is the way to lasting change. In talking about cultural change, Fullan stressed the importance of relationships and cultivating leaders at many levels. People have different experiences and bring different ideas and understandings to the table. These ideas of working together and building relationships that Fullan suggested would bring about cultural change are evident in participatory action research.

With all of the positive ways to bring about change that Fullan suggested, he warned of the implementation dip (Fullan, 2011). A dip in performance is expected as one makes changes that utilize new skills. Change is difficult for many, and it is the responsibility of the change leader to help people get through it. Communication is key in this stage as it is in any other (Fullan, 2011).

Methods Used in Studying Teacher Evaluation

Case studies, surveys, and mixed methods have been used to study teacher evaluation. Many cases studies focus on the perceptions of those involved in teacher evaluation, but some researchers have used quantitative or mixed-methods to study the relationship between teacher evaluation and student achievement.

Considering the purposes of teacher evaluation, it is not surprising to see literature based on teacher and evaluator perceptions of the process. Most often this literature is case studies. La Masa (2005) collected data with interviews, observations, and document retrieval in one school to investigate how the school carried out the evaluation process. Teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of the evaluation process were part of the study. Athanases (1994) examined one teacher's experiences in preparing a portfolio, which is relevant in this literature review because portfolios are a part of the new teacher evaluation system in Virginia. Athanases used written reflections, interviews, revised lesson plans, and small-group discussions as data sources. Finally, Attinello, Lare, and Waters' (2006) used surveys, interviews, and focus groups to evaluate a district-wide, portfolio-based teacher evaluation system. Teachers' and administrators' views on the portfolio-based system were collected.

Surveys have been used to study teacher evaluation across school districts. Zimmerman and Deckert-Pelton (2003) collected data with a questionnaire with essay-type responses to gain an understanding of how teachers view the evaluation process and the principal's role in it. Participants were 86 K-12 educators attending educational leadership graduate classes from five northwest Florida counties. Participants stayed after a class if they wanted to participate. There was no additional time spent with participants. Participants' responses were analyzed with a constant comparative method.

Quantitative methods applied to large data sets have been used to study evaluation systems. Kane, Taylor, Tyler, and Wooten (2011) analyzed quantitative, longitudinal data to see if classroom observations by trained evaluators could predict differences in student achievement. The researchers used 10 years of data from the Cincinnati Public Schools' Teacher Evaluation System. In this evaluation system, teachers typically are observed four times each evaluation

year (on a five year cycle) by trained evaluators. The researchers collected student achievement data for school years 2003-2004 through 2008-2009. The researchers controlled for teacher experience and observable student characteristics. They analyzed the data with a prediction model.

Mixed-methods have been used to investigate the effect, if any, of evaluation systems (or their components) on student achievement. Jacob and Lefgren (2008) used a mixed-methods design to determine how well principals identify effective teachers as measured by achievement in reading and math. They surveyed principals and used data on students and teachers from one school district. Metcalfe (2011) used mixed-methods to determine if lesson plans embedded with a specific math strategy affected student achievement. The researcher used a questionnaire, benchmark scores, and teacher lesson plans in this study. Ing (2010) matched data from principal and teacher surveys to administrative data to determine if informal classroom observations improve instruction.

Conclusions

Principals play an important role in the success of teacher evaluation. With the concerns listed above regarding many of the current evaluation systems used across the country, much care must be given in the creation and implementation of the new teacher evaluation systems in Virginia. By making a quality process and including teachers in every step of the evaluation process, there is the potential to have a product that, when used correctly, will make our schools better places to teach and to learn.

Considering the time and effort that is involved in making what we hope is an effective evaluation process for all stakeholders, it would be irresponsible to end the discussion with the implementation of the process. Considering my own personal experiences, I know that my

experiences as an administrator have differed from those of my teachers at times. It is important to involve teachers in every step of the evaluation process, especially once the evaluation is completed. I have had my own experiences with the new teacher evaluation process, but how teachers and other principals have experienced the new process is their own story. This study will report the experiences of teachers and administrators in the first years following the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system.

Chapter 3

Methods

Overall Design

This was a qualitative case study of one elementary school in a small school division in southwestern Virginia. A qualitative approach to this study was appropriate because of the researcher's interest in how teachers and administrators experienced the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system. In-depth interviews permitted the probing of feelings, thoughts, fears, and other elements of the teachers' and administrators' experiences.

Selection of the School Site

While there might have been issues associated with conducting a study in my school division, there are reasons why Stoney Brook Elementary School (a pseudonym) was a logical choice. I knew the evaluation system for the division, and I knew how it was implemented. The school division is small, and much of the design of the new teacher evaluation system took place on committees involving teachers. Much of the implementation involved the entire division. I was not a direct supervisor of anyone in this school. This was the largest school in the division, employing teachers with a variety of experience levels, increasing the number of possible participants in the study.

Stoney Brook Elementary School was a Title I school with an enrollment of 532 students in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth. The student population was 9% African-American, 32% Hispanic, and 58% Caucasian. Approximately 11% of the student body received special education services. Sixty-one percent of students were on free or reduced-price lunch. Of the 42 teachers who were evaluated annually (this number excluded the guidance counselor and librarian), 20 had obtained a master's degree.

For the 2013 – 2014 school year, Stoney Brook Elementary School was accredited with warning by the Commonwealth of Virginia because it did not meet the math accreditation benchmark of 70% on the mathematics SOL tests. Virginia's approach to No Child Left Behind was to use its Standards of Learning assessments, rather than Common Core standards. Schools in Virginia were designated as either accredited (having met Standards of Learning assessment cut scores) or schools in improvement (those schools with students who did not meet accountability standards). Selected schools in improvement were labeled Priority schools. Priority schools typically had very low achievement scores overall. A second category of schools in improvement was labeled Focus schools. Focus schools typically had less critical student achievement problems compared to Priority schools. Focus schools generally had one or two content areas (rather than three or four) in need of remediation or support to improve student scores. Additionally, Priority and Focus schools were given that Priority or Focus designation after several years of not meeting student assessment cut scores in the same content subject area. Stoney Brook Elementary school was never a Priority or Focus school. It was in school improvement for the 2011-2012 academic year based on SOL scores in reading from the 2010-2011 academic year. In the 2011-2012 academic year, the reading scores increased, but the math scores went down, meaning that the school came out of improvement for reading, but went into improvement for math. While the school was in improvement for two consecutive years, it was in two different subject areas, so it was not seen as consecutive years in the same content improvement area. In the 2013-2014 academic year, the math scores increased and the school was no longer in improvement.

By studying the experiences of teachers and administrators in this school regarding the new teacher evaluation system, I hoped to gain insight that might help improve the process, not

only in this school or this division, but in other divisions with administrators who were thoughtful and sensitive to the experiences of those participating in the process. The morale of participating teachers and administrators within the school might have been improved through the sharing of their experiences. All case studies are limited in scope and generalizability. The scope and generalizability of this study were limited to one school and one school division in a rural setting in a southern state.

Gaining Access to the School Division and School

A letter was sent to the superintendent through email describing the plans for the study and asking permission to complete the study within the school division (see Appendix A). When the superintendent approved the study, an email was sent to the principal of the selected elementary school to set up a meeting to describe the research, ask for his participation, and ask for permission to contact his assistant principal and teachers to participate (see Appendix A). When the principal agreed to allow his school to participate in the study, the researcher visited a faculty meeting to explain the purpose and provided general information about the study. Following this meeting and participant selection, an email was sent to prospective participants (the assistant principal and selected teachers) explaining the purpose of the study, the participants' responsibilities, and requesting their participation (see Appendix A). Prospective participants were asked to respond to the researcher by email, which served as their written consent to participate in the study. This overt approach kept all relevant parties aware of the purpose and procedures of the study. Transparency was expected to allay participants' fears that information they provided could be used in ways that could harm their status within the school division and kept participants involved throughout the study.

Populations

There were two populations in this study: teachers and administrators (evaluators). Teachers were those in the selected elementary school that had experienced the new evaluation system. Administrators were the principal and the assistant principal in the selected school.

Selection of teacher participants. Teachers were selected for participation based on--

- Status in the evaluation process (completed the evaluation process using the new system during the first year of implementation -- 2012-2013 or completed the process by the end of the second year of implementation -- 2013-2014).

- Years of teaching experience (non-continuing contract teachers[2], continuing contract teachers from five to 20 years, referred to as experienced teachers, and continuing contract teachers above 20 years, referred to as veteran teachers).

- For non-continuing contract teachers, the number of years under the new teacher evaluation system (one year or two years).

- For continuing contract teachers, the year of implementation in which their evaluation took place (year one or year two).

Table 1

Selection of Non-Continuing Contract Participants Matrix

Number of years under new evaluation system in the 2013-2014 school year	Completed evaluation
One year	2
Two years	8
Total	10

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[2] According to §22.1-303 of the *Code of Virginia*, effective July 1, 2013, "A probationary term of service of at least three years and, at the option of the local school board, up to five years in the same school division shall be required before a teacher is issued a continuing contract" (Commonwealth of Virginia, 2014, p.188).

Table 2

Selection of Continuing Contract Participants Matrix

	5-20 years	Above 20 years	Continuing contract that did not complete an evaluation in the first two years
Full evaluation in first year of implementation—2012-2013	9	3	10
Full evaluation in second year of implementation—2013-2014	5	5	
Totals	14	8	10

This was a purposive sample in that only teachers who had experience with the new teacher evaluation system were considered for participation. From those who had experienced the new teacher evaluation system in the first two years of its implementation, non-continuing contract teachers were sorted from continuing contract teachers. The non-continuing contract teachers were then sorted by the number of years they had experienced the new teacher evaluation system in year 2013 - 2014 (one or two). The continuing contract teachers were sorted by the year they experienced the evaluation process (year one or year two of implementation) and by experience level (5-20 years of experience or above 20 years of experience). Two teachers from each group were selected using random sampling. A random numbers table was used to select the teachers in categories where there were more than two teachers in the population. An email was sent to each possible participant (see Appendix A) to inform them of the study and ask if they would participate. A separate, follow-up email was sent as a reminder to teachers who had not responded within a given time frame in an effort to increase participation (see Appendix A). If either teacher in each category would not have

agreed to participate, random sampling would have continued until the population of teachers in the group was exhausted or until two teachers agreed to participate. A total of 12 teachers were originally selected as possible participants in this study.

One category, non-continuing contract teachers who had experienced the evaluation system for only one year, only had two possible participants. Only one teacher in this category agreed to participate, so there were only data represented from one teacher in this category because there were no possible replacements.

During the interview process, it occurred to the interviewer that two teachers were categorized incorrectly. One teacher was a probationary teacher who came from another division who was actually experiencing his or her twenty-first year of teaching. The second teacher had been in the division for some time, but had worked elsewhere previously. He or she, too, was experiencing his or her twenty-first year of teaching. These data were kept for use in the study, but placed in the appropriate category (continuing contract with over 20 years of experience, one who experienced the evaluation system in year one, and the other who experienced the evaluation system in year two). This change in categorization placed three participants in both categories of continuing contract with over 20 years' experience who participated in the evaluation system. Replacement participants were found using the process identified above for the categories where these teachers were originally placed (continuing contract with 5 to 20 years' experience, evaluated during the first and second year of implementation).

Selection of administrator participants. The principal and assistant principal in the school served as evaluators. Both were invited to participate in the study.

Data Collection

   Data were collected with interviews. An interview protocol was developed by the researcher using the initial research questions and possible domains to develop interview questions (see Appendix B). Once initial interview questions were prepared, they were tested for content validity. When content validation was complete, interviews were scheduled with study participants. The interviews were conducted by an outside interviewer, one who was not employed by the participating school division.

   Development of the interview protocol. An interview protocol was developed using the initial research questions, possible domains, and domain definitions (see Table 3) as guides to develop interview questions (see Appendix B).

Table 3

Research Questions, Domains, and Domain Definitions

Research questions	Domains	Domain definitions
1. How do teachers experience the implementation of a new evaluation system?		
a. What is the psychological experience of teachers as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?	Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of teachers or administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it
b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationships between administrators and teachers	The working relationship between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers
c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation	Relationships between teachers and peers	The working relationship between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)

Research questions	Domains	Domain definitions
system?		
d. How did the amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how teachers experience the implementation of the system?	Time	The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process
e. What are the expectations of teachers for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?	Outcomes	What comes as a result of the new teacher evaluation system
f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system experienced by teachers?	Outcomes	
g. How did teachers experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation system?	Learning	What the teacher or administrator has had to learn in order to participate in the evaluation process.
h. How did teachers experience other components of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Other	Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process
2. How do administrators experience the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?		
a. What is the psychological experience of administrators as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?	Affective	
b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected	Relationships between administrators and teachers	

Research questions	Domains	Domain definitions
by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?		
c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationships between teachers and peers	
d. How did the amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how administrators experience the implementation of the system?	Time	
e. What are the expectations of administrators for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?	Outcomes	
f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system as experienced by administrators?	Outcomes	
g. How did administrators experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation system?	Learning	
h. How did administrators experience other components of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Other	

Content validation of the interview items. A panel of experts was selected to review the interview items for content validation. Those deemed to be experts in the process of teacher evaluation included central office staff members (superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of testing), other administrators (principals and assistant principals who were not asked to participate in the study), and other teachers (teachers from other schools who were not asked to participate in the study) who participated in developing and implementing the teacher evaluation system.

Three central office staff members and three administrators comprised the expert panel for the administrator interview protocol. The six administrators serving on this expert panel were the only other administrators in the division who were not involved in the study. They were all involved in the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, and had a good understanding of it. Six teachers of varied experience levels, who had completed the new teacher evaluation process, comprised the expert panel for the teacher interview protocol. These teachers were from the teacher evaluation committee that helped in the development and implementation of the new evaluation system. The six teachers on the expert panel were teachers that were not eligible to be participants in the study.

An email (see Appendix B) was sent to the selected administrators and teachers who formed the expert panels to ask them to participate in the study by completing the content validation instrument (see Appendix B). After learning that participants could not refer back to the beginning of the survey to review the domains or domain definitions once the Qualtrics survey was started, the researcher sent a follow up email to the expert panel as both a reminder of the request for participation and to provide the domains and domain definitions for their use (see Appendix B). Consent by the participants who agreed to complete the content validation

instrument was given (implied) by completing the online Qualtrics survey. If the members of the expert panel chose not to participate, they were asked to delete the email and not complete the survey. If they chose to participate, they were instructed to complete the Qualtrics survey (content validation instrument) using the link provided in the email. The expert panel responded anonymously. Completion of the survey ended the panel's commitment to the study, although it was explained that they might be asked to participate in a test interview. Completing the survey did not commit them to the test interview. The researcher used the content validation instrument to test the items for clarity and for association with the defined domains. The researcher reviewed the results of the content validity check with her research advisor and made changes to the interview protocol as appropriate (see Appendix B). For example, the researcher added words in one of the probes making it more specific, and the researcher notified the interviewer of areas where he would need to be sensitive to be certain that questions in the interviews were interpreted as intended.

Selecting and orienting an outside interviewer. The interview protocol was administered by an outside interviewer. The use of an outside interviewer helped to ensure confidentiality for the participants. The interviewer held all interview responses in confidence and did not share responses with the researcher except through transcripts. The interviewer recorded the interviews, which were transcribed by a hired company. Participants were not identified in the transcripts. This process of interviewing and transcription was intended to remove fear participants might have had about sharing their true thoughts as confidentiality was assured. The administrators in the school division encouraged risk-taking and involved stakeholders in decision making, which were other reasons that teachers were expected to provide honest responses to the questions asked.

To solicit the participation of the interviewer, the researcher contacted the interviewer by telephone to schedule an introductory meeting. At this meeting the researcher:

1. Shared the purpose of the study, research questions, and the interview protocol to give the interviewer the context for the study.

2. Discussed the expectations and timeline of the study. The researcher explained that the interviewer would be expected to conduct a minimum of 2 test interviews, 12 teacher interviews, and 2 administrator interviews during a specified time period. The interviewer would explain the purpose of the study to potential participants, obtain informed consent, and then conduct each interview. At the end of each interview, the interviewer would upload the interview to the transcription site. Once each interview was transcribed, the interviewer would inspect the transcription for accuracy by comparing it to the audio file. The interviewer would notify the researcher of his approval of each transcript. The interviewer would keep all audio recordings on his computer until the researcher instructed him to destroy them.

3. Asked the potential interviewer if he would consider participating in the study.

At the end of this meeting, the potential interviewer agreed to participate in this study. A second meeting was scheduled with the interviewer by telephone to review expectations for the test interview. At this meeting, the researcher:

1. Explained what was expected of the interviewer regarding the test interviews.

2. Explained the process that would be followed for each interview by reviewing the interview protocol. The interviewer would introduce himself, review the purpose of the study, and obtain informed consent, all of which were specifically written in the interview protocol and informed consent documents (see Appendix B).

3. Reviewed the interview questions and possible probes with the interviewer, including the domains and domain definitions to ensure that the interviewer understood what data the researcher hoped to find.

4. Tested the digital audio recorder to be certain it worked correctly. A second audio recorder was provided to help ensure that all interviews were recorded without problem.

5. Explained how to name each interview following a coding system derived from the demographic questions in the interview.

6. Demonstrated how to upload audio files to the interviewer's computer and how to send those to the transcription company.

7. Explained the process of reviewing the transcriptions for accuracy once they were returned to him by comparing them to the audio recordings.

8. Explained the process of destroying the audio files once the study was successfully completed.

The outside interviewer was a retired superintendent from the Commonwealth of Virginia. His career in education included being a teacher, principal, and superintendent. He holds a doctorate in education from the University of Virginia. He was still concerned with matters in education and was involved in continuing education for teachers. The interviewer had great experience in interviewing others in a personnel setting. These experiences, along with his other experiences throughout his many years in public and continuing education made him an excellent choice as interviewer.

Testing the interview protocol. The amended interview protocol (see Appendix B) was tested by the interviewer with a teacher and an administrator from a different school in the same division. These test interviewees were not used in the study, but, like the participants in the

study, they had experience with the new evaluation system. These participants were selected as follows: An email was sent to an administrator and a teacher who conducted the content validation instrument to request their participation in a test interview. (see Appendix B). The researcher selected an administrator and teacher that she thought would voluntarily participate and provide meaningful responses in the test interviews. Time was a consideration as well, as the test interviews took place at the end of the school year when people were involved in many activities. If they replied affirmatively, they were contacted in person to arrange an interview time and location set by the outside interviewer. The first teacher selected declined participation, so an email was sent to another teacher from the expert panel that the researcher believed would participate, who replied affirmatively. Test interview participants reported to the set location off school grounds at their interview times to complete the interviews with the outside interviewer. Written consent was obtained before the interviews were started. The interviews were recorded by consent of the participants. When the test interviews were completed, the test interview participants concluded their commitment to the study. This convenience and purposive sample ensured that test interviews were conducted with a teacher and an administrator who were familiar with the evaluation process. The researcher was present for both test interviews. This allowed the researcher to determine if the questions asked would provide data that would be useful and to see if the questions themselves made sense. The researcher heard how the interviewer conducted the process and how he probed for more information. The researcher and interviewer discussed both of the test interviews at their completion. Both the researcher and the interviewer believed responses were honest and that probes were appropriate. Some questions seemed repetitive, but it was decided that due to the variance in context that these questions

might produce additional information. Reviewing the interview protocol in this way allowed for changes to be made prior to the actual interviews, as deemed appropriate.

Analyzing the test interview data. The administrator and teacher test interviews were recorded and transcribed, one at a time. The test interview data were sent to the transcription company by both the researcher and the interviewer together to test the process. When the transcripts were received, the researcher unitized and coded the test interview data using the constant comparative method. Test interview data were analyzed and changes were made to the interview protocol until the researcher was comfortable with the interview questions. Once this process was complete, interviews were scheduled with actual participants using the final interview protocol (see Appendix B).

Administering the interview protocol. The administration of the interview protocol was explained in the following steps: scheduling the interviews, acquiring informed consent, and interviewing the participants.

Scheduling the interviews. The interviews were scheduled with the principal, assistant principal, and teachers of the school according to a schedule provided by the outside interviewer. The outside interviewer provided the researcher with the off-campus location for the interviews, along with possible interview dates and times. The researcher emailed those who agreed to participate an interview date and time (see Appendix C). Each potential participant was asked to reply by email confirming his or her interview date and time or to ask for a change in date or time. Once all interviews were confirmed, the researcher emailed a copy of the interview schedule to the interviewer. All teachers should have met with administrators to review their final evaluation by the times the interviews took place.

Acquiring informed consent. At the beginning of the interview, using the final interview protocol (see Appendix B) the interviewer greeted the participant, introduced himself, and reviewed the purpose of the study and the participants' role in the study. The interviewer reviewed the expectations for the participant. The interviewer provided the participant with a consent form that they read together. The interviewer was available to answer any questions the participant might have had before consent took place. The interviewer obtained written consent (see Appendix B) from the participants, keeping a copy and providing the participants a copy of the consent form.

Interviewing participants. Once written consent was obtained, the interviewer conducted the interviews following the procedure established in the orientation of the interviewer. After the participants participated in their individual recorded interview (if they consented to be recorded), their commitment to the study concluded.

Data Management

A transcription company was used for the transcription of interviews. The researcher created an account with the transcription company prior to the first upload of data by the interviewer. As interviews were completed, the interviewer transferred the audio files to his computer in an mp3 format. He saved the audio files using codes determined by the demographics provided in the interviews. (For example, *N1* was a non-continuing contract teacher with one year under the new evaluation system. *C220+* was a continuing contract teacher who experienced full evaluation under the 2nd year of implementation with more than 20 years of experience, *A* was an administrator. (The interviewer assigned random numbers prior to the *N*, *C,* or *A*). The interviewer then logged on to the Synergy Transcriptions website, http://www.synergytranscriptionservices.com/, and uploaded the files for transcribing.

When the files were received, the transcription company sent a confirmation email with information on the total minutes of the interview(s) to the researcher. The researcher gave permission to Synergy Transcriptions to proceed with the transcriptions. The transcriptions were delivered to the researcher by email as they were completed. The researcher forwarded these emails to the interviewer, who reviewed the transcripts along with the audio files for accuracy. The interviewer attempted to fill in the blanks if he could understand the audio. When the interviewer emailed the researcher that he was satisfied with the transcripts, the researcher confirmed satisfaction with Synergy Transcriptions, who then deleted the audio file(s) from their system.

Synergy Transcriptions offered a non-disclosure agreement and guaranteed that audio files were deleted once satisfaction was expressed or within two weeks following the delivery of the transcription. The transcripts were coded to protect the identity of the respondents, using the code assigned by the interviewer for the audio file. A copy was made for unitizing and coding.

The researcher did not have access to the audio files in the transcription emails or from the Synergy Transcriptions website. The only audio copies were located on the interviewer's computer. They will be deleted upon successful completion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was achieved using the constant comparative method as described by Maykut and Morehouse (2002). In applying this method, each unit of meaning was compared to other units of meaning and grouped into categories. New categories were created; categories were deleted, or changed according to the analysis. Categories were provisional and changed throughout the process depending on what the data revealed. The following steps were followed for data analysis:

1. Interviews were forwarded to the transcription company immediately. As soon as the transcription was returned to and reviewed by the interviewer, data analysis began by the researcher.

2. All data pages were coded by source (N for non-continuing contract, C for continuing contract, A for administrator). The coding for non-contract teachers continued with a 1 or 2 depending on if this was his or her first or second year under the new evaluation system. The coding for continuing contract teachers had a 1 or 2 depending on which year of the implementation they were evaluated and a 520 (indicating between 5 and 20 years) or a 20+ (indicating more than 20 years) depending on their years of experience. Administrators were coded A for the first administrator interview and A2 for the second administrator interview. Photocopies of data pages were used for analysis.

3. The researcher read through transcripts several times, noting recurring themes. These themes were written individually on sheets of chart paper and hung on the wall.

4. Data were unitized by reading through the transcripts, determining units of meaning, and identifying the unit of meaning with a word or phrase to describe it. The unit of meaning was marked on the paper to separate it from other units and to indicate where to cut it apart for the next step. When all of the data were unitized, the units were cut apart and separated by meaning. Each piece of data was posted under the appropriate heading. A miscellaneous heading was included for any item that did not fit elsewhere.

5. Once the data were distributed among the categories, the categories were examined for relationships or patterns.

6. The researcher then looked at all units of data under each category to analyze what the data meant. A propositional statement was written at the bottom of each category that provided an interpretation of the meaning of the data in that category.

7. Raw data matrices were prepared to display the data.

8. The researcher kept a log during the analysis process of ideas generated, possible probes, or other thoughts regarding the process. For example, the researcher noted ideas about what the data might suggest and notes to self about what to look for or go back to as data analysis continued.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 is a description of the methods used to complete this study. The selection of the school site and participants, data collection procedures, data management procedures, and data analysis procedures are described. The experiences of teachers and administrators in a small school division in southwestern Virginia with their new teacher evaluation system were examined.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this case study was to understand how teachers and administrators experienced the new teacher evaluation system used in an elementary school in a small school division in southwest Virginia. In-depth interviews of 13 teachers and two administrators were conducted. Data are presented on the introduction and purposes of the new teacher evaluation system, the components of the system and the training that was provided in support of the components, the responsibilities of evaluators and teachers in the new evaluation system, and the support given to teachers throughout the process. The uncertainties about the evaluation system and the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system are presented. Teacher and administrator thoughts and feelings about the new teacher evaluation system are shared, and recommendations for changes in the evaluation system are presented.

Introduction to the New Teacher Evaluation System

The introduction to the new teacher evaluation system took place in three phases. First, faculty members were introduced to the idea of a new evaluation system in the 2011-2012 academic year through informal discussions with building-level administration in faculty meetings to prepare teachers for the upcoming changes and the formation of a division-wide evaluation committee. Next, members of the evaluation committee shared information with their respective faculties as appropriate. Central office and building-level administrators met together and discussed their ideas for an effective evaluation system as well. The faculties were formally introduced to the idea of a new evaluation system during the implementation year of 2012-2013 through a district-wide in-service, a new faculty member in-service, and individual-school

faculty meetings where components of the evaluation system were introduced, focusing mainly on the document log.

Pre-implementation. The revised teacher evaluation system was discussed with faculty and staff prior to implementation. Teachers and administrators indicated that they first heard of the new teacher evaluation system at the end of the 2011-2012 academic year. One teacher recalled, "From what I remember it was…the end of two school years ago [SY 11-12] and our testing coordinator came in and basically told us about it, just a whirlwind kind of [presentation]" (711C1520)[3]. Another teacher reported, "We [teachers] started getting an inkling of it a couple of years ago that it was coming down the pike and…we started seeing things in faculty meetings.... We…saw pieces of it before it actually came to fruition…" (64C220+). The division implemented the new evaluation system July 1, 2012, as required by the Virginia Department of Education.

Formation of a new evaluation committee. Prior to implementation, during the 2011-2012 academic year, a division-wide evaluation committee was formed. The committee was composed of nine teachers who volunteered from the schools, the Director of Testing, and the Assistant Superintendent of the school division. An administrator explained, "A committee was developed which included teachers, and teachers were primarily the ones that actually came up

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[3] The procedures for coding as was described in chapter 3 were: following the interview, the interviewer assigned the data file a code. A letter was used to signify administrator (A), continuing contract teacher (C), or non-continuing contract teacher (N). The number immediately following the letter on the continuing contract (C) teacher codes represented the year in which the person was evaluated (1 for year one, and 2 for year two). The number immediately following the letter on the non-continuing contract (N) teacher codes represented the number of years they were under the evaluation system (1 for one year, 2 for two years). The number immediately following the letter for the administrators had no significance other than the first administrator interviewed (1) and the second administrator interviewed (2). For the teacher codes, the numbers that followed the 1 or 2 that represented the year they were in full evaluation, indicated their years of experience if they were a continuing contract teacher. For example, 520 represented a teacher with 5-20 years of experience. The numbers 20+ indicated more than 20 years of experience. The numbers preceding the letters were randomly assigned by the interviewer and had no significance other than to code the data file. For example, 711C1520 represented a continuing contract teacher, in full evaluation during the first year of the new evaluation implementation system, with 5-20 years of experience.

with the evaluation system along with [the Director of Testing] and [the Assistant Superintendent]" (95A1). One teacher recalled that building-level principals asked for volunteers, "and it was kind of 'things are changing, [we are] going to have seven different standards that must be met, and if you would like to be on a committee, let me [the administrator] know" (1514C1520).

Committee members shared possible changes in the evaluation system with faculty members and kept other teachers informed. According to one teacher: "Three years ago [academic year 2011-2012] we [teachers] actually heard [about the evaluation system] all year long. We knew that the [evaluation] committee…[was] meeting…. It [the evaluation system] wasn't anything new that we were suddenly thrown [into]" (1415C2520). Another teacher said, "That whole year [academic year 2011-2012], we [teachers] knew it [the evaluation system] was coming, and we've known about the meetings, and the committee members were talking about it, so it wasn't brand new" (1415C2520). Division administration also "got together and started thinking about how we could better…evaluate our staff" (95A1).

Formal introduction of the new evaluation system. A district-wide convocation is held at the beginning of each academic year. At the beginning of the initial implementation year for the new teacher evaluation system, the 2012-2013 academic year, a district-wide in-service was held to introduce the new teacher evaluation system, in addition to the convocation. A teacher said, "We [the school division] had the beginning of the year meeting last year [SY 12-13], and the whole [evaluation] process was introduced" (1415C2520). In this meeting "[the Director of Testing] met with us [all teachers in the division] and went over the components [of the evaluation system]" (412C2520). One teacher described the in-service as a "friendly kind of atmosphere that was division-wide…" (119C220+). This teacher explained,

We [teachers] were in groups, worked on things together concerning it [the evaluation

system], what would evaluators look for, what kinds of things would be red flags for

them. We went through all of that in groups and presented it for the entire division.

(119C220+)

This teacher thought the division-wide in-service was helpful because it "gave a really

comprehensive overview of the entire process…" (119C220+).

It is customary prior to the district-wide convocation and in-service at the beginning of

each academic year that a smaller in-service be held for teachers new to the division. The new

evaluation system was introduced in this meeting by the Director of Testing who "gave us [new

teachers] that…binder [document log]…and explained the different components of it…"

(106N1). The district-wide in-service was followed by school-level faculty meetings, where the

Director of Testing was oftentimes present.

At each introductory meeting, the components of the new evaluation system were

reviewed with a focus on the document log. At the district-wide in-service, "the notebooks

[document logs] were introduced and we went through each of the sections and examples of

what it [the contents of each section] should be…" (1415C2520). A non-continuing contract

teacher recalled that "[the administrators] gave us basically a table of contents [to the document

log], but it was six pages, and it had everything laid out for…what you needed to include in each

of those…sections…" (53N2). The table of contents for the document log included a list of

sample documents that could be included in each section. The document log was a new

component of the teacher evaluation system, and it received a lot of attention in the introductory

meetings, although other components were discussed, including classroom observations and

writing SMART goals. All teachers created at least one SMART [specific, measurable,

appropriate, realistic, and time-bound] goal for their students related to student progress. Additionally, teachers established a second goal for their own professional development that was also considered in the evaluation.

Some teachers remembered the initial introduction occurring at a faculty meeting instead of the district-wide in-service. Based on their comments, the researcher believed that teachers used faculty meeting and district-wide in-service interchangeably. For example, "When we initially did it [training for the evaluation system], we came together as a faculty" (1415C2520).

While the introduction to the new teacher evaluation system was planned to help facilitate implementation, some teachers found it confounding. A non-continuing contract teacher felt, "[The initial introduction was] confusing…" and went to the Director of Testing "to get further explanation…." This teacher did not have "a firm grasp of what was required…" (53N2).

Purposes of the New Teacher Evaluation System

Teachers and administrators held varying opinions about the purpose of the new teacher evaluation system. Five purposes were identified by them: holding teachers accountable for their performance in the classroom, facilitating teacher improvement, enhancing collaboration between teacher and administrators, rewarding teachers, and facilitating administrator improvement. Even with the identification of a specific purpose, some teachers questioned whether the new teacher evaluation system was achieving any purpose at all.

Holding teachers accountable for their performance in the classroom.
Accountability may be viewed positively or negatively. A positive response made by an administrator was, "I think we are moving a step in the right direction to make teachers more aware of what they're doing in the classroom, to think about what they are doing, and to hold

them a little bit more accountable" (810A2). Teachers reported that the school division was using the evaluation system to identify those teachers who were not performing well in the classroom. One teacher said, "[The evaluation system] was designed to either show whether you were doing your job or not doing your job" (64C220+).

A more negative response to the evaluation system was expressed by a non-continuing contract teacher who believed the purpose of the new evaluation system was to "find bad teachers," (53N2) going so far as to say, "I believe it's a bad-teacher witch hunt" (53N2). A more experienced teacher echoed this same sentiment, "I think it [the evaluation process] was designed to weed out weaker teachers…" (1514C1520). An administrator expressed a similar belief, "So I think it's [the evaluation system has] forced some teachers out [because of all the extra work] and maybe it's weeded teachers out. I don't know. The jury, as far as I'm concerned, is still out on that" (810A2).

Several statements were made by teachers and administrators about how accountability was present in other professional fields, concluding that "it's time" (810A2). One teacher stated, "In this world, right now, everybody is accountable for things that they do. I guess there was a feeling that teachers weren't accountable" (128C220+). Teachers agreed that accountability was important, "I think teachers should be accountable" (412C2520). A veteran teacher felt that the evaluation system was okay, noting "I mean you just have to be held accountable and other professionals are evaluated in their jobs…so it's okay, it's just part of it" (128C220+). While a non-continuing contract teacher agreed, "There has to be some accountability for educators," (53N2) she added, "I don't feel like this [the new evaluation system] is it" (53N2). A veteran teacher spoke about being trained as a teacher and being a professional, but added that--

Doctors don't get numbers to tell if they are a 3, 2, or 1, but as professionals in teaching it

seems we are all being evaluated and I don't know that other professions are. I mean I

am not sure that they treat us as professionals. (1C120+)

An administrator shared, "I think it's [evaluation is] a necessary thing and I think it's a very

detailed, precise way of measuring all of the aspects of teaching" (810A2).

One administrator spoke to the idea of accountability several times, noting that the

evaluation system "was a good source of accountability…" (810A2). The administrator

continued, "They [Teachers] can see, as well as an administrator. I mean, it's [the data are] right

there in front of them, so they can actually see the product of what they're doing and … be

reflective of their job" (810A2).

Facilitating teacher improvement. An administrator agreed that the purpose of the new

evaluation system was not only to "find strengths," (95A1) but to "find weaknesses," (95A1) and

added the responsibility of "address[ing] those weaknesses as quickly as we [administrators and

teachers] can or we get people out…" (95A1). An alternative to dismissal offered by this

administrator was to "get people [teachers] in the right place [meaning a change of grade level if

necessary]…" (95A1).

Many teachers and administrators believed the focus of the evaluation system was on

teacher improvement. "Overall, I think [the evaluation system] was designed again to go back to

making teachers better…" (95A1). Administrators believed it to be their responsibility, as

instructional leaders, to help teachers improve. A veteran teacher added that "[the evaluation

system] has concrete evidence that teachers are doing something and that we are trying to

improve" (313C120+). Some teachers viewed the evaluation system as a way to be more

reflective on their work:

I think that it's [the evaluation system is] meant to make us [teachers] reflect on what we're doing and whether what we're doing is for the betterment of our school system, our school climate, our kids, and their education. I think that's the goal. (1415C2520)

Finally, one teacher agreed that the purpose was to "look at the teaching habit and see how that is affecting student performance…" (2C120+), but worried that "it [the evaluation system] got bogged down in too much other stuff" (2C120+).

Enhancing collaboration between teachers and administrators. As an administrator in this school system I (the researcher) have noticed that the new teacher evaluation system has resulted in more teacher and administrator conferences about observations, walk-throughs, the document log, and goal-setting. This increased communication has helped teachers view the new evaluation system as "more of a collaborative process between the administrators or evaluators and teachers…" (1415C2520). One teacher agreed that there is more collaboration between administrators and teachers, but "because [of] time constraints, it's not as collaborative [between evaluator and teacher] as it should be…" (1415C2520).

Rewarding teachers. There was limited data on the rewards associated with the new evaluation system. In talking about the document log, only one teacher found it to be "a good organization tool for keeping track of everything you are given…" (106N1).

Facilitating administrator improvement. Through this process, the hope of one administrator was that the evaluation system would "[make] administrators better" (95A1). One administrator provided an example, "I've learned a great deal about their skill in teaching, let's say ESL (English as a Second Language teachers), that I did not know about, and I've learned a little bit more about the struggles they go through…" (810A2). The evaluation system has given this administrator "more of an insight as to what they [ESL teachers] are doing and why they are

doing it and maybe made it easier for me to feel like I could evaluate them whereas before I didn't feel qualified" (810A2).

Achieving the purpose(s). Opinions varied as to whether the revised teacher evaluation system was achieving its purpose. "So I am not sure it [the evaluation system] does exactly what it is supposed to do" (2C120+), remarked a veteran teacher about the evaluation system overall. This teacher continued, "I don't think it [the evaluation system] quite got there [in achieving what it was designed to do" (2C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher was in agreement:

> [The evaluation system] is not [achieving its purpose]. You can fake it. You can easily
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> lie. You cannot lie if you are being evaluated in your classroom. …There is so much
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> more credibility towards direct observation versus documentation of a book [document
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> log], …[saving] data, mak[ing] yourself look way better than you actually might be,
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> right? (53N2)

Some people felt the evaluation system did achieve its purpose, whatever they deemed that purpose to be. An administrator who felt the purpose of the evaluation system was to make teachers accountable said, "I think it [the evaluation system] is doing what it's designed to do [making us accountable]" (810A2). A non-continuing contract teacher did feel the evaluation system was achieving its purpose, "So I think that, yeah, it's [the evaluation system] really helped teachers along the way to know whether you are on the right track or whether you are not on the right track" (137N2).

Many of the teachers' opinions were related to the purpose of the document log. Several teachers suggested that the document log could easily make a teacher look better than they actually were. A non-continuing contract teacher specifically said that "you can fake it" (53N2). It all comes down to how well you can put together your document log, and it was very clear that

if you could "put together a good package, and if this little notebook [document log] represents you as a teacher, you can make it look really, really good" (1514C1520). One teacher did remark on the purpose of the document log being that "it's supposed to be helping me reflect along the way on what I need to be doing" (1415C2520).

Another teacher offered a recommendation as to how the evaluation system could meet its purpose:

> You set a goal both personally and for student progress. I think if it [were] centered more around accomplishing that goal and not this other extraneous stuff that goes into that notebook [document log], …I think it would set out to do what it is designed to do. (2C120+)

In addition to being unsure if the evaluation system was achieving its purpose, some teachers questioned what the purpose of the evaluation system was. One said, "I am not sure what it [the evaluation system] was designed to do" (1C120+).

Components of the New Teacher Evaluation System and the Training Involved

There were several components to the new teacher evaluation system including a table of contents, a document log, classroom observations and walk-throughs, student and personal goal setting (SMART goals), and conferencing with evaluators. The new evaluation system had seven standards: Three were related to classroom observations, three were focused on the document log, and one was on student academic progress, which could be measured by multiple sets of data including the SMART goal and student growth percentiles[4], if applicable. Each standard had a set of indicators that "target each one of the standards pretty reliably…" (810A2).

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[4] The Virginia Board of Education recommended using multiple measures of student academic progress, but required the use of student growth percentiles in the content areas and grades for which they were provided. These data were provided by the Virginia Department of Education for students who participated in SOL testing in grades four - eight in reading and math.

Training for each component of the evaluation system took place at various and multiple times throughout the year of implementation (2012-2013).

The document log and document log table of contents. At the district-wide in-service at the beginning of the year, teachers were given a document log with dividers marking each section, along with a document log table of contents that explained what should go in each section. All teachers that were interviewed referred to the document log (oftentimes called the white notebook or the portfolio). While some teachers said the document log was divided into six sections and some said it had seven sections, there was a common understanding that the document log was where "you keep your data and all your evidence…" (1C120+). Teachers completed activities in the district-wide in-service at the beginning of the year in an effort to aid in their understanding of what documentation should be provided for each section of the document log. As one teacher explained above, the teachers were placed in groups at the district-wide in-service where they looked at the individual standards. Each group identified some things that might be a look for or a red flag for administrators for each standard and shared these with the remaining faculty.

One teacher felt that the district in-service was "the least effective [learning experience regarding the new evaluation system]…because it was so overwhelming" (412C2520). Another teacher disagreed, "we had a [district-wide] in-service on that…new evaluation system, which was very helpful…" (119C220+). This teacher continued,

> In the training, the most effective, well, the division wide in-service I guess because that just gave a really comprehensive overview of the entire process as much as could be done in that one day, so that was very helpful. (119C220+)

The document log was divided into seven sections according to the standards, although evidence was not required to be presented in each section. Throughout the interview findings presented in the study, some teachers indicated that there were six sections of the document log and some said seven. There were seven sections. The document log had a table of contents, devised by central office administration, which helped teachers understand the types of evidence to include in each section. A building-level administrator described the table of contents as "fairly detailed of what would be good examples [of evidence] and…it [the table of contents] brings up conversations with the staff about…things that they can put into their notebooks [document logs]…" (95A1). One teacher described the table of contents as "a two-page sheet that we have that…gives us the ideas of things we can put in our notebook [document log]" (64C220+).

The table of contents of the document log was intended to help both teachers and administrators. The division's central office administration--

came up with handouts [table of contents] that we [principals] put at the beginning of

every section [of the document log] that gave examples of what could be put in there and

that really, really helped with what the teachers could put in there. (95A1)

This same building-administrator recognized that "[the organization of the document log] really helps…when we [the evaluators] have the notebook [document log] in place that we can filter through that notebook before we write the evaluation" (95A1). Several teachers found the table of contents helpful to them when assembling their document log. An experienced teacher shared, "[The table of contents] was probably the most helpful because it gave me real documents, real examples of what they [my evaluators] want to see…" (1514C1520). A veteran teacher shared why he or she found the table of contents helpful: "the written instructions [table

of contents] in the book [document log], you know, lots of teachers are really good at following directions and that was helpful" (2C120+). While the table of contents was meant to be helpful, one teacher did not find it so. He or she reported,

But there were a couple of pieces, and I can't remember which part they are, but there is nothing to put in there [in the document log]. There is nothing really you can put in there for it. So I don't guess that is really effective. (64C220+)

The document log itself was seen both positively and negatively, with most of the overall comments being positive. One teacher found the document log to be, "a reflective process. It has allowed me to have everything in front of me including my goal and my lesson plans, and my data, whereas normally I may not look at all of that [at] one time" (412C2520). Another teacher seemed hopeful that "maybe this new evaluation system, the notebook [document log] may prove to be a good tool that will help teachers in time" (119C220+). Another teacher felt "[preparing the document log] was helpful," (412C2520) because it "did help…as far as detailed lesson plans and just looking at the data. I felt like it was good on a reflective basis" (412C2520). The negative feelings presented had to do with the timing in which the document log was due. One teacher shared, "[There is] always anxiety when things are due right before SOLs [referring to the document logs being due before SOL testing]" (412C2520). One teacher did express frustration with the time involved in collecting data for the log, saying, "I immediately thought about time that…gathering this data and organizing this…information, this proof and putting it into a notebook that at the end of the day, there [are] 24 hours" (1415C2520). This teacher questioned, "is that time [spent working on the document log] I'm taking away from my family? Is that time I'm taking away from my students?" (1415C2520).

One teacher seemed indifferent about the document log:

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This is my 18th year, things [initiatives] are coming and going and I am beyond…getting

freaked out…. You just get through it, you just do it, you get through it and move on to

the next thing, so it [the document log] was never something that was too overwhelming.

(412C2520)

Collecting data for the document log. Teachers understood that they were to collect data

and keep it in their document logs in the appropriate sections. An administrator described the

process:

We require the teachers to keep a notebook [document log]…of those indicators

[standards]. …For example, the first one [is] professional knowledge. In that notebook

they'll put in information…about their professional knowledge, and then the next section

is planning and of course they would put planning in there. (95A1)

A teacher confirmed this understanding by explaining that "[the document log] requires the

teacher to accumulate data to answer these…areas [the indicators]. And, it's a 3-year process"

(2C120+). Some examples of these data are "parent communication logs, teacher evaluations,

student work, just a compilation over the year of data, progress, student progress, things like my

reading goal and my math goal…" (412C2520).

Teachers used the table of contents of the document log to gain an understanding of

which pieces of evidence were required and which were optional. A veteran teacher explained,

I did what was required…. I had my beginning of the year data, my end of the year data,

things I participated [in] during the year, and just different things; my evaluation,

professional development, many things were typed in [the document log]…. (119C220+)

This teacher added that she "looked at what was required because some things are required and

some aren't and I really did what was required and got that in there" (119C220+).

While collecting evidence seemed straightforward, some teachers doubted the value of the process. A veteran teacher remarked that she was "just looking and trying to find stuff to fit in [the document log]" (2C120+). Her overall feeling was that "we are not doing things to make our teaching better, we are doing things to feed into this notebook [document log]…" (2C120+). A similar problem was noted by a specialty teacher, "[The information that the specialty teacher collects is] entirely subjective" (53N2).

The intended purpose of the document log and the collection of data were both noted by an administrator through the statement, "They [teachers] can demonstrate [their performance]…between now and the next evaluation by adding materials to that portfolio [document log] and showing growth in [those] areas themselves" (95A1). He or she added, "And…down the road…what a great collection of work [document log] that they [teachers] have…put together for them[selves]…" (95A1). From this statement, it is clear that the administrator viewed the document log as a benefit to teachers once the evaluation was completed, noting "that's a powerful tool to have all that information in that portfolio [document log]" (95A1).

Submitting the document log. Evidence was collected in the document log over the course of the year(s) and it was submitted to building-level administration at the end of the evaluation year. One teacher commented, "At the end [of the year] we [teachers] just presented our notebook [document log] to both of our administrators…" (711C1520). A veteran teacher acknowledged that the document log was shared with building-level administration, saying, "and we [teachers] keep all that [data] in the notebook [document log] to share with the principal or assistant principal" (128C220+). An administrator confirmed that, "each one [teacher] presented

the evaluation [including the document log] individually to me or to [the other administrator]" (810A2).

Scoring the document log and final evaluation. At the end of the academic year, the building administrators reviewed the evidence in the document log, along with classroom observations, and assigned a score to each standard. Each standard was rated from zero to three (0=Unacceptable, 1=Developing/Needs Improvement, 2=Proficient, 3=Exemplary). The total score for each standard was multiplied by a given weight (each of the first six standards was worth 10 percent and the seventh standard regarding student progress was worth 40 percent). These scores were added to make the total score for each teacher's annual evaluation. Building administrators were specific in their comments about the scoring of the evaluation, including the document log. An administrator summarized the scoring, by stating "And at the end of the evaluation you come up with a final tally [score]... [from] zero to a three. Zero being unacceptable and three being exemplary" (810A2). One teacher viewed it as the end of the process: "We were given a score, and that was about it" (711C1520).

Considering an alternative format for the document log. Later in the process, the administrators of the building shared a copy of an electronic portfolio for teachers who preferred that method of data collection. This was not helpful to all teachers, as one veteran teacher remarked, "At one point we [teachers] were shown a digital example of the notebook [document log] and what one teacher had done. That was just amazing, but not everybody can do that kind of thing, so that was overwhelming also" (412C2520).

Conducting classroom observations and walk-throughs. Similar to the previous evaluation system, administrators were responsible for making classroom observations and walk-throughs. The number of observations differed based on the contracted status of the teacher.

Non-continuing contract teachers were observed at least three times a year (twice in the first semester and once in the second semester). Continuing contract teachers were observed twice a year (once per semester). An administrator remarked on the importance of the observation to get a "really complete synopsis of how we think that teachers performed that year to write a really good evaluation" (95A1). The other administrator remarked that the "observations are necessary. …They [Observations] completely address some of the standards in here [the evaluation] that you can only see at an observation. So you've got that piece built into that evaluation and…I think it's a really good tool" (810A2).

Most teachers were comfortable with the observation component because it was familiar to them. "The observations--we've always had…[in this school system] ever since I've been there" (1415C2520). Another teacher commented,

It's [the observation is] just part of what has to be done. I mean they [evaluators] are in and out of the room to know what's going on. They just don't come in when it's just evaluation time, so that's just part of being a teacher. (128C220+)

Administrators were in and out of classrooms constantly, not just for the required classroom observations, but for what was known in the division as a three-minute walk-through. Several years before the implementation of the new evaluation system, administrators in the school division started doing three-minute walk-throughs in an effort to get into classrooms more frequently, increase their visibility in the school, and help generate discussion with classroom teachers about the instruction in their classrooms. While walk-throughs were not initially intended to become part of the evaluation system, some teachers chose to include them in their document log as evidence of the standards. An administrator explained, "I mean we [administrators] try to do at least one walk-through [per classroom] a week as an official walk-

through…and we e-mail that to the teacher so that they have that…[and] can add those into the portfolio [document log]…" (95A1).

Setting student and personal goals (SMART goals). Another component of the new teacher evaluation system that involved training was the writing of SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound) goals. As part of the new teacher evaluation system's student academic progress standard, teachers were required to write a SMART goal related to student progress each year, in addition to a personal professional development goal. Professional development goals might include "things that we [teachers] wanted to accomplish in the year…" (64C220+) or "what I am going to do to improve throughout the year…" (313C120+). The other portion of the SMART goal was related to student progress. SMART goals, which were planned to guide teachers in remediating student academic weaknesses, detailed what teachers wanted to accomplish during the year. In this school, administrators "ask[ed] for one [SMART goal] in reading and one in math," (95A1) related to student progress. Teachers might ask, "What were the things we wanted to accomplish with our students?" (64C220+).

Once the SMART goals were written by teachers, and discussed with the evaluator, teachers used these goals throughout the year to assess student growth. One teacher remembered how he or she implemented the SMART goals stating, "[I visited] those goals during the year and…gaug[ed whether]… I [was] on the right track, and are my kids going to be meeting my goals? If not…why aren't they meeting the goals? How do I need to adjust?" (1415C2520).

Using student data. The use of student achievement data to assess student growth was a paramount component to this new teacher evaluation system. An administrator remarked on the importance of using student data: "It's [student growth is] just a powerful quick synopsis of

looking at students and where they were and where they've gotten and…that [it] all comes back as [a] reflection to the teacher" (95A1). Not all educators in this division were as sold on the idea of measuring student growth using student test data. One teacher questioned the importance of using student test data saying,

> But the data from one test at the beginning of the year and one test at the end of the year,
> I don't know. Each child is so unique; I don't know how…helpful that is and that may
> come to be in time a very helpful kind of document…. (119C220+)

Conferencing between teachers and administrators. There are three types of conferences that were reported by administrators or teachers. The three types of conferences are pre-observation conferences, post-observation conferences, and final evaluation conferences. A distinction was made by teachers between the post-observation conference and the final evaluation conference.

Pre-observation conference. Pre-observation conferences were not a requirement of the new teacher evaluation system, but they had been used in the previous evaluation system model. Because of that, at least one building administrator continued to use them. A new teacher explained, "he [my principal] usually [came] a couple of days [ahead] of [the] time that he would…observe me. We talked about what I would be doing…" (106N1).

Post-observation conference. Post-observation conferences were a component of the new teacher evaluation system. Principals and teachers were expected to meet to review notes after each observation. One administrator noted that he or she tried to incorporate the document log into the post-observation conference. "So when I [building-level administrator] meet with them [teachers] for their observations [post-observation conference], I've asked them to bring their notebook [document log] with them so that we can…go through…[it] and talk about any

questions that they have" (810A2). Another administrator shared that he or she "sometimes…

[has] even met with the teacher in the classroom immediately after the observation in the

classroom" (95A1). A non-continuing contract teacher referred to the post-observation

conference simply as "the meetings with the administrators [that] were primarily based on

classroom observation" (53N2). A veteran teacher shared his or her feelings about conferencing

by noting, "Conferencing with my evaluator has always been positive and helpful and just a good

experience. I knew they were there to help me, help the children, that's what we are all about…"

(119C220+). Another teacher shared that "[conferencing with my evaluator] really has been

helpful" (137N2).

Final evaluation conference.   A final evaluation conference was held late in the spring

of each academic school year for those teachers who completed the full evaluation cycle. At this

meeting, the building-level principal(s) reviewed the document log, observations, and SMART

goals with each teacher, focusing on the seven standards of the evaluation system. It was at the

final evaluation conference where principals and teachers reviewed their final score based upon

the tallying of the seven standards. Most participants indicated that a final evaluation took place.

One teacher explained, "We [My evaluators and I] just…sat down and went through each section

[of the document log] and they said, 'this section looks good, we took off a point here because

you were missing this…'" (1514C1520). Another teacher described the final conference in a

similar manner stating, "Then…one administrator had a conference with me at the end of the

year just to go over and review the notebook [document log] and the process" (412C2520). One

teacher said that the document log--

is reviewed the years that you enter full evaluation where the…administrators actually

look at it [the document log during the final evaluation conference] and they talk to you

about what's in it and that's the year you actually go through your full evaluation….

(1415C2520)

An experienced teacher described this conference as a sit-down meeting with both administrators where they "talk[ed] about areas of concerns and the areas of strengths…" (1415C2520). This teacher clarified, "and then on years that you're on full evaluation, you actually sit down and have the meeting [evaluation conference]" (1415C2520). A principal shared his or her thoughts about the evaluation conference saying, "[Conferences give] us [teachers and administrators the] opportunity to…make sure… [teachers are] following through with [their] portfolio [document log] and make sure [they are] adding…student data and keeping up with…student data" (95A1).

Training for the components of the evaluation system. This school division's new teacher evaluation system required a mixture of introductory and more in-depth training sessions. There were mixed feelings about the training involved in the new teacher evaluation system. The feelings were positive, negative, or uncertain depending on the specific component that the training covered. Teachers spoke about additional training opportunities throughout the year as well.

Positive thoughts about training. Both teachers and administrators had positive feelings about the training in which they engaged for implementing the new evaluation system. Conferences, document-log reviews, one-on-one assistance, and mentor support were reported as positive training activities.

A veteran teacher found conferencing most helpful:

[The] most effective [learning experience for the new evaluation system] was my

principal…. At my end-of-the-year evaluation [conference] last year, [he] kind of [told]

me that I did do this and I did do that, and I, as a PE teacher, didn't think I had done any of all this…. Because of that, I feel better about this year. (313C120+)

The document log was a source of training for both administrators and teachers. An administrator felt that the "[administrators] have had a good bit of training…, I've learned the most in going through and actually doing it [reviewing the document logs]" (810A2). A teacher believed that reviewing the document log was helpful as well. This teacher said that the document log "may be the most beneficial [aspect to the training]" (1415C2520).

One-on-one help with either the Director of Testing or their building administrators was viewed favorably. An experienced teacher noted, "He [The Director of Testing] was at both meetings [district in-service and school faculty meeting] and there was discussion [about the evaluation system]" (1415C2520). The majority of teachers interviewed found one-on-one help to be the most helpful form of training. One teacher said, "The most effective [learning experiences regarding the new evaluation system] was having individual help…" (412C2520). One-on-one assistance was especially helpful when writing SMART goals. One teacher recalled,

[The Director of Testing] helped us [teachers] a lot with [writing SMART goals]. He came to my classroom and help[ed] me write one that…wouldn't get me in trouble, because my first one probably would have [referring to too much data keeping]. (2C120+)

A non-continuing contract teacher did not use the services of the Director of Testing but understood that if she "went to him [the Director of Testing] or called him…he would have explained things to [her]…" (106N1). Several teachers said they could go to their administrators for help when needed: "I was able to go ask questions [of my administrators] if I needed to" (412C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher said, "One-on-one, that's the best [way to learn

about the teacher evaluation system]. That way it is specifically tailored to what you do and they can…walk you through it" (53N2).

New teachers included the support of their mentor teacher as being beneficial to them, especially when they were teaching at the same grade level. One teacher commented on the use of her mentor teacher: "I mostly relied on my mentor when I had a lot of questions about things, just because she was right there and it was easier…" (106N1). This non-continuing contract teacher mentioned the importance of her mentor again when she noted, "Having my mentor teacher…was very helpful. …It [was] helpful to have her right on the hall just for immediate questions" (106N1).

Negative feelings about training. Some teachers had negative feelings about the quality of the training they received. One teacher felt the training for the new evaluation system "just left a lot of negative feelings with people…" (412C2520). Although one-on-one help was available to teachers, a veteran teacher felt that "[the system] is…very cumbersome and time-consuming…" (2C120+), and that "[the administrators]…are not able to guide us [teachers] through the process [the new evaluation system] as easily or as much as it needs to be done" (2C120+). One teacher shared negative thoughts about the SMART goal training when she declared, "I'm not sure how much of that [discussion about SMART goals] I internalized" (1415C2520). This same teacher felt that the Power Point presentation used at some point for training might be "the least effective [form of training]. It's 'Okay, here's the Power Point and let's look at it.' I'm not sure how effective that was" (1415C2520). Some teachers were more neutral or unclear in their thoughts about the implementation of this new system. They seemed to be neither positive nor negative about it.

Uncertainty about training. Some teachers were uncertain about the amount and quality of the training they received. One reported, "I don't think we have had a lot of training. There were sheets and if we had questions we felt free to go and ask the questions. That's probably the best I can give you" (64C220+). Another teacher referred to her training as "trial and error…" (1514C1520). One teacher was unsure if the SMART goal training was effective and whether it continued throughout the process, "I'm not sure how much of that [SMART goal training] stuck and I'm not sure that we did follow up after that," (1415C2520) he or she noted. A veteran teacher was uncertain about follow-up training or training for others in the second year of the process, stating, "They [administrators] must have trained the new teachers somehow. We had no group thing [in-service] to discuss the notebooks [document logs]" (1C120+). Several teachers who were evaluated during the first year of the new teacher evaluation system remarked on the lack of support in their second, non-evaluation year: "For it [the evaluation system] to be such an issue [last year]…there really wasn't a great amount of discussion about the notebooks this year compared to what came before…" (1C120+).

Additional training opportunities. An additional training opportunity was available throughout the year, in the form of support provided through emails by building administrators and the Director of Testing. One teacher mentioned, "There were emails…if you've got questions please contact me [administrator]…" (1415C2520). This teacher added that this support was provided by the Director of Testing as well, saying, "and then [there were] the emails that 'if you have questions, talk to your evaluators, talk to me [the Director of Testing]'" (1415C2520).

Evaluator and Teacher Responsibilities in the New Teacher Evaluation System

The responsibilities of the new teacher evaluation system were divided between the evaluator (building-level administrators) and those being evaluated (teachers). One teacher remarked on the responsibilities of another person who was not a direct supervisor.

Evaluator responsibilities. Evaluator responsibilities as viewed by teachers and administrators were: helping teachers through the process, supporting teachers so they could accomplish their evaluation goals, assisting with and reviewing each teacher's document log, completing observations and associated conferences, reviewing SMART goals, providing recommendations through conferencing, and assigning a score to the final evaluation and completing the evaluation process for the school year. Each of these responsibilities, as viewed by the participants, is reviewed in this section.

Helping teachers through the process. Teachers believed it was an administrator's responsibility to support them instructionally, keep them on task, and guide them successfully through the evaluation process, which speaks to the commonly accepted definition of the administrator as an instructional leader.

With the new evaluation system, teachers believed administrators had supportive responsibilities involving the individual components of the system. Teachers thought that administrators should help them identify material to put into the document log, complete observations, and review the document log and teachers' SMART goals. Teachers believed that their building administrators should help them and work with them to improve upon their craft. One teacher said, "I feel like they [administrators] are there to help us. I never feel like they come in to…look for what we are doing wrong. …I feel like they really come to try [to] help us through an outsider's eyes" (711C1520).

Administrators agreed that their first responsibility was getting data to teachers, such as test scores from the previous school year. One administrator stated,

It [the evaluation process] really starts before the year even begins. …[Administrators] will send the information [student data] home [to teachers] a couple of weeks before school starts and they'll start writing their smart goals before they…come to school and within the first two weeks of school, they'll have a good established goal. We ask for one in reading and one in math. And that really, without actually writing the evaluation, [in my] opinion…is the first start of the evaluation process for us. (95A1)

Instead of helping teachers locate material to include in their document log, one teacher said, "Well, they [my evaluators] were good about…telling us [teachers] that this needs to go in your notebook [document log]" (1C120+). A veteran teacher said, "they [my evaluators] are always available if we have questions about where some things should go [in the document log]…" (128C220+). Another veteran teacher believed the evaluator's responsibility "especially since it's [the evaluation system is] very new, is to help guide us through the process…" (2C120+). An experienced teacher said,

[Helping new teachers falls]…on the administrators' shoulders more than just the end of the year. 'Okay, here is the notebook [document log], now I am going to look back at it and make sure they did what they were supposed to all year long.' (1514C1520)

Again, administrators agreed that their responsibility was one which supported "walking our teachers through the evaluation…one standard at a time and talking about some of the things that they could use to document each of the standards into their notebook [document log] and helping them prepare for it" (810A2).

Supporting teachers so that they could accomplish evaluative goals. Selected teachers believed that building-level administrators were responsible for ensuring teachers were fulfilling the requirements of their job. These teachers felt that it was the evaluator's responsibility to ensure that teachers were doing what they were supposed to do, as if they were being held to an imaginary checklist. One teacher said that the administrator's responsibility was to "make sure I am doing what I am supposed to be doing, not just at the end of the year but throughout the year…" (1514C1520). Another teacher elaborated, "So I think it's their [administrators] job to make sure that I'm doing what I'm supposed to. They're kind of guiding me along the way that I'm doing what I should be doing" (1415C2520). A veteran teacher explained, "He [my principal] checks throughout the year to see if I am on task, which is fine…" (313C120+).

Several teachers had a slightly different view of the administrators' roles with this new system. They believed it was the administrators' responsibility to provide information that teachers, as professionals, could use: "My evaluators' responsibilities [are] to be willing to discuss with me…anything that they see as recommendations…and work with anything that needs to be improved upon" (119C220+). Another teacher stated "[my evaluator's responsibilities are] to make sure that we [teachers] are using the information [given in the evaluation]" (1514C1520).

Assisting with and reviewing each teacher's document log. Assisting with the compilation of the document log was viewed as a major responsibility of the evaluator by many of the teachers. As with selected other aspects of this new system, teachers' beliefs related to principals' support with the document log varied. One teacher said about his or her evaluators, "They just told us [teachers] what to read and to put it under different categories [in the document log]" (1C120+). Another teacher remarked on the responsibility of the administrator

for collecting the document log and "going through and making sure we [teachers] had what was supposed to be in there" (711C1520). One teacher recognized that "[the document log is] a learning process and I think it was a learning process for the administration sitting down to review those" (1514C1520). A non-continuing contract teacher was pleased with the help she received from her administrators on her document log: "Well, they [my evaluators] have done a great job of looking at it [my document log] throughout the year and really helping…to know what to put in there…" (137N2).

While there was a general consensus among teachers that administrators were to review the data in the document log, there were some differences in accountability when the teacher was not on full evaluation. A teacher who was on full evaluation the first year of implementation said,

> I didn't do a notebook [document log] this year [the second year of implementation], so no one asked. It [the document log] wasn't a requirement for me this year. I wasn't on full review, so no one asked what my data looked like. (1514C1520)

Completing observations and associated conferences. Observations were not a new component of this system, but were recognized by both teachers and administrators as being a responsibility of the administrator. Building-level administrators were charged with observing[5] selected teachers' in-class instruction during the academic year. Related to observations, one teacher replied, "Okay, I think that of course [administrators are] supposed to be observing it [my classroom] and watching what you're doing in the classroom…" (1415C2520). One teacher recognized that administrators observed teachers in formal and "really even informal

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[5] Teachers employed on annual contracts with less than five years of service required at least three formal observations from their evaluator each academic year. Teachers with continuing contract status, those with at least three years, but up to five full years of service or more, required at least two formal observations from their evaluator each academic year, whether they were on full or partial evaluation status.

situations…" (1415C2520). An administrator explained, "We [Administrators] do [three] observations for a non-[continuing contract] year, [two] in the first semester, one in the second semester…. The evaluation generally is written in the month of May…and we'll…meet with the teachers obviously before school is out" (95A1). A non-continuing contract teacher reported on how her observations were arranged: "Well, my [evaluator]…just emailed me a couple of times when he could come and observe and I would tell him which day…would be better for him to come in…" (106N1). Administrators saw their role as "being in and out of the classroom…" (95A1).

Administrators admitted that it was difficult to complete all of the formal observations. One administrator said, "It's quite an undertaking [to observe and evaluate teachers] sometimes…because I think this particular…[year] we had 25 [non-continuing contract] teachers at the elementary school we had to do… (95A1).

Reviewing SMART goals. The introduction of SMART goals was new for teachers and administrators with this new evaluation system. Both central office and building-level administrators wanted to be able to support teachers with this new undertaking. Teachers were supported in the writing of SMART goals. One teacher stated, "[Administrators] helped me set up my goals…" (313C120+), and "[gave] input which is just wonderful…" (313C120+). Administrators either mailed or e-mailed "the information [student data] home [to teachers] a couple of weeks before school start[ed]…" (95A1) so that they might start considering their SMART goals. Administrators worked with teachers on their SMART goals at the beginning of the year, mid-year, and at the end of the year. One teacher noted, "At the beginning of the year they [administrators] ask for the [SMART] goals…then we [teachers and administrators] come back together at the midpoint [to look at the SMART goals]…" (1415C2520). Teachers saw the

administrators as guides, "making sure and talking to you [teachers] that 'Okay, at some point we have looked at your goal and we've talked about that goal.' You know, is it [my SMART goal] something that we both think is attainable?" (1415C2520).

Providing recommendations through conferencing. Historically, a major aspect of the teacher observation and evaluation process has been the focused pre-and post-conferencing associated with observations, along with an end-of-year final evaluation discussion. Conferencing associated with classroom instructional observations was not a new procedure. Teachers felt that administrators were responsible for providing recommendations to teachers through formal and informal conferencing. Teachers and administrators met to review SMART goals and data at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. At the beginning of the year, administrators helped teachers set their goals based on student achievement data. One veteran teacher said, "The evaluator[s]…helped me set up my goals" (313C120+), and added that "so he [my principal] always [helps] me set up a goal…" (313C120+). A teacher indicated that in the middle of the year, an evaluator asked, "We're a little over the halfway point [of the year]. How are you progressing? Are you on track for it [your SMART goal]?" (1415C2520). This same teacher met with both administrators at the end of the year for a formal conference.

Administrators recognized their responsibility to conference with teachers about their SMART goals, "[to] look at the data that they've collected…to see if they're getting closer to the goals" (95A1). This administrator added that "at the end of the year we [administrators and teachers] meet again with the evaluation. We'll look at the notebook [document log], evaluation, and the [SMART] goals. They all should intertwine and match fairly well" (95A1).

A non-continuing contract teacher spoke about informal conferencing with her administrators, "[A] couple of times [my administrator and I] just stood in [the] hallway…and we talked about little things that I had gotten done" (106N1).

One teacher seemed to appreciate the recommendations given to him or her by administrators, saying, "We [the evaluators and I] did meet collectively, all three of us, they gave recommendations for what could have been better or [told] me some things that they did like about the notebook [document log]" (711C1520).

While most teachers spoke positively about their conferences with administration, one teacher said she was--

> a little disappointed when I sat down at the end of the process and we [my administrators and I] had our meeting and we discussed my notebook [document log] because [they said] it looks great, …I am okay with that, …but I like to have more constructive criticism back. 'Maybe you could have done.' I have the same complaint with observations in our classrooms. They [Administrators] come in, and 'You are doing a great job.' Okay, that's great. I like that, but that doesn't give me any way to get better…. I still think that there is room to use it [the evaluation system] as a growth tool and not just an evaluation tool. (1514C1520)

One administrator viewed his or her responsibility as "just trying to stay on track with those teachers that are on my list [full-evaluation] to follow up" (810A2). Another administrator believed in "keeping constant communication with the teachers…" (95A1).

Assigning a score to the final evaluation and completing the evaluation process for the school year. Completing the evaluation process at the end of the school year involved reviewing the document logs and assigning scores for teacher performance.

Assigning a score to each teacher's evaluation at the end of the evaluation cycle in late spring was a new phenomenon for both building-level administrators and teachers. Assigning these scores was not equally stressful for both administrators. One administrator spoke about the difficulty of assigning a score to the evaluation: "It's not just a matter of going through it [the document log] and looking at it [what is in the document log]. …You're making judgments based on it and that's a tough thing to always do" (810A2). The administrator continued,

> Now you've [administrators have] your observations to back [you] up, but going through
> and looking at it [the document log] and determining…from unacceptable to exemplary
> with a number and then looking at that average in the end and thinking that you are
> coming up with a score that's going to be attached to somebody's name and it's a lot. It's
> a little stressful thinking that you've got that to be responsible for. (810A2)

The other administrator found the document log useful in scoring, explaining, "when they [teachers] have that notebook [document log] in place and they have the evidence and they [have] demonstrated that …it's easy to give the three [highest score]" (95A1).

Completing the evaluation process for the school year. In the case of this new system, both administrators and teachers saw the evaluators' responsibilities being complete at the end of the school year after administrators reviewed final evaluations and document logs, and assigned a score for the final evaluation. One teacher reported, "[My administrators complete their responsibilities at] the end of the year. Certain things have to be in before they can review; they also check the notebook [document log] for teachers on full evaluation…" (128C220+). An administrator agreed, "[for] the teachers…[of] SOL grades…it's the end of the year before they get their data back…[and] feel like they can complete the seven standards. …That pushes it [the evaluation] right up to the end of the year" (810A2).

Teacher responsibilities. Teachers recognized that they had new and different responsibilities in the new evaluation system. These responsibilities were collecting and organizing data for the document log, having an understanding of what evaluators were looking for in the evaluation, writing their SMART goals, being observed by their evaluator during planned instructional activities, and using evaluation recommendations for improvement. "I think the biggest responsibility lies on us [the teachers]," said one teacher regarding the evaluation system (1514C1520). Each of these responsibilities as seen by the participants is reviewed in this section.

Collecting and organizing data for the document log. The new teacher evaluation system in the Commonwealth of Virginia was focused on student learning outcome data, and the new system was clearly data-driven. Teachers' student learning outcome information was collected and stored in each teacher's document log. Since the document log was a new component to the evaluation system, many teachers seemed to put a lot of emphasis on it. One teacher expressed the stress that he or she placed on the document log stating, "I felt like my main responsibility was putting together this notebook [document log], filling it, all the time. Just filling it full of papers…" (711C1520). Much of the focus of teachers was on keeping up with what was needed for their document logs: "Basically just…making sure I am constantly collecting what [the data] I need, making sure… I have copies of my evaluation; I have copies of my data, graphs, and things to show that I am paying attention to my goal…" (412C2520). One administrator agreed stating,

> So that's kind of their [teachers'] role as to make sure as they're going along, they're
>
> collecting the information that they need to collect to put into their folder [document log]

at the end of the year when we [administrators] look at the folders for the evaluation.

(95A1)

For some, the collection of data was simply "shoving things in the pocket [of the document log]" (53N2). The data-collection process for a non-continuing contract teacher was comparable to a final project in college. He or she explained, "It's… like [a] final project …in [a] college-level course. You have to [keep] this notebook [document log], these are the requirements of the notebook. You have three years…well, one year and then you just kind of…add to it…" (53N2). An administrator agreed stating that the teachers' "biggest responsibility [was] to collect that data and collect those sources of evidence that they [could]…keep in that notebook [document log]…" (810A2).

As with any new venture, some teachers organized and collected data for their notebooks better than others. One teacher collected his or her data throughout the year, but waited to organize it until closer to the end of the year: "But then the actual organizing the notebook, the majority of that time came more at the end of the year and hours were put in" (1415C2520). An experienced teacher took more care with the document log during the year it was due, saying, "When I was on full evaluation knowing that my notebook [document log] had to be turned in at the end of the year, I was more diligent about keeping up with …papers and data and logging tons of information…" (711C1520). This teacher explained, "The notebook [document log] loomed over my head as my main focus to get completed before the end of the year" (711C1520).

For other teachers, particularly those who taught non-SOL subjects, the new documentation system just did not seem to best fit their instructional needs. For some teachers, the system did not work as well as it did with others. A teacher of students with severe

disabilities noted, "I am supposed to collect that data that responds to those six areas and there are some teachers that it works well with. In my situation, it does not work very well" (2C120+). He or she continued,

> I got the feeling… that I…didn't fit into the process very well. I really didn't know what
> to do, so I …did nothing. I mean I was observed, I had two good write-ups, but I just
> don't fit into the notebook very well. (2C120+)

This same veteran teacher had another reason that he or she did not fit into the process well. School records indicated this person was on full evaluation during the first year of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation process. He or she said,

> This is where they [administrators] backed up. They said at first that I was [on full
> evaluation the first year of implementation] because I was supposed to be probationary
> and then when I said I haven't been observed but one time, they said, 'Well, we have
> changed our mind. Now you are not a full evaluation year. And this year [year 2 of the
> implementation] they [administrators] said I wasn't, so I don't really know…. (2C120+)

A non-continuing contract teacher, who was also a specialty teacher, gave another example of how the system did not work well for all teachers, saying, "all the specialty teachers were kind of like hung out to dry, when the white notebook [document log] was explained to everybody" (53N2). One reason this system has not worked well for specialty teachers is that it is difficult to write and document a SMART goal for students when they only have "[the specialty class] one time a week for 45 minutes. So I [a specialty teacher] have been struggling…for the past couple of years with what I am going to do for my evaluation [SMART goal]" (313C120+).

Teachers saw their responsibilities in the evaluation system as a year-long process beginning with data analysis and continuing with the creation of their SMART goals, followed

by the organization and development of their notebooks, which served as their student learning data repository and document log. One teacher said,

> [I completed my responsibilities] before I had to turn it [the document log] in, because I wanted to make sure I had up-to-date data, up-to-date lesson plans, recent observation checklist, [and] things of that nature. It was just an ongoing process all year long on my…part. (64C220+)

A veteran teacher explained, "I am trying to do it [complete different tasks for the evaluation system] all year" (1C120+). The collection of data is a year-long process. A teacher confirmed, "I have [my SMART goal] in mind and then the data part is pretty easy for me because that's what I'm constantly doing all year long" (1415C2520).

Teachers had to organize the material within their document logs. Some did this as they went along, but others simply "shove[d] it in the pocket, whether [they thought] it's relevant or not…" (53N2). For those teachers, the organization came at the end of the year before the document log was due: "and then a week before it's [the document log is] due, organize it and kind of plug [it] in to where the powers that be told us to put the information" (53N2).

It was important to one teacher that he or she completed his or her responsibilities in a timely manner, including as one of his or her responsibilities, "making sure that I was getting everything done and when things were due, I was getting them turned in" (106N1). The document log was overwhelming for some individuals and they felt a push to get it in on time. For example, the physical education teacher had trouble finishing the end-of-year testing because "during SOL testing I can't be in the gym making noise…and I have to be outside, so I did not start early enough to finish mine [SMART goal testing], so I am panicking at the end of the year…" (313C120+).

Having an understanding of what evaluators were looking for in the evaluation. In addition to the maintaining the document log, teachers needed to have an understanding of the system. One teacher saw her responsibility as to "be aware of that [what the evaluator is looking for], and…work toward that…" (119C220+). Another teacher said, "I think they [evaluators] don't want to see all your lesson plans, they want to see a couple of lesson plans, and where they relate back to the assessments…" (1514C1520).

Writing SMART goals. The writing of SMART goals was a new aspect of Virginia's teacher evaluation system, and the teachers of this division, like others in the Commonwealth, had to figure out how to use them appropriately. Most teachers saw it as their responsibility to write and revise their SMART goals based on student data. A non-continuing contract teacher described his or her process:

> We [teachers] had the data at the end of the year last year [second-grade]…and I think they [students]…had already taken their beginning-of-the-year tests…and we [third grade teachers] kind of looked at that [data] a little bit just to see. We have a pretty high ESL population…so [we took] that into account when we created [our goals]. (106N1)

Teachers and administrators had different thoughts about writing SMART goals. A veteran teacher said about creating a SMART goal in reading and math, "Since we [teachers] were starting to collect all this data, that wasn't too hard to come up with as far as using the testing and the benchmark testing that we were doing" (128C220+). One teacher believed "you do it [write SMART goals] because they ask you to" (53N2). One of the administrators believed "writing the [SMART] goals is the initial start [for teachers]" (95A1).

Some teachers wrote their goals for their classrooms individually, but a majority worked with other teachers. A veteran teacher remarked, "I have worked…with the Title I math teacher

and…[many] times we would stay after school and put it [the math goal] together and look at the data, and I would do the same with the reading consultants…" (119C220+). This teacher added, "and in the end, a lot of the colleagues helping colleagues, 'What did do you do for this and what does this mean?' so there was a lot of that as well, so there was a lot of support" (119C220+). Another teacher explained, "I just sat down with my new team [of teachers] and we wrote them [SMART goals] together based on our reading and our math SMART goals" (412C2520).

Being observed by evaluators during planned instructional activities. Teachers have been observed by their evaluators for decades. This aspect of the new teacher evaluation system was not new to veteran teachers. Teachers did not indicate any significant changes in their responsibilities regarding observations since this was an area that did not change from the original evaluation system. An experienced teacher noted, "As far as the observation side of the evaluation, I don't do much different than I do on a daily basis with my lesson planning and I am kind of an open book" (1514C1520). Another teacher said, "So again, that [observations] wasn't anything new" (1415C2520). Even a non-continuing contract teacher seemed comfortable with the observation component saying, "In actuality I really think that our final evaluation comes down more on in-class observation, like when they come in and they observe you. Especially for a new teacher…they [administrators] are in your class all the time…" (53N2).

Using evaluation recommendations for improvement. An additional responsibility, shared by a veteran teacher, which indicated an awareness of professional growth was that "if there [were] recommendations [given to teachers during their post-observation or final evaluation conference], I need to look at those and improve on those…" (119C220+). This includes being reflective about the process. One teacher said,

I think with the notebooks [document logs] and the evaluation process we have to use it more as a growth tool. We have to use it more formatively, so that we can guide our lesson plans around what the data is showing us. (1514C1520)

An administrator said that "it [the evaluation system] forces them [teachers] to be reflective about what they are doing…" (810A2).

Responsibilities of others. In selected situations, other individuals might have had a role in supporting teacher growth through this new evaluation system. One non-continuing contract teacher mentioned the responsibilities of her mentor teacher, appointed by the principal as a support to new teachers, someone she found very helpful. This teacher said,

With my mentor teacher, it was informal. She was also [a] third grade teacher…. I just had questions about things, [and] just knew she was there to help me and she was good at reminding me [about] things throughout the year, and she thought of things that I might not know to tell me. (106N1)

This less-experienced teacher saw it as his or her responsibility to "[communicate] with my mentor teacher" (106N1).

Other individuals had opportunities to be involved or engaged in this new teacher evaluation system. At the onset of this new system, administrators wanted lots of stakeholder support, so teachers were asked if they might want to serve on the new teacher evaluation committee. Of the thirteen teachers that were interviewed for this study, only one had volunteered to serve on the evaluation committee. This teacher remarked on his or her involvement, "It [my involvement on the evaluation committee] was interesting in that I got to see the whole--everything and then what we [the committee] narrowed it down to" (1514C1520).

He or she acknowledged that the committee involvement "didn't make putting my notebook [document log] together any easier" (1514C1520).

Uncertainty of Teachers in the Implementation of the New Teacher Evaluation System

Understanding a new teacher evaluation system is highly important to teachers. And, a new teacher evaluation system is exactly what teachers and building-level administrators in this division were experiencing. There were several areas of uncertainty in the new teacher evaluation system as determined by study participants. One of those areas of uncertainty was the overall process, as a whole. A majority of teachers interviewed were uncertain about the document log and their SMART goals. Another area where uncertainty was prevalent was the evaluation of specialty teachers, including special education and those teachers who instruct students in something other than core classes, such as art, music, or physical education. Finally, some teachers were uncertain about the scoring of their evaluation.

Uncertainty about the process as a whole. Teachers seemed uncertain, in the beginning, about the process as a whole. Uncertainty about how they may be held accountable for student learning might have been discomforting for some teachers, but it could almost have been disabling for others. A veteran teacher stated, "You know, it was pretty gray at first. I think it was for everyone" (1C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher felt uncertain even after the first in-service, "when [the administrators] passed [the new evaluation system] and…kind of went over what was to be expected, which was rocky at best because nobody really knew what the expectations were, what was going on" (53N2). Another non-continuing contract teacher spoke about the uncertainty in the process, saying, "People have [a] lot of nerves…where they haven't been evaluated yet…[and] the notebooks [document logs] haven't been looked at yet, so

they are…nervous about the coming years because they really don't know what they need to be doing…" (137N2).

In speaking about the process as a whole, one teacher questioned if the changes that came about were because of the evaluation system or because her school was in school improvement, a Virginia Department of Education designation for a school whose students are not meeting established Standards of Learning assessment cut scores. This experienced teacher commented,

> I'm not sure how much of that [interaction with administrators] comes about because of the evaluation system. Yes, I would have been collecting data. Yes, I would have been showing it to them [administrators]. Would it be to the same extent if we [were not in] school improvement? (1415C2520)

Uncertainty about the document log. Teachers being required to document student achievement within their classrooms and needing to be prepared to share this documentation with their evaluators was a new aspect to teacher evaluation. Teachers at almost every level of experience felt some uncertainty about the document log, even with the in-service that was provided. A veteran teacher said, "You know, you did get the in-service, but you have to admit that you…still…weren't exactly sure what was being looked for or what needed to be included" (1C120+). To be specific, it seemed the table of contents was confusing for some teachers. Another veteran teacher stated, "It was just the way things are worded on… [the document log table of contents]. I wasn't sure I understood exactly what I needed, and then when [the Director of Testing] came and helped it was easier…" (313C120+). One teacher attributed this to personal differences, "I feel [you can] say something to this many teachers and we are all going to have our own vision of what that notebook [document log] is supposed to look like and…I think that was just overwhelming at first" (412C2520).

Even with the table of contents, there was some confusion about where to put certain documents. One teacher explained, "There were [a] couple of areas…at the end of the year that…I thought [were] covered in this section [of the document log] but needed to be…put into a separate section to make sure it was all covered" (1514C1520). Even after working on the document log for two years, a veteran teacher remarked, "I'm still not sure I'm 100% comfortable [with the document log]…" (1415C2520).

Along with the uncertainty about the document log in general came uncertainty about the data to collect for the document log. As mentioned above, it seemed there was some confusion as to where to put certain documents and it seemed that there were some sections of the document log where there was nothing to include. Teachers "just gathered what you hoped was the right thing…" (1C120+). One teacher remarked, "There are a couple of sections [of the document log that] there was really nothing for us to put in there" (64C220+). A non-continuing contract teacher realized "with the binder [document log]…there are seven different components…and some of them, there [are] only certain standards that you have to have information for. [Some sections]…were optional, and I felt…that might have been a little bit more clear" (106N1). An administrator agreed, "The biggest thing [concern] still is those pieces of evidence that they [teachers] need to record and…and it works here but it works here, where do I put it? How do you know that it's in there?" (810A2). Even the teacher that served on the evaluation committee indicated that she "wasn't sure what needed to go in that notebook [document log] to satisfy each of the requirements for each of the sections" (1514C1520).

Uncertainty about SMART goals. Writing SMART goals was a new task for all teachers within the school system, and it was not an easy task. One teacher confirmed, "Especially with our [SMART] goal, I think that was the hardest part in the beginning"

(514C1320). Some teachers seemed confused about what the administrators expected, "SMART goals were a little tougher because I didn't, in the first year, really understand what they [administrators] were wanting" (1514C1520). One teacher explained,

> We had a little bit of an issue with [the] writing of SMART goals because they [evaluators] wanted us to use 100% of students…I know my kids and I know that 100% of my students will never fall under the same category and they will never achieve [at] the same rate, and so it was a learning process…. (1514C1520)

Other teachers were concerned about what would happen if they did not meet their goal,

> Even if you didn't reach the goal, I still wasn't clear on what could happen to you as a teacher. Of course, I was pressured and feeling, 'Oh! My goodness, if I don't reach my goal, am I going to lost my job?' …that wasn't really presented clearly to us. (711C1520)

Another teacher had a similar fear; "But there is that fear with this evaluation process that…if you don't meet your goal, what happens?" (1415C2520).

Some uncertainty came with understanding expectations associated with writing SMART goals. Additional concern was felt by selected teachers as they wondered if they were even required to write SMART goals as they did not instruct in SOL testing content areas. A non-continuing contract teacher who taught in a non-SOL tested grade level said,

> I guess I kind of sound like a broken record but it [using student growth] was very confusing because we [pre-K teachers] were coming in and everyone was talking about…using [student growth] for the SOLs and in pre-K, we don't really have the SOLs, so we had to think of what to do on our own…. (137N2)

Teachers even wondered if they should write easy-to-meet SMART goals or if they should truly stretch themselves to attempt harder-to-attain student achievement goals. They wondered if

there would be negative repercussions for attempting, but failing to reach, truly rigorous student achievement expectations. One teacher explained,

It's how much emphasis is put on whether or not you meet that [SMART] goal, because I think you [as a teacher] can work really, really hard but at the end of the year it just may not be where you want it to be because I also don't want to create a goal. I want my expectations to be really high. So I'm going to set my goal really high because I want 100% of my kids to make…a 90% or better. (1415C2520)

This teacher continues with her concern, "So if I'm putting my goal there [set high for all students] and I'm not reaching that goal, I don't want to feel like my evaluation is going to be marked down because of that" (1415C2520).

Uncertainty about the evaluation of specialty and special education teachers.
Selected teachers wondered how they might be evaluated if they did not instruct in Standards of Learning tested content areas or if they served as supports in those areas. From this discussion of uncertainty came a concern regarding the evaluation of specialty teachers, which includes special education, art, music, library, computer science, and physical education teachers. Four teachers that fall into this category were interviewed. They had concerns not only about how they would be evaluated, but how they would write appropriate SMART goals. A veteran teacher explained, "This kept coming up. What are we going to do with our specialty people, how do we evaluate them? How do we evaluate SpEd [special education]?" (1C120+). He or she added, "So it was kind of like we were even more of a little gray area that no one quite, at first, I don't think wanted to deal with us or [knew] how to evaluate us…" (1C120+). Another example came from the art teacher,

Because I am a specialty teacher, nobody knew how I was going to go about collecting

data. Nobody had any idea what to do with me, so it has [taken] a little…more figuring

out what to do with it on my own versus other teachers. (53N2)

Specifically regarding SMART goals, a veteran teacher remarked, "the goal setting with

the art, the music, the PE, it's difficult for them to write a goal the way [the administrators]

wanted" (2C120+). Special education teachers "didn't fit into any of that kind of category"

(2C120+).

Uncertainty about the scoring of the evaluation. At the end of an academic year, the

new evaluation system was to be used to generate one score for each teacher. This was both a

new and somewhat frightening idea for selected teachers. Some teachers wondered if this new

system was a trumped-up disguise for getting rid of teachers whose students were poorer

performers on Standards of Learning assessment tests. Teachers were uncertain about the

establishment of one score that was supposed to reflect a year's overall evaluation. One reason

for this might have been that the scoring rubric that was developed to explain how the evaluation

score would be calculated changed. An experienced teacher shared his or her concern:

The numbers [on the full evaluation] threw me because we were used to [getting fours

and threes] on our evaluations. I was looking through and I was looking at mostly threes

and I think one 2, and I am thinking 'what have I done?' Finally I look back and I am

like 'Oh my gosh! There are no fours.' After I got through that initial shock of worrying,

it was fine. (412C2520)

An administrator told what seemed to be the same story,

I don't know if I can say this now. I guess I can. I had a staff member this year, we met

with and she got her evaluation and it was below [a] three. Not much below, and I think

it was a 2.7, which is above proficient and she just got completely flushed at the very beginning. You could just say she wasn't initially happy because she looked at that final score….What had happened was she was thinking that it was on a four-point scale because that was the evaluation [range] two years ago. So she was instantly frustrated when she saw the 2.7 because based on the 4 scale, it's average - I mean it's below average [on the old scale] and she…didn't pay attention what we were…telling her because she's already focused like 'I got 2.7.' And she went back to the classroom after we were finished and signed [the evaluation]. [I] asked if she had any questions, [she said]…no, she left and came back. And 15 minutes later she came back in tears. 'I'm so sorry. I misinterpreted. I was thinking about a 4-point scale instead of 3-point scale….' I mean it was [a] great evaluation, but again that is kind of that process of doing it. This was her first evaluation [under the new system]. She wasn't evaluated last year. So this was her first evaluation. So it was for her, 'Oh my, gosh what have I done? Why am I 2.7?' …She thought it was really bad, but it was really…about proficient, you know? (95A1)

Outcomes of the New Teacher Evaluation System

As with the implementation of any new system within a school setting, there are likely to be anticipated or expected outcomes and unanticipated outcomes--those that may be a surprise to those involved. The implementation of the new teacher evaluation system in this school division had its share of both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes, reported by study participants. The outcomes of the new evaluation system were also compared to its predecessor.

Anticipated Outcomes. Anticipated, or expected outcomes, included changes in teacher performance, changes in teacher instruction, and changes in documentation as a result of the new

teacher evaluation system. Other anticipated outcomes included a change in climate, effect on student learning, teacher satisfaction with job, personal costs, and positive outcomes.

Change in teacher performance. Teachers and administrators varied as to whether the new teacher evaluation system prompted a change in teacher performance or not, and if there was a change, whether it was viewed as positive or negative by the teachers. The ultimate criterion for evaluating the new evaluation system was, and will continue to be, whether, in the long run, the new system has a positive effect on student learning.

Positive change. There were a number of teachers who believed that the new evaluation system had a positive effect on them. Several teachers reported positive changes in their performance as a result of the new teacher evaluation system. A continuing contract teacher stated, "[The evaluation system has affected me as an educator]…just allowing me to be more reflective" (412C2520). A teacher with over 20 years of experience said, "Oh, yes! [The new evaluation system has changed the way I teach]" (313C120+), adding, "My lesson plans are better now because of this [evaluation system]…. I want to have everything addressed" (313C120+). Another teacher noted that "We're [teachers are] getting better every year…. There's still progress to be made" (1415C2520). An administrator saw a positive effect because "[the evaluation system is] a good tool for the staff to see 'this is an area that I am weak in' very quickly" (95A1).

Negative change. Likewise, there was an educator who had yet to realize positive benefits associate with the change. A veteran teacher remarked, "I would say so far there is probably not a lot of benefit to it [the evaluation system] as far as making teachers better teachers, and improving student outcomes" (2C120+).

No change. Several educators thought the new system influenced very little of their classroom teaching and learning program. Of those who felt their performance as a teacher was not changed by the new evaluation system, one expressed some uncertainty, "Did it make me a better teacher? I don't think so…" (1C120+), while another teacher was certain, "No. [The new system won't change the way I teach.]" (53N2). An experienced teacher said, "I don't see it personally right now [that the evaluation system has an effect on my work in the school]" (1415C2520). Another teacher explained that it would not change her as a teacher but that it would cause her to be systematic in recording her work as a teacher. She declared, "I have always been very conscientious about teaching and especially being a mother, too, it's [teaching is] just so important. …I have always been like that. It's [the evaluation system] is just helping me put it down on paper" (412C2520).

Change in teacher instruction. Some teachers felt that the new evaluation system changed the way they instructed students to improve learning. Many of these changes were attributed to data-driven instruction which was a component of the new teacher evaluation system. One teacher thought that some changes in instruction could have been because of school improvement process. Another teacher felt that the new evaluation system would not change his or her instruction. Finally, some teachers were not certain if changes in instruction would be a result of the new teacher evaluation system.

Changes due to data-driven instruction. Several changes occurred as a result of the use of data that was prompted by the new teacher evaluation system. Teachers collected data on individual students to use as evidence in their document logs and used this data to target student weaknesses and make changes in their lesson plans. Teachers had to create a SMART goal in

reading and math and use student academic growth data in the new evaluation system. An

experienced teacher expressed how the use of data affected her instruction:

> I think it [the new evaluation system] makes my instruction a little more data-driven
>
> whereas before maybe I didn't look as closely at that beginning-of-the-year data. …I
>
> [looked at data] just so I could pace myself and I knew where I needed to spend more
>
> time based on where they [my students] were but…now I look at it [data] even more
>
> closely and [ask if] I [am] giving the kids who struggled exactly what they need and who
>
> are those kids that need extra? (1514C1520)

From really understanding students by analyzing their data to writing more detailed

lesson plans, another teacher felt the new evaluation system "has helped me become better at

what I am doing…" (412C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher agreed:

> [The new evaluation system] has had [an impact on my instruction] because every time
>
> we take a test, …we put all the data into the notebook [document log] and then we go
>
> back and we really look at all of these tests and what our low areas are because that's
>
> what we are expected to do now, to really look at student growth and…weak areas and to
>
> learn from that…. (137N2)

An administrator shared that the new evaluation system "forced us as a school to talk about our

instruction and its forced grade level teams to talk about individual children and the instruction

that they need" (810A2).

Changes in instruction potentially due to the new evaluation system and to school

improvement. One teacher admitted to a change in her instruction and said that those changes "

[she's] attributing today a lot to our evaluation system," (1415C2520) but stressed that while the

evaluation system had been around for two years, the school had also been in school

improvement for that same amount of time. She believed that "the two things together…[are] leading to some changes in instruction" (1415C2520).

No change in instruction. One teacher thought that the new evaluation system did not change or would not change his or her instruction. This teacher shared, "For me, I don't think it [the evaluation system] is going to change my instruction because I was already starting to do data collection anyway. …I wanted to see where my kids were and see where they…were going to…" (64C220+).

Uncertainty about changes in instruction. Finally, and expectedly, some teachers were not certain if the evaluation system had or would change their instruction. Two teachers expressed this uncertainty with conditions. Both conditions were related to the increased accountability placed on the teacher. One said, "I know that we all [teachers] feel more accountable and we feel the pressure…" (128C220+). The other, a veteran teacher, commented, "I guess that it [the evaluation system] has made me more aware…that you [have] got to get the children performing" (1C120+).

Changes in documentation. While many teachers spoke about changes in the way they documented student growth, mainly by having to keep a document log, only one teacher spoke specifically about the change in documentation. This veteran teacher said,

> For me, it's just been more of putting it [the documentation] somewhere as opposed to keeping it all year and keeping track of what they [students] were doing and then when it was all over and done with it went in the trash. Well now, it's going in something [the document log] that if somebody has a question, I have…documentation for it. (64C220+)

Changes in school climate. When asked about how the outcomes of the new evaluation system affected the climate of the school, answers varied from no change in climate over the

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time period of the implementation of the evaluation system to some change in climate, not necessarily due to the new evaluation system. For those teachers who thought there was a change in school climate, most of them questioned whether it was the evaluation system that caused that change in school climate or not. Other teachers that believed a change in climate had occurred said that they believed the evaluation system did cause a change. One teacher offered another suggestion for a change in school climate or morale.

Uncertain if evaluation system caused a change in school climate for those indicating that there was a change. Teachers spoke about issues of the school that did not necessarily have to do with the evaluation system. For example, one teacher replied, "I think we as a school…need to work on the school community. We function so much as our own grade-level entities and we…rarely interact with other grade levels. It's all about SOLs…" (1514C1520). Another teacher suggested that "it [the climate of the school] would depend on who [which teacher] you are looking at [laughs]" (412C2520). He or she continued, "You have a positive climate on one end and then you see negative…. I think probably like [in] any school…you see everything" (412C2520). A veteran teacher believed:

> [The] morale of the school is down. I don't know if it's because of the notebooks
>
> [document logs]. I don't know if it's the pressure on SOL tests…or where we have not
>
> been doing well on SOL tests…but I feel something has affected the morale. (313C120+)

This teacher added, "I can tell the teachers aren't happy and they are not as gung-ho. I don't know that it's completely about the evaluation [system]. I don't think so" (313C120+). This teacher also said, "I don't think it [the evaluation system] has improved it [the learning climate of the school] (2C120+).

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Change in school climate due to the evaluation system. When speaking about the new evaluation system, a non-continuing contract teacher said, "It [The evaluation system] does, it does [affect the learning climate of the school]" (53N2). He or she continued,

> We have five-year olds with test anxiety. That's crazy. …These kids, they are freaking out, they are having panic attacks. We are teaching them that learning is not fun, that it is stressful and that it's [school is] not a good place. (53N2)

While this teacher spoke of the stress students were feeling, an administrator said about the school, "I think it's [the evaluation system has] definitely impacted the learning climate [of the school] and I think we're working our way from being stressed to being a little more relaxed" (810A2). One teacher did see the evaluation system as causing a positive change in school climate, saying, "I think it's always good, the more you collaborate and share and converse with your colleagues, the better. I think it just makes the climate better as far as the closeness of the faculty and the support" (119C220+).

Another reason for the change in school climate. One teacher commented about how the change associated with the new evaluation system could be the reason many of the veteran teachers experienced stress, thus having an impact on the climate of the school. This person explained, "I think it has been stressful there [at the school]…for the other teachers…" (137N2). This non-continuing contract teacher said,

> I was pretty fresh, pretty new, I didn't really know what to expect, so this is all kind of normal for me… I know with a lot of the older teachers that…[have] to do this, I guess it's…taken the morale down a little bit…. I think the new teachers are a lot better with the change…. (137N2)

Effect on student learning. Most participants thought that the new evaluation system had a positive effect on student learning. One teacher pointed out that, "[It is] not necessarily the notebook [document log] process, but what we [teachers] are putting into it [that affects the learning of our students]" (412C2520). Stated another way, "It's not necessarily what the notebook [document log] is doing, but what you [teachers] are doing to put in there [the document log]" (412C2520). Another teacher attributed the impact on student learning indirectly to the evaluation system: "I think it [the evaluation system] probably helps me to be a better teacher, so…in that respect, yes, it does [the evaluation system affects student learning] because I think if I am doing better, they [have] to do better" (128C220+).

The idea of looking at where students started at the beginning of the year and seeing how far they had grown academically at the end of the year was an important aspect of the new evaluation system for teachers. A non-continuing contract teacher explained this idea, "I mean just…being able to look back at information and help them [my students], even to help them see how far they [have] come can be helpful" (106N1). An administrator agreed,

> Initially it [using student data] was going to be another large task for our staff and administrators to take on, but I think it was necessary. I think for…administrators and staff, because we need to see where our kids are and we're going and how much they've succeeded throughout the year. (95A1)

Teacher satisfaction with job. As with the other outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system, teachers and administrators had opinions about the effect of the evaluation system on teacher satisfaction with their jobs. Both positive and negative opinions were expressed.

Positive effect on teacher satisfaction. Seeing growth in their students, instead of simply looking at whether or not students passed the Standards of Learning test at the end of the year

helped some teachers experience more satisfaction with their jobs. One teacher said, "When my scores aren't as good as I think they should be, at least I can look back and go, 'Well, my students did learn.' We didn't waste 180 days, we made progress and moved forward" (1514C1520). A veteran teacher agreed,

> I think so [the evaluation system affects my satisfaction as a teacher]. I feel better about it [my job satisfaction]…with the collection of all the data, I can see my strengths and weaknesses, and I can tune in and do better in certain areas. (128C220+)

Both administrators indicated that they believed the new evaluation system to have a positive effect on teacher satisfaction with their jobs, or at least had the feeling that teachers were satisfied with their work, whatever the reason. One building administrator said, "I would say [the] overall satisfaction [of teachers in my school] is positive" (95A1). The other administrator said, "I think the teachers…I've conferenced with are [satisfied with their work as a teacher]" (810A2). This administrator went on to attribute the satisfaction to the evaluation system, saying, "Based on what they [teachers] see in their evaluation and what they see in the data collection [document log], they have been satisfied with it [their work]" (810A2). This administrator continued to talk about teaching as a profession, referring to teachers in general, saying that he or she did not think teachers were "satisfied with that [teaching] as an occupation," (810A2), because of "the data collection compiled with all of the other amount of work load that the teachers have to do…" (810A2).

Negative impact on teacher satisfaction. On the other side, the added responsibilities and increased accountability that are associated with the new evaluation system have made some teachers less satisfied with their profession. One participant made a familiar comment about being a teacher, "I mean we [teachers] are constantly being asked to do more and more and

more. I should say we are being asked to do more and more for a whole lot less" (64C220+).

This evaluation system could be seen as another example of that where the expectations of the system have increased with the document log and writing SMART goals. A non-continuing contract teacher expressed strong dissatisfaction with the governance of education: "Being a school teacher, they [unknown referent] have made it kind of a pain. There is red tape involved with any government, but they are slowly trying to strangle me with it…. Especially if you are the [specialty] teacher" (53N2).   This teacher went on to say, "It's [Education is] a nasty place to be, especially since the powers that be say that we are not as successful as we should be" (53N2).

Another experienced teacher remarked on how the process could have a negative impact on some, not necessarily all, saying:

I think that [satisfaction of teachers in my school]…would probably vary too. You hear a lot of negative reaction to it [the evaluation system] and unfortunately the most negative reactions are coming from the most negative teachers. …Anytime you ask people to do something different or something more, you tend to get that reaction, but I think that's probably just a small percentage…. (412C2520)

While some teachers are obviously bothered by the changes in the new evaluation system, one teacher planned to deal with the changes and move forward, stating, "For me, this [teaching] is what I have always wanted to do. So for me it's [the evaluation system is] not changing my feelings towards educating children. It's something I've always wanted to do" (64C220+). This same teacher recognized unhappiness in her peers, "I think there are some teachers in our building that are not happy with the way things are going [overall], and they are just getting out" (64C220+).

No impact on teacher satisfaction. One experienced teacher said, "I don't see that it [the outcomes of the teacher evaluation process] has really had any impact [on the satisfaction of teachers in general]" (1514C1520).

Personal costs. Some teachers recognized that there are personal costs involved with the new teacher evaluation system, which could be the reason some teachers are "…just getting out" (64C220+). Two of the costs as viewed by participants were stress and time.

Stress. As one might expect with an evaluation system, there is a stress factor. A veteran teacher confirmed, "The cost is…a lot of stress, if you are doing it right or not…" (1C120+). This experienced, continuing contract teacher not only experienced the stress of an evaluation that comes with being observed and evaluated, both of which have accountability aspects in the new evaluation system, she experienced the stress of the new system and the uncertainty of whether she was doing it correctly. Another teacher, who was not on continuing contract, agreed, "It's a very stressful environment" (53N2). An experienced teacher spoke to how this stress affected the relationships of others in the school,

> I think everybody [teachers] feels a little bit more stressed, and so it does feel a little
> strange [relationships with administrators]. Not [in] a bad way, but it is kind of like all
> business now, just kind of we are not as laid back as we used to be. Everybody is…just
> more…on their toes…. (711C1520)

This teacher viewed the administrators' stress as a stressor for teachers.

Time. The cost of time comes with new expectations. Administrators and teachers acknowledged up front that the new teacher evaluation system would require changes in the way that principals and teachers worked. As the new system progressed during its first year, those beliefs related to additional work were realized. Teachers spoke to the amount of time it took to

complete their responsibilities of writing SMART goals and completing their document logs. It took time to become familiar with the new evaluation system, and it took time to complete the components of the new evaluation system. An administrator said, "The cost of it [the evaluation system], I guess goes back to time" (810A2). A teacher agreed,

> The cost is [putting] in so much time on this one goal when you have so many [goals], really. I guess, in the long run, it's a good thing. I know at that time, I am thinking I really need to be doing this to get ready for tomorrow, to get ready for the kids, but I need to do this [work on the evaluation]. In the long run, it's a good thing. (119C220+)

> From the data provided by teachers, it seemed to have taken more time to write the

SMART goals the first year due to the uncertainty of what to do:

> [For the] SMART goal, last year [2012-2013 SY] took more time, just not knowing what we needed. So it was probably at least an hour or so each for math and for reading, just to sit down and really focus on what we [teachers] needed to do and then we went back and revisited in the middle of the year. (412C2520)

One teacher said, "This year [2013-2014 SY] was not as difficult [writing SMART goals] because we, the new grade team, took what I had last year and said, 'Okay, how do we want to do this?'" (412C2520).

There were similar feelings regarding the amount of time it took to complete the responsibility of the document log in that it took longer in the first year of implementation. "I guess I spent more time getting that notebook [document log] together last year [2012-2013 SY] than I did this year [2013-2014 SY]. I had a general idea of what they [administrators] were wanting to see" (64C220+). It was difficult to say how much actual time was spent on the

document logs because many teachers worked on them over the course of the year, on snow days, or whenever time allowed.

A non-continuing contract teacher saw time as a cost, but could recognize that the benefits of the process were valuable. He or she said, "I would say the benefits outweigh the cost[s], because the costs for me were only the time it took, but the benefits outweigh that because now…I have one place to look when I want to see my data…" (137N2).

Positive outcomes. Regardless of the uncertainty or fear that might have existed in the initial implementation year of the new teacher evaluation system, some teachers were hopeful for a positive outcome. One teacher hoped that the new evaluation system--

> will help their [teachers'] practice, and it will help, maybe not the first year, maybe the second year and the third year, when they see, 'Well, I could have done this a different way or I could have added more to this,' so I am hoping it will be a positive outcome with that. (412C2520)

Teachers recognized that outcomes of the new evaluation system were related to how the new system was implemented. If a teacher is just completing the document log for "the purpose of turning it in and saying, 'Okay, here is my notebook,' then there is no benefit" (412C2520). This teacher went on to say, "I think it [the benefits of the system]…totally depend on if the teacher would use it for that reason [to look at student growth]…There can be great benefits, or a waste of time. It's just how you use it" (412C2520).

Unanticipated outcomes. Two unanticipated outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system were identified. One specialty teacher believed that as a result of the new evaluation system and the use of student data, that her class seemed unimportant to other teachers. "I am still wanting to find ways to sell my program. I didn't feel like I used to have to sell my program

back years ago" (313C120+). An administrator seemed worried about the focus on student data,

"Teachers are so focused on…section seven: …it's the heavy weight. And, I think…we [have] a

few [teachers] that just say 'this is not what I signed up for. I won't do it anymore.'" (810A2).

Comparative value of the new evaluation system versus the older evaluation system.

Expectedly**,** teachers and administrators might naturally compare the new evaluation system with

its predecessor. Teachers, in fact, did compare the new evaluation system with the one that came

before it. Some viewed the new system more positively than the old, including administrators.

Some teachers did not necessarily indicate a preference for the new evaluation system, but that is

not to say they liked the older system better.

A more positive view of the new system. One teacher specifically listed the positive

changes:

> [With the new evaluation system, there is] just a lot more. [You are] just not looking at
>
> classroom observations twice a year, not looking at SOL scores, you are looking at data
>
> that's collected at the beginning, the middle, and the end [of the year], including looking
>
> for student growth and what worked and what didn't work. [The evaluation system is]
>
> just more thorough and [we are] definitely looking at a lot more areas than before.
>
> (412C2520)

Most teachers viewed the increased use of data in a positive way. The data has always been

there, but one teacher wondered "how often it [student data] was referred back to in lesson

planning. It was done…check that box" (1514C1520). This teacher continued,

> Now, we have to show where we have gone back to that data and we have used it as we
>
> planned our year and we are constantly [going] back and re-evaluating what we are doing
>
> and I think that's where it has been most impactful for me. (1514C1520)

Not only did the new evaluation system provide teachers with more data to make instructional decisions, but one teacher said, "Now with this [new evaluation system] I have so much more solid concrete [evidence]. If a parent comes in, …I can go back through [the] year and I have more facts…with this evaluation system" (313C120+).

One teacher viewed the new system in a more positive light by making a negative comment about the old system, saying, "Back in the older days, I mean to me, it [the old evaluation system] just wasn't really…much of a process to go through" (313C120+).

Administrators compared the previous and new evaluation systems. One administrator said, "I don't want to think that what [the previous evaluation system] we had in place was not a good evaluation [system]" (95A1), but he or she also stated, "I think it's [the new evaluation system is] much better in more detail than the previous ones we had" (95A1). Another administrator said, "I think the outcome of this evaluation gives you more of a leg to stand on if you've got a teacher that has some issues than I think the old evaluation did…" (810A2). He or she went on to say, "it [the new evaluation system] also gives you…a lot of information to prove this teacher is doing a good job and gives you a lot of information to help the teacher reflect on what their year was like…" (810A2).

A more negative view of the new system. Other teachers did not view the new evaluation system as positively as its predecessor. Another teacher did not report as much confidence in the new system saying, "Well, I don't know that it's [the new evaluation system is] going to be that much more beneficial than any other process we have had" (1C120+). A specialty teacher had an interesting thought about the comparative value of the new evaluation system to the old. She spoke about her friends who taught core classes and the challenges they faced with their non-English speaking students, for example:

They [students who come speaking no English] are asked to read at a fourth grade level

by the end of the term and you [as their teacher] are an unsuccessful teacher if you can't

get that student up to par with all the other students. I don't think it [the new evaluation

system] shows…it's too cut and dry, there is no room for gray. (53N2)

While core teachers could show growth using their SMART goals, the teacher making this

statement had a very valid point when it came to the end result of the high-stakes test.

Thoughts and Feelings about the New Teacher Evaluation System

Teachers and administrators had varying thoughts and feelings regarding the new teacher

evaluation system, some of which changed from the introduction of the system to the time the

study was conducted. Teachers and administrators shared their initial and later thoughts about

the overall system, the time involved, the individual components of the system, and the training

involved. Thoughts were shared about relationships with administration and peers, and the new

evaluation system was compared to the old.

Initial thoughts. The initial thoughts of teachers and administrators included: having

something else to do that could take away from instruction, the pendulum swinging, and being

overwhelmed. Their feelings were positive and negative in the beginning, although there were

more negative feelings expressed.

Having something else to do that could take away from instruction. Many of the

teachers interviewed, from all experience levels, first thought the new teacher evaluation system

was just something else to do "to prove that you are [doing your job]…" (53N2). One teacher

said, "I mean truthfully it [the evaluation system] was something else we had to do because…a

lot of the things they [evaluators] were wanting in a notebook [document log], teachers do

anyway" (1C120+). A veteran teacher expressed her concerns by saying, "I think [the evaluation

system is] just going to become something teachers are going to start completing…. I mean, when a job becomes just another job to do, another notebook to fill out, it loses its meaning" (2C120+). This teacher went on to say, "There are just too many forms to fill out, too much data to keep collecting. I know data is important…but we really…just get bogged down in that…" (2C120+).

Teachers saw the added components of the document log as another task. Along the same lines of another additional responsibility, teachers stated that they did not have the time for it. An experienced teacher said, "I don't have time to do that. [Laughs] It seems like a whole lot of extra work, and I don't have time to do that" (1514C1520). Another questioned, "Where do I have the time to do it [the document log]?" (1415C2520). And, a non-continuing contract teacher said she felt--

> it [the document log] is one more thing to take away from…instruction. …Instead of putting fun lessons and cool things to do with the kids, you have [to] document what you are doing and why you are doing it, which takes away from what you could be doing…. (53N2)

An administrator recognized this concern by saying, "[Collecting all of this data has been] a really difficult thing for teachers to get used to because of the time. They don't have the time to teach like they used to…" (810A2).

In addition to just being another thing to do, teachers felt they had to jump through hoops. A non-continuing contract teacher compared this to being in college, "But I am…fresh out of college, so it's one of the things you should get used to…you have to do this. …Okay. It's graded, okay. What else do you want me to do?" (53N2). To put it more simply, "Yeah, you just say 'okay.' Right? I mean your boss says, 'jump through this [hoop], okay?'" (53N2). An

administrator viewed this more positively, "You're told to do something [collecting evidence for the document log] and you do it, and it's not as bad as you thought it was going to be" (810A2).

Pendulum swinging. If you are in education long enough, you might hear talk of the pendulum swinging when it comes to new initiatives. Talk concerning the revised teacher evaluation system was no different. When asked about initial thoughts regarding the new evaluation system, a veteran teacher replied, "Just the pendulum swinging again" (64C220+). Another veteran teacher spoke of the new evaluation system "as one of those things that is changing. I will ride this one [change] out too and do what I need to do. It's not that big of a deal" (412C2520).

Being overwhelmed. Initially, the evaluation system seemed overwhelming to most teachers, and it specifically seemed to be more overwhelming for the veteran teachers. One administrator said, "You have veteran teachers that were set in their ways, and they…were absolutely totally against the lesson plan, evaluation, and this change" (95A1). The system seemed overwhelming at different points for different teachers. For example, one teacher had the responsibility of a new grade-level team, being a mentor, and having a student teacher. She said, "This year [second year of the process, which was her first year on full evaluation] was a little overwhelming. …I wish I could have spent more time on it [the evaluation system]" (412C2520). An administrator explained, "And then the [school] year started, and…all of a sudden it was the end of the year and they [teachers] panicked because life happened. You know, teaching happened and school happened, and they got busy" (810A2). A veteran teacher explained, "Like anything new, and especially in the climate of accountability, …it was somewhat overwhelming. It seemed like there was going to be so much data and so much scrutiny on data…" (119C220+).

Positive feelings. As with most any change, some people are going to immediately like it and others might never come to appreciate it. A couple of teachers, along with administration, were not worried when they first learned about the evaluation system. An administrator recalled, "At first I was like, 'I know it's going to be another change, which sometimes change is good. Sometimes change is bad, but I think it was a good move.' I think it was a good positive change" (95A1). One teacher said, "It was fine [when I first heard about the evaluation system]" (412C2520). Another teacher thought it was okay because "it wasn't anything that was gigantically new when it came to the goals and the observations and the evaluations. It was actually putting the piece [document log] together" (1415C2520).

Negative feelings. In an attempt to be supportive, the administrators of the school shared possible examples with faculty that would provide alternatives for teachers when completing the document log. Unfortunately, this administrative attempt at additional explanation and support had what seemed to be an adverse effect on some of the veteran teachers. A continuing contract teacher felt that being shown an online version of the document log--

> was a little overwhelming because teachers are getting out of school now ready to use these programs and can do all of this digitally. Teachers who have been [teaching] a while, it's not that easy for us…[with] SOLs and…everything. I guess that there was just a little frustration from what I hear of some [veteran teachers] that we have to be compared to [new teachers]. (412C2520)

Teachers were frustrated on top of being overwhelmed with the system. A non-continuing contract teacher affirmed, "Oh, I knew it was going to be a pain…" (53N2).

With the aforementioned thoughts about the new evaluation system, there were feelings of shock, confusion, panic, and frustration. One teacher felt, "There was the initial shock that

was like, 'What am I going to do?'" (1415C2520). When a non-continuing contract teacher heard about the new evaluation system, she found it "kind of confusing and everybody was a little panicked about it…" (53N2). A veteran teacher said "I panicked, I panicked, and I panicked, and I panicked" (313C120+). One teacher felt fear, "I think initially [during implementation] that there was that fear like, 'Oh, what are we going to do?'" (1415C2520). An administrator picked up on these feelings, "So I think there was a lot of apprehension and a lot of concern, a lot of stress in the beginning" (810A2). Others experienced frustration. One teacher who had served on the evaluation committee prior to this newly formed evaluation committee was proud of the system they had created, "and then we had to start all over [with the latest evaluation system]" (1415C2520). This experienced teacher who served on the previous evaluation committee said, "I was just a little frustrated because...[the previous evaluation system] was really good, and we had the system that…I was anxious to use and then we had to start a new system" (1415C2520). Teachers believed that "[a new evaluation system] wasn't…necessarily [their] choice" (1415C2520).

> An administrator commented on the initial stress felt by teachers. He or she said,
>
> I think it's [the new evaluation system has] been very stressful for some. It may be stressful for everybody, and I think some of that [stress] has lessened, but I think…it puts enough stress on some teachers that [they] don't want to do it anymore. …We've had several teachers that [are] just saying, 'I'm done. I'm not going to do it anymore. …I'm not good on teaching anymore. I'm collecting data.' (810A2)

Later thoughts. Time helps to heal. As teachers and administrators became more familiar with the evaluation system, it seemed that some, but not all, experienced a change in their thoughts about the system. Thoughts verbalized later in the process included ideas like it

was not that bad, it was not a perfect system, it was a year-long process, and it had to be done. Teachers did not necessarily see the new evaluation system as a bad system, but recognized that it was not perfect either.

It was not that bad. Getting started with a new teacher evaluation system might be difficult for many. In time, however, once teachers and administrators became more familiar and more understanding of expectations associated with the new system, opinions about the new system mellowed somewhat for a number of teachers. One teacher said, "It [the evaluation system] wasn't as intimidating…once you got into it and understood what was needed. It wasn't that bad" (412C2520). Over the course of the two-year period since the introduction of the new evaluation system, many teachers came to believe that the new system was not that bad. A non-continuing contract teacher confirmed, "Definitely, [the evaluation process got easier to do]" (137N2). An administrator agreed that later in the process, "everybody seem[ed] a little…more comfortable with it [the evaluation system], and it's not as overwhelming as originally they felt" (810A2). Once there was an understanding of the system and the expectations, the evaluation system "wasn't as daunting…" (106N1). Another teacher confirmed, "For me, it's not been that bad of a thing. It's just a matter of…being methodical about keeping up with things" (64C220+). An administrator agreed, "As we [teachers and administrators] worked through it…and then went back and looked at it and said, 'You know [it] really wasn't so bad after all'" (810A2).

It was not a perfect system. While it seemed that feelings were better after some time was spent learning the evaluation system, a building administrator shared, "I'm not saying it's [the new evaluation process is] perfect, but I think it's a good tool" (810A2). A teacher agreed, "I don't think it's [the new evaluation system is] a perfect system" (1415C2520).

It was a year-long process. Historically, for teachers, the evaluation system was often a set of objectives that needed to be met by a date in late spring. Teachers and their evaluators would sit, discuss each objective, score the objectives in some fashion, and sign forms. Such was not the case with this new teacher evaluation system. One realization that could have helped to clarify the way the evaluation system was viewed was an understanding that it was a year-long process. One teacher stated, "So I think [the evaluation system] is [more than] just an end-of-the-year process. It needs to be a year-long intervention…for everyone and not just the people who aren't doing what they are supposed to be doing" (1514C1520).

It had to be done. Some teachers saw the evaluation system as something they had to do, agreeing that teachers should be evaluated. One teacher stated, "So overall I agree that we should have a [teacher evaluation] system. I agree that…we should be evaluated…" (1415C2520). Being evaluated however brings out some additional fears, especially when you feel like a number, meaning the final evaluation score that is numeric. A teacher explained,

> It doesn't make you feel very comfortable to know you are going to be given a number [referring to the final evaluation score]. You know you are going to either be a 3, 2, [or] a 1. You know…that you are a professional, …but you are still getting a number that tells you what kind of teacher you are. (1C1120+)

A veteran teacher shared, "I think that…teachers in general…feel threatened with the fact that they have…[to] show evidence on everything. I think to some degree it is threatening to… teachers. It might have been for me, too, if I hadn't…taught some years…" (1C120+).

Overall thoughts about the system. When asked about their overall thoughts regarding the new evaluation system, teachers' opinions varied from it being a frustrating task to feed the

document log to recognizing it as a positive, reflective process. Other teachers still indicated neutral feelings about the process overall.

A veteran teacher believed "we are not doing things to make our teaching better, we are doing things to feed into this notebook [document log]…" (2C120+). Another teacher spoke about the preparation of the document log and said, "I still get frustrated when I think about, 'Okay, this is the time I've got to do it [prepare my document log], and I've got to do it right" (1415C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher asked, "Why can't I just teach?" (53N2). This teacher felt that he or she had to--

> document that I am actually good at my job which means that I can't do my job that I'm
>
> good at. I think [the evaluation system] is good. I understand…there has to be some
>
> accountability for educators, but I don't feel like this is it. (53N2)

This person continued "It's [evaluation is] just something you have to do, like taxes" (53N2).

Other teachers had positive thoughts about the process overall. A veteran teacher remarked that "if used properly, it [the new evaluation system] could be a reflective process, which is always good, no matter how many years you [have] taught. I think the teachers should always reflect on their practice" (412C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher said, "[Overall], I feel good about [the new evaluation system]. My experience has been completely positive with it. I like having all my data in one place.... I like the organization of it and the accountability of it" (137N2). An administrator agreed that "[the new evaluation system has]…been…a positive change for the school" (95A1). The other building-administrator shared his or her thoughts, saying, "When you look at that end product [evaluation system], I think it's a really good tool for the teachers" (810A2).

It could be that overall thoughts seemed to improve because teachers became more familiar with the process. Teachers commented on the lower stress level in year two of the implementation process, either because it was their second year and they were more familiar with the process or because they were on full evaluation the first year and on partial evaluation the second year. A veteran teacher said, "I feel more positive this year because it was not--, thank goodness, …a full evaluation year two years in a row" (313C120+). Another veteran teacher remarked, "This is our second year, so it [the evaluation system] has been better, and I think as time goes along it will just get…better. Then by the time we get used to it, somebody will change it again" (128C220+). An administrator said, "So this year (SY 13-14), I've noticed that the teachers were a lot less stressed and a lot less concerned about it [the evaluation system] because they have two years of collecting things [for their document logs]" (810A20). This administrator added, "I think that [teachers are] relaxing a little bit, and they feel more comfortable [with the new teacher evaluation system]" (810A2).

Some teachers did not indicate a positive or negative feeling about the evaluation system overall at the time the data were collected for this study. One teacher said, "I guess [I feel] indifferent [about the evaluation system]. I don't love it. I don't hate it" (1514C1520). Another teacher spoke to her perception of others' feelings about the process, "I've not really heard anyone that's like, 'Oh, that's [the evaluation system is] stupid.' But on the flip side, I'm not hearing anyone go, 'Oh, this is great'" (1415C2520).

Time involved. Teachers are often disappointed when professional expectations seem to take time from preparing for their classroom and their students. Participants in all categories of experience had something to say about the use of time to complete the evaluation system. Some spoke about the individual components, mainly the document log, and others spoke about the

time involved for the process as a whole. Some people spoke specifically about the number of hours spent on the evaluation system and some spoke in general about the amount of time involved.

Time spent on the document log. Initially, it seemed a lot of time was put into the document log as it was a new component of evaluation for the teachers. One teacher was "not thrilled with the time of putting the information in there [the document log]. But sometimes that's maybe a necessary evil" (1415C2520). Several teachers recognized that this was time that could have been spent elsewhere. A teacher said, "I really felt like I was spending more time on this notebook [document log]…[than on] my teaching practices and…how I implemented things…" (711C1520). Another teacher said, "My time [spent completing the evaluation] could have…been better…[spent] doing lesson plans…instead of getting…[the documents] all together and sticking…[them] in a notebook [the document log]. So I could have used my time more effectively somewhere else" (64C220+). A non-continuing contract teacher who chose to do an electronic version of her document log, said, "[The document log] took a while. I…wasn't unhappy that it took me as long as it did because I was doing a lot of that out of choice…" (106N1). This same teacher "didn't think it was an unreasonable amount of time" (106N1).

The document log was time consuming for the administrators as well. Administrators had to review the document logs of every teacher on full evaluation. An administrator explained, "It [the document logs] took a lot of time. If you've got five or six [teachers] that you do full evaluation on every year, it's not quite so bad, but when you're looking at 20 [teachers on full evaluation]…" (810A2). Teachers noticed the amount of time administrators spent on reviewing the document logs. One teacher wondered,

Right now I see my administrators with these stacks of notebooks [document logs] at the end of the year going through them. And there's [a] part of me that wonders if their [administrators'] time would have been better spent in a classroom, seeing what the kids are doing? (1415C2520)

Time spent on the evaluation process. Negative comments about the time involved in the overall process focused on where that time might have been better spent. A veteran teacher said, "I really didn't have a lot of negative[s] [about the evaluation system] except for the…time that it took. This is time outside of school because…I can't put this together in school. I don't have the time" (1C120+). Another teacher said,

At the end of the day, I think personally I want more time to be planning what I need to be doing with my students, and I need to be looking more at…what Johnny needs help on. What resources can I find for him? That's where I want to be spending my time other than, 'Oh, I need to prove that I'm a professional, so I need the piece of paper, the document that I was at the opening day picnic greeting parents. At the end of the day, I would rather have my time going to what I perceive as benefitting my kids directly than proving that I do my job well. (1415C2520)

While the process seemed to be time-consuming to everyone involved, some teachers saw this time as well spent. One teacher said, "I think [the time spent on the evaluation system] was…used properly, and we [teachers] are using the information that's in there [the document log]. I think it was time well spent" (1514C1520). A veteran teacher said,

I just considered it [the amount of time spent] something that I needed to do. I didn't begrudge it. It was something I needed to do. …It's a good thing to have goals and to

think about, 'What am I going to do to address this and to achieve this?' so it was a good thing. (119C220+)

Actual hours spent on the process. While most teachers said they collected data all year long for the document log, they did try to quantify the number of hours spent organizing the document log for the final submission. One teacher spent "about 5 hours after school making sure everything was in the right location in the notebook [document log]" (128C220+). A non-continuing contract teacher said that he or she--

probably worked on it [the document log] seven or eight hours or more just putting things together [in the first year]. This year [the second year of implementation], I probably worked about maybe three or four hours all together because it didn't take as long as I kind of knew what I did from last year and wanted to continue because it worked well for me. (137N2)

Thoughts about components of the evaluation system. Teachers spoke to their thoughts and feelings regarding the specific components of the new evaluation system, including being observed, maintaining a document log, writing SMART goals, using student data, and conferencing with administrators (including feelings of trust in administrators). Thoughts were shared about the training received regarding the various components of the evaluation system.

Being observed. Most teachers seemed very confident about the classroom observation, indicating a certain comfort level with their evaluators. Most of the experienced, veteran teachers shared this sentiment, "I feel totally comfortable when they [evaluators] come in now [after many years of experience for an observation]" (711C1520). Another veteran teacher shared, "It [being observed by my evaluator] doesn't bother me at all. I tell them [my evaluators]…to come see me whenever" (313C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher was

not worried about being observed, saying, "We do that [get observed] all the time, so that part was okay. I didn't have any nerves about that" (137N2). Some teachers acknowledged the importance of the classroom observation. One teacher said, "I think [the observations] are very good, very thorough, very helpful, because there are so many components from the learning environment to professional knowledge that are dealt with on there…" (119C220+). Another teacher "just like[d] hearing what the outsiders [administrators] [had] to say," (711C1520) after the evaluation.

While selected teachers might enjoy the process of being observed and documented by an evaluator and then discussing that observation and notes, some teachers and an administrator reported the observation as not an enjoyable experience. Some teachers felt nervous when it was time to be observed. A veteran teacher said, "Being observed has always made me nervous…. It's just me, just my perception, but it's just part of it, and it's [the observation has] always…been a positive thing" (119C220+). Another teacher agreed that "I think any time you hear that you're going to be evaluated [observed] that there is a certain nervousness there" (1415C2520). An administrator even remarked on the stress that can come with an observation on the administrative side: "And I'm not going to deny that it's been stressful going in and…nitpick or look for certain things that are going on [in the classroom in an observation]" (95A1). A veteran teacher shared, "I don't look forward to having observations anymore.… I know that they [evaluators] have to look so technically at what level I have taught, where my questioning has gone…it's not relaxing" (1C120+).

Maintaining a document log. The document log was a new component in the evaluation of teachers. Administration made an attempt at making it user-friendly by creating a table of contents that teachers could use to place documents in each section of the document log. The

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document log was divided into seven sections, one for each of the seven standards in the evaluation system. Administrators expected that this organization would aid teachers in easily storing and locating evidence. However, many teachers felt that they were simply stuffing their notebooks to complete this component of the evaluation. A few teachers seemed to find value in maintaining the document log, with some indicating that they were already doing this work anyway.

Other teachers felt more positively about logging their work. A veteran teacher stated, "I guess, for me, it [the document log] was a way to…prove that I was doing my job…. They [the evaluators] are just actually seeing it now" (64C220+). Another veteran teacher said, "I felt like part of it [preparing the document log] was important to make teachers think about what they needed to be doing…" (2C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher felt that the log helped her to see the results of her efforts all in one place. This teacher proclaimed, "We [teachers] were already doing all of these things that they [evaluators] had asked us to do, but it [the data we collected] was never really all in one place…, and it has really helped me in that way" (137N2).

One teacher felt that the document log required a lot of work that went unrecognized. This teacher said,

> For the final notebook [document log], I think it was more of a scramble to get everybody checked off, and I don't feel like my notebook was really [noticed for] everything that was in there. I don't feel like it [my document log] was looked at--maybe it was. I am not sure. As much as the focus the whole year was on the notebook [document log], …at the very end, it was like, 'Okay, here you go, bam!' We are done, you know. (711C1520)

Writing SMART goals. Writing SMART goals was an unfamiliar component of the new teacher evaluation system. All teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia were expected to

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write two goals: a professional goal and a goal for student growth. In this school, teachers were asked to write both a reading and math goal for the student growth component. While learning to write the SMART goals was a tedious process and seemed overwhelming in the beginning, it seemed that many teachers were happy with them in the end. One teacher said that writing SMART goals "was very overwhelming" (412C2520). Another proclaimed, "I'm not thrilled with the fact of the student [SMART] goals. I think…we could work somewhere on that area of it" (1415C2520). And, still another teacher felt that the SMART goals could easily be manipulated, saying,

> I think that it is so easy to skew those numbers [on the evaluation]. You know what's on your evaluation, you know what's on your assessment, [and] you know what you need to teach so that the kids do better on that assessment at the end of the year. So to show growth, I think it can be skewed. (1514C1520)

On a more positive note, some teachers felt that the SMART goal kept them focused, and found some value in writing them. A non-continuing contract teacher shared,

> I thought that [the use of SMART goals] was a good thing. It was good to have a time at the beginning of the year [and] sit down and think about what was practical. They [the administrators] told us…not to set them [the SMART goals] low just so that you could meet them, but to…set them high and it was okay if you didn't meet them. So I felt like it was good…. (106N1)

This teacher added that creating SMART goals "allowed us [teachers] to think at the beginning of the year where we…were headed, where we wanted to go, with [the] understanding that it's better to set them [our goals] high and not reach them" (106N1). Another teacher commented on

the writing of professional goals, saying, "I think it is important for us [teachers] to have our own [professional] goals to work towards" (1415C2520).

Using student data. Standard seven of the new evaluation system dealt with showing growth through the use of student data. Because of the focus on the standards of learning assessments in years past, some teachers seemed to think that the use of student data meant using SOL test scores. Teachers were actually encouraged to use multiple sources of data, and they could choose these data points themselves. Many of these were evident in teachers' SMART goals. This was necessary since many would agree it was not fair to only look at one test on one day. Teachers assess in many ways, and students can show growth in many ways. Teachers of math and reading in grades four through eight, however, were given student growth percentiles which indicated low, moderate, or high growth for students in their classes, which was considered as part of their evaluation, but only as one of the multiple data sources.

> One teacher indicated an understanding of the use of student data for growth saying,
>
> I don't mind that [the use of student growth data]. …If you are going to judge me on
>
> scores, I would rather be judged as a teacher on 'Did my students grow and learn?' as
>
> opposed to 'Did they pass…one test one day out of the whole year?' So I don't have a
>
> problem with student growth, I actually like that aspect of it. (1514C1520)

An administrator confirmed, "I think it's [student growth is] the very key and [an] integral part to a teacher being successful is just looking at student growth" (95A1). While one teacher was "completely opposed to fully looking at test scores…" (412C2520), he or she "appreciate[d] being able to just look at growth because I think any student growth is great…. I like that there are different components than just SOL scores" (412C2520). One person had positive feelings about the new teacher evaluation system "because we [teachers] are looking for that information.

I can say, in my position [as a specialist in the school], that we are being forced to collect that data, and we're not just collecting, we're actually looking at it" (1415C2520).

One teacher felt that the use of student data had a negative effect on teachers. A veteran teacher said, "I felt that putting the goal setting as a reflection of student's scores did not help teachers at all and made them anxious and made them afraid" (2C120+).

Some people had mixed feelings on the topic of student data. A veteran teacher said,

The only part [about using student academic progress] I liked [was] being able to see how my students grow, but I feel like in that notebook [document log]…if you have…students that are behavior issues because of home, some of that may not necessarily be taken into account…. (64C220+)

An administrator had--

mixed feelings about that [the use of student growth data or student growth percentiles]. Again, like I said, you've got different groups. We ability-group our reading, and our lower reading groups--you can see these children that have just grown by leaps and bounds…. You can see tremendous growth, which is great for the teacher. But when they take the SOL and they don't do well…it just…deflates everything.... (810A2)

Conferencing with administrators. Teachers were not uncomfortable when it came to conferencing with their administrators, which might be a reflection of the trust they have in building-level administrators. A veteran teacher said, "I think I have fair administrators. Nothing about them ever made me uncomfortable with doing it [conferencing]" (1C120+). Another veteran teacher said, "Conferencing with my evaluator has always been positive and helpful and just a good experience. I knew that they were there to help me [and] help the children. That's what we are all about…" (119C220+).

Several teachers spoke about the comfort level they experienced during conferences with administrators. One teacher did not feel a change in conferencing with the new evaluation system. He or she said, "I don't know that I felt any worse about it [conferencing] with this system than I would have any other time" (1C120+). Another teacher sounded like he or she was more confident with this new evaluation system, saying, "It's easier to talk to them [my administrators] about everything now because we have facts now, we have it [data] in hand" (313C120+). This same teacher shared what would seem to be conflicting data by saying that he or she "[was] absolutely more cautious [under the new evaluation system]" (313C120+) in sharing information with his or her administrators.

Teachers seemed to have positive feelings about their administrators. One teacher said, "I value and appreciate what they [my administrators] say, and respect their roles as administrators…. I feel valued as a teacher" (1514C1520). Most teachers indicated a good relationship with both administrators. A typical response from teachers was, "I have a good relationship with our school administrators, both our principal and our assistant principal" (1514C1520). Another teacher stated that this "good personal relationship…makes it [the evaluation system] easier" (1415C2520). One teacher indicated that he or she was more comfortable conferencing with one administrator over the other. This person said that, "[It was] not that there is anything wrong with either one of them. I think that's just my own--I've been with one longer, so there's probably…more of a comfort zone there" (1415C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher was the only one who was not extremely positive about this relationship, "In my first year it was just basically them [administrators] feeling me out and me kind of feeling them out. So we never really got comfortable with each other before the white notebook [document log] was introduced…" (53N2).

A building-level administrator recognized the importance of conferencing with teachers about instruction, "Again, it [conferencing with teachers] takes time, and we have to do a lot of it after school, but…it's worth it. If they [teachers] feel good about their job then they'll be a better teacher" (810A2). Teacher and administrator conferences facilitate teacher improvement. This same administrator spoke about this, saying, "I think the evaluation tool has been good for the teacher-administrator relationship. [It has] given us [building-level administration] a direction to lead the conversation, …and things to talk about that…had been seen during…walk-throughs and observations" (810A2).

Training received. Different methods of training were provided prior to and throughout the implementation process. The differences in teachers learning styles might account for differences in what training was deemed most or least effective. Much of the training during the first implementation year took place at the beginning of the school year, which was a time when teachers had many other things on their minds. An administrator suggested, "I don't know that you can ever get enough training until you're thrown into it and you have to do it yourself. And I think that's where the most knowledge comes through" (810A2).

Positive feeling about training received. A veteran teacher said he or she thought "the in-service was very good, and it was kind of just trial and error, like so many things are. Then we just asked questions and had help" (128C220+). Another veteran teacher found the support of the administration most helpful, saying, "I guess what was most helpful was the principal and assistant principal would come in and say this needs to go in your notebook [document log].… That was probably the most beneficial of any of it" (1C120+). Another teacher felt that "going through and look[ing] at what the state expected to see in those [standards in the document log] was probably the most beneficial" (1C120+).

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Negative feelings about training received. As expected, some teachers, who sat through the same training experiences, found them as ineffective. One teacher felt the training was not very effective because, "it still left a lot of questions" (1514C1520). The initial training may have seemed confusing because it was so much information to take in at one time, again at the beginning of the school year. One teacher said that initially he or she felt the training was, "to be very honest, very confusing. I just felt like it was overwhelming and confusing…" (412C2520). A non-continuing contract teacher shared that "maybe the least effective [training] would have been…the Power Point and sitting down as…an entire school and then trying to teach us [teachers] that way because we are all so different" (137N2).

Relationships with administrators and peers. A major change, such as the implementation of a new evaluation system, could affect the relationships of those people involved in the change. Without having a full understanding of the new system, teachers might become suspicious or fearful about what the new evaluation system would mean for them. A major change could bring people together. With the evaluation system, more conferencing could lead to better relationships between administration and teachers and more collaboration between teachers could improve relationships among peers.

Relationships with administrators. It appeared that many teachers had a strong, positive relationship with their administrators prior to the new evaluation system. Most spoke about the strength of that relationship throughout the implementation process, indicating that the process itself did not have an effect on their relationship. A non-continuing contract teacher, who did not know the administrators as well as a veteran teacher might, said,

> I felt it [my relationship with administrators] was very good. I feel like we have the
>
> benefit of the small town community feel to it. I feel it would be different elsewhere, but

I just felt completely comfortable going to either of my administrators…anytime I needed

help…. (106N1)

A veteran teacher agreed, "I think I have a very good relationship with the principal or assistant

principal. We can talk. I can go in and talk with them about my concerns, and they listen…"

(128C220+). Another teacher said, "I don't think it [the new evaluation system] has changed

that [how I interact with my administrators] any either. I hate to think that any evaluation system

would change that relationship" (1514C1520). Another new teacher was not negative about his

or her relationship with administration, but felt that he or she "[hasn't] been around the block

long enough. As a new teacher, I don't have enough of a prior relationship with them to really

say for sure" (53N2). This same teacher added, "But yeah, it's [my relationship my

administrators is] a positive relationship. They are cool" (53N2).

The administrators in the building spoke positively about their relationships with teachers

as well. One administrator said, "I think it's [the evaluation system is] giving you and the

teachers opportunity and time to be able to do these things [have uncomfortable conversations],

and build a stronger relationship of trust and respect" (810A2).

Relationships with peers. The implementation of the new evaluation system could affect

a change in the relationships between peers. In some cases, peers could turn to one another and

build a stronger relationship, one of support and understanding. A non-continuing contract

teacher explained, "It [my relationship with my peers] was very positive…they are a great team.

I think it [the evaluation system] helped us…to be able to get closer…" (106N1). A veteran

teacher shared, "Well [collaboration] may be one of the positives of it [the evaluation system].

…We work together more" (1C120+). In other cases, some teachers may not have felt that they

had anyone to turn to, and the impact of the change could have made them feel more isolated.

Another non-continuing contract teacher had a different experience. He or she shared, "[My fellow teachers] still don't respect us [as specialty teachers]. I'm like Rodney Dangerfield in that school. No respect. No respect. We are viewed as the babysitters just because we don't have classrooms to ourselves" (53N2). Another teacher in a special situation, meaning a non-core classroom, felt he or she could not comment on collaboration, saying, "I can't tell you a whole lot about that because there is nobody to collaborate with" (2C120+). Some teachers found it difficult to talk about their changes in relationships because they found themselves in a new position, unfamiliar with those with whom they were working. One teacher changed grade levels both years of the implementation process. He or she said, "It's hard to say [if there have been changes in my relationships with my peers]. I worked with brand new people…this year and last year…and the year before. So, it's just different" (412C2520). Another teacher spoke about his or her relationship with immediate [grade-level] peers,

> We [my peers and I] have a great relationship…. I was saying to someone the other day,
> I am lucky to get to work with the group of people I get to work with because…we are
> pretty open with each other and we are good to ask for help…. (1514C1520)

This same teacher had an interesting comment about the peers outside of her grade level, however: "Outside of my immediate group of peers within the whole school, I just…bite my tongue and don't share unless they come specifically asking, because it's not always taken in a receptive manner" (1514C1520).

Another teacher felt that the implementation had a negative effect on teachers in the beginning of the process because "you have certain teachers that are just going to get their feathers ruffled no matter what you tell them to do if it's different" (412C2520). Another teacher, who served as an instructional specialist in the school said,

In my particular situation, I don't really have another person that does what I do to compare [to], so at this moment I don't have that issue [the evaluation system affecting my relationship with my peers]. But if there was someone there for me to compare to, I could see that as being a real issue. (1415C2520)

The administrators of the building felt that teachers were working together more and saw their relationships as positive. One administrator said, "Sometimes the only way to survive is to rely on your colleagues, but I think that they [teachers have] worked well together" (95A1).

Finally, one teacher noted a change in relationship with his or her peers, but not because of the evaluation system. This specialty teacher felt there was a change in relationship because of the standards of learning. This physical education teacher said,

If you want me to be honest…for the last couple of years, I feel like PE is not important. …Sometimes I feel like now I am just a babysitter. I guess there is so much emphasis on all the classroom things and standards of learning sometimes. It's [the emphasis is] not from the administrators…this is from my peers. (313C120+)

This teacher goes on to explain that because he or she feels the need to sell the physical education program to the core teachers, that "I have cried some [over changes in relationships with my peers] and I don't know, I just think everybody is stressed out" (313C120+).

Comparison of the new evaluation system to the old. Clearly, a new teacher evaluation system will have components similar to the previous system of evaluating teachers. On the other hand, a new system might have differences from the one used before. The new evaluation system did have some differences from the old system with the addition of the document log and adding student growth measures, specifically in the form of SMART goals. There were pieces of the new system that were the same or similar to the old system including

observations and conferencing. Teachers shared specific thoughts and feelings regarding the two evaluation systems.

Speaking about the differences in the evaluation systems, one teacher noted, "The way it's [the evaluation system] is different now…is there are 7 different components. In the past there were components, just these are [a] little more specific than they were in the past" (64C220+). Another teacher said,

I guess with the old [evaluation] system, it was looking at…how you [as a teacher] were professional, and how you were reacting with the students, and then your personal goals…. With this [new evaluation] system, I see it being more focused on specific numbers [now] that there is that data component. (1415C2520)

A veteran teacher remarked, "I don't know that it evaluates you as a teacher any better than some of the other evaluations that have come through have done" (1C120+).

Teachers recognized similarities as well. A veteran teacher remarked, "[the evaluation] is still subjective. Even though you are showing evidence of things, it's still pretty subjective" (1C120+). This teacher also spoke about the new components that teachers were already doing, "with the new system, it's Bloom's, Marzano – even though…you do those things anyway…" (1C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher did not see a difference in the conferencing between evaluation systems, saying,

I didn't think that there were any differences in the traditional [conferences] that we had in my first year teaching, which was the year before the white notebook [document log]. …[The evaluators] come in, they watch what you do, and then they pull you out and discuss what's going on there. It was similar to that. (53N2)

One difference this teacher pointed out however was that the "[conferences with administrators were based on observations]…because [the administrators] didn't really understand what was going on with the white notebook [document log]" (53N2).

One veteran teacher viewed the new system as an improvement over the old system saying, "I think these new evaluation tools that are used in the regular classroom observations and evaluations…are more comprehensive and more thorough, and therefore I think they will be more helpful because things are very detailed" (119C220+). An administrator agreed that the new evaluation system was an improvement, saying, "Nothing is perfect, but I think it's [the new evaluation system is] far better than anything we've ever had before" (810A2).

Recommendations Regarding the New Teacher Evaluation System

As with any initiative, some parts worked well and some parts could be improved. Those involved in the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system in this division shared some recommendations that they believed would help improve the process. Recommendations were made to help others, such as a teacher new to the division, as they go through the process for the first time; to improve the components or process of evaluation; to provide supports for teachers currently experiencing the new teacher evaluation system; and to help administrators as they implement the new teacher evaluation system.

Recommendations to help others. Participants were thoughtful about what might have helped them as they experienced the new teacher evaluation system for the first time. Their recommendations were: using a model, following the table of contents, understanding the process, making a system for yourself, working with peers, working with administrators, understanding that things will get in the way, and using the process for reflection. Each of these recommendations is shared below.

Using a model. Teachers from various experience levels thought a model would be helpful or offered suggestions for modeling the document log. A non-continuing contract teacher said, "I guess looking at it [the document log] from the beginning, it would have been nice to have a model to go by maybe for each grade level, what it should look like…" (137N2). The administrators tried to provide a framework, which was a document log with dividers and a table of contents for each section. A teacher shared one way of modeling, saying,

> With the permission of more experienced teachers who have already gone through the process, maybe let them [the new teachers] look through their [the experienced teachers'] folder with their binder [document log] to see what the section looks like, and what's expected in…[each] section, because you just really have no idea….It's so much easier to have something to go by. (1514C1520)

Another teacher suggested that a new teacher look at several document logs from the same grade level, "and then adapt it [the document log] to your own style…. Adapt it [the document log] to what you are doing in your classroom, [and] use it to showcase…some of the things that you are able to do" (642320).

Following the table of contents. The table of contents provided by the administrators listed what was required and what was optional for each section of the document log. Most teachers spoke about reading and following the table of contents. A veteran teacher said, "Read the cover sheet, …follow exactly what the cover sheet says, and keep your data. …I would just tell someone who is starting to read there [the table of contents], just study that log cover sheet, because that's basically how I got mine put together" (1C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher found value in the table of contents as well. He or she said, "I would probably give them

[a new teacher] that bulleted list that [the Director of Testing] gave me where it showed specific things that needed to [be] plug[ged] in" (53N2).

In addition to simply having the table of contents, one teacher felt that the contents of the document log should be thoroughly reviewed with administration. He or she said, "I think it would be helpful for the administrator to sit down with a new teacher at the beginning of the year, and really go through what each section [of the document log] requires…" (1514C1520). An administrator agreed that there must be an understanding of what the teacher will be responsible for, saying, "Look at that evaluation tool. Look what you're going to be held accountable for, and continue to develop yourself and think about it" (810A2).

Understanding the process. There were many new components to the new evaluation system that confused even experienced teachers, not to mention a novice teacher. One of the administrators suggested mentoring the new teacher and helping guide him or her through the process. This administrator said, "I'm their mentor teacher….   [I'll] walk through it with them step-by-step, and talk to them about…the information that they need to gather and how they need to gather it" (810A2). A veteran teacher stressed that understanding as well, saying, "I would say [to the new teacher] if you could, …really, really get a clear understanding at the beginning of the year of what you need to put in that portfolio [document log]" (2C120+). He or she added, "I would say have a very clear understanding of [the evaluation system]…" (2C120+).

Making a system for yourself. As teachers experienced the process, they found ways to systematically cope with the new evaluation system, and they included these as suggestions for new teachers. One teacher suggested, "Document everything, keep a copy of everything, everything that they[administrators] hand you and say, 'Put this in your notebook,' make sure you put it in your notebook" (711C1520). Another teacher recommended, "Whatever makes it

easier for you, make your system with those file folders or sticking it in the notebook [document log] as it comes…" (1C120+).

Some teachers were very honest in their recommendations, having experienced feelings of stress going through the process themselves. A non-continuing contract teacher provided some advice on controlling stress related to compiling the document log, saying:

I will just say [to another teacher] not to stress over it [the document log] too much…. It will get done…. Just…use time wisely. Like I said, I used snow days--that was a good time to just…work on [it]…. (106N1)

Planning and pacing oneself seemed to be recurring themes in the recommendations. Another teacher said, "I think having that planning at the beginning of the year, and knowing what I need to be gathering as the year goes…on would be a great benefit" (1514C1520). A veteran teacher reminded, "I would say that it's going to take some …time to formulate your goals, to get your steps in mind, to use the data, and it is going to take some time. Just bank some time for that…" (119C220+).

Most of the recommendations offered by these now-experienced teachers in the evaluation process were made in an effort to alleviate the stress they experienced. One teacher suggested, "Set attainable goals, but don't stress too much about it…. I…think I put way too much stress on it at the beginning of the year, …and honestly, by the end I was just…exhausted with it…" (711C1520). Another teacher spoke about how one might cope with the stress of the new evaluation system, saying,

And the other thing is fake it until you make it…. Don't stress about the notebook [document log]. Nobody is going to fire you over a piece of paper. You might get a straight face on your permanent record, but it's better to have a frowny face…because at

the end of the day you are there to teach the kids, not to worry about shuffling a bunch of paper. So try your best, use the teaching, and if you still struggle, go get one-on-one help. Don't worry about it. We don't get paid enough to worry about it. (53N2)

A non-continuing contract teacher offered this advice,

[At] first it's a little difficult. You are not going to know exactly what to do, but don't worry because the next year is going to be a lot better…. It looks like a lot, but it's going to help you a lot in the long run. (137N2)

For some teachers, organization was the key to their process. An experienced teacher advised, "Be organized" (1514C1520). A non-continuing contract teacher provided details on what that organization might entail, saying,

[Make] sure that you keep everything that you are given. Keep copies of data that you are given and test results and pacing guides and things like that. …Keep that all in one place, no matter which direction you go. If you do it [your document log] online, or if you do it just paper copies, just make sure you hang on to everything. (106N1)

Working with peers. Throughout the process, teachers found it helpful to ask questions of their peers or work together on various components of the evaluation system. One teacher spoke of how he or she helped others,

I have just taken from the ideas…that they [administrators] told us we can put in it [the document log]…. I have helped some of my colleagues when they get stressed out over it. They will say, 'What does your notebook look like?' and I will say, 'Well, this is what I have put in it.' (64C220+)

A veteran teacher remarked, "I know there is more conversation about the evaluation because before…there would be no need really to discuss anything with a colleague about your

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evaluation" (119C220+). He or she continued, "Now, …there is a lot more sharing…just for the support and the help, I think" (119C220+). An administrator recognized the importance of working with others, saying, "Team yourself up with your grade level and your mentor teacher, and walk through it and learn" (810A2). The other administrator said, "They're [teachers are] working together a lot more on putting the notebooks [document logs] together. So we have a lot of collaboration…" (95A1).

Working with administrators. Teachers provided recommendations for new teachers as to how their administrators might be of assistance to them. A veteran teacher suggested that a new teacher "talk about your goal with your administrator…" (1C120+). Other recommendations from teachers involving administrators focused on conferencing. A veteran teacher offered, "Ask a lot of questions during your conference. Don't be afraid to…[ask questions]…. If you disagree, if you did something or…didn't do something that they [your evaluators] say you should have discussed, don't be afraid of that" (2C120+). Another teacher suggested more involvement with the principal during the conference. He or she said, "Maybe a little more with the principal involved and the conference…going over certain things…" (412C2520).

Understanding that things will get in the way. Another recommendation that teachers offered from experience was to tell a new teacher not to stress, that life will happen, and other things will get in the way. One teacher described her process:

[The beginning of the year is] the bad time of year to try to do something like that [work on the evaluation system]. I think that's what happened to most of us, I know it's what happened to me. We had the faculty meeting, …and all of a sudden school starts and it's

really hard to remember…. So you don't look at it again until somebody says, 'Okay, it's

time for your observation….' (2C120+)

Another teacher confirmed, "[the document log] fell down the list and I…work[ed] on it more

towards the end [of the year]…" (1415C2520).

Knowing that things will get in the way, several teachers made the recommendation to

work on it as often as you can. A non-continuing contract teacher spoke from his or her

experience saying, "Do not wait until the last minute because it becomes a pain" (53N2).

Another teacher explained,

When it comes time to do my next one [document log], I know that I need to start a little

sooner gathering all my stuff and not be a procrastinator and put it off to the end of [the]

last six weeks before they [my evaluators] ask for it and then start frantically gathering….

(1514C1520)

Another teacher confirmed, "More importantly just make sure you are putting what you need [in

the document log] as you go along so at the end it's not just a big time for stress. …You don't

need that at the end of the year anyway" (412C2520). One administrator spoke to the idea of

procrastination,

Maybe that's something I would change. You know, having the teachers be more

proactive about…having certain things in there [document log] that they could be

working on…instead of wait[ing] until the very last minute to get the whole thing put

together…. It is easy to do that-- to procrastinate, because you [have]…so many other

things going on. (810A2)

Using the process for reflection. Many of the participants made suggestions to use the

evaluation system in a positive way, specifically for reflection as it was intended to help teachers

become better at what they do. One teacher's hope was "that teachers will use it [the evaluation system], …as part of their teaching to reflect and understand [student] growth" (412C2520). One veteran teacher agreed, "I think that [focusing on being reflective] would help a lot" (2C120+). This belief was shared by an administrator, who said, "Be reflective about everything that you see and everything that you do…" (810A2).

The idea that you will only get out of it what you put into it was presented by a veteran teacher. He or she said, "Apply [the evaluation system] in a positive way. It should be so that everybody is feeling good about what they are doing. …It's used as a positive tool" (119C220+). This teacher also remarked,

> I think everyone needs to be getting around to thinking that way [that the evaluation
>
> system is helpful]. I think a lot of people think it's something that's going to hurt you,
>
> …and it shouldn't be that way. …Maybe [it is] just the climate of education. I think
>
> that that's the way it is, and it shouldn't be. It's [the evaluation system is] used to help
>
> teachers. …That's the way it should be used. (119C220+)

Recommendations regarding evaluation components and the overall process. Some teachers made suggestions for specific components of the evaluation system, such as SMART goals, and the overall process. Suggestions for the overall process were using the process for improvement, simplifying the process, making it user-friendly, using a file-folder or a checklist, and being clearer in expectations.

Recommendations regarding SMART goals. The recommendations on SMART goals reflected teacher concerns about the weight assigned to the student progress goal, the level at which the student progress goal should be set, the consequences for not meeting the student progress goal, and the complexity of the goal.

An experienced teacher thought that too much weight was assigned to the student progress portion of the evaluation. He or she said,

There's a whole lot of weight that goes on the SMART goal, and that students pass it, the way the system is set up now. I think if [I could change anything about the evaluation system], it [the weight for each indicator would be] more equally distributed and not a huge percentage looking at that one number. (1415C2520)

The consequences of not meeting the SMART goal were expressed by teachers. One teacher who questioned the value attached to the student growth standard, expressed concern about what would happen if the students did not meet the set goal. He or she declared,

I think we could have some flexibility on board [with the evaluation system]. …I want to be able to set high goals for my kids and not think that I'm going to be punished because I set the bar high and that my kids didn't reach [it]. I don't want to be the person that sets a low bar knowing that my kids can reach that low bar. I want to push it a little higher, but I don't want to think that I'm going to be punished because I pushed it. (1415C2520)

The level of the SMART goal was of concern to several teachers. A veteran teacher expressed this concern, saying, "If I could change anything in the process, maybe [I would] make my goals not so high where I want so many of them [students] to improve, maybe make my goals less…" (313C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher agreed, "My advice would be not to do too much, keep it [the goal] simple in terms of the sample to show growth. Don't do an entire grade level, …maybe 20 kids max, and keep the goal really simple" (53N2).

Overall recommendations for change in the process. Several recommendations were made for change in the evaluation system overall. One experienced teacher said, "I would like to see [the document log]…use[d] more formatively for us as teachers, and not just, 'Here is the

end, this is what it is, good job, way to go. Here is your score, you are fine'" (1514C1520). This teacher continued, "More feedback as far as ways to improve, using it [the evaluation system] as an improvement tool as much as an evaluation tool" (1514C1520). These are recommendations that can be made by administrators through conferencing.

Four participants recommended ways to simplify the process or at least suggested that it should be made simpler. An experienced teacher said,

I know it [the evaluation system] needed a change to become more student-centered, and

I wish I had ideas on how to make it better. …I don't really know what could make it

better other than definitely getting rid of a lot of things in the portfolio [document log].

(711C1520)

Another teacher referred to simplifying the document log, saying, "I am not sure there will be anything that I would change other than some of the pieces that there really is no data for. I don't know if we actually need them…" (64C220+). A veteran teacher said, "Remembering now what things did go in [the document log] and what may not need to go in and to make it simpler instead of so long and drawn out" (128C220+). This teacher continued, "I just like to see it…kept a little more simple and maybe a little more clear cut" (128C220+). One veteran teacher questions the reality of this suggestion, saying, "I don't know that really a teacher could change anything, …like to simplify it somehow, but we are not into simplifying anymore" (1C120+).

Along those same lines, some teachers felt the process, and more specifically the document log, should be made more user-friendly. A veteran teacher said,

As far as the big portfolio [document log], I think it's a lot of record keeping, a lot of data

to keep up with, and I am wondering, is this directly impacting the students? …Maybe it

could be streamlined a little bit and be more user-friendly, and maybe that will happen as

time goes on because it is new. (119C220+)

Another veteran teacher did not offer a suggestion, but said, "I don't know, make it easier, just

make it user-friendly to use it" (2C120+). Two teachers felt that a file folder might help. One

veteran teacher said, "[The evaluation process] should not have a notebook [document log]. It

should have a file folder…" (2C120+). Another teacher thought the file folder would help keep

things in place. This teacher explained, "Make sure you have a folder, and until you put

everything in your main evaluation notebook [document log], make sure you keep everything in

your folder, so it does not get lost" (313C120+). Another recommendation to make the process

more user-friendly was made by a veteran teacher who said, "I think a simple checklist of things

that you could…just [check] yes, I did that, I did that, I did that, would be just as effective as

filling up a portfolio [document log]" (2C120+).

Some teachers felt that the overall process or at least the expectations of the evaluation

system could be made clearer. An experienced teacher said, "I guess [if I could change anything

in the process, it would be] just the understanding of what was needed" (412C2520). A non-

continuing contract teacher said, "Maybe the one thing I would…change is some of…the

different standards and what they [administrators] tell you …go[es] into each one [in the

document log]. They could just be a little more clear" (106N1).

The only person who did not think that anything needed to be changed with the

evaluation system was one of the administrators. This administrator said, "I really don't know

that I would change anything as far as the [evaluation] process is concerned…because I think it's

just a really good tool. I think our system has done a great job putting this together" (810A2).

Recommendations for supports for teachers currently experiencing the evaluation system. In addition to recommendations for helping new teachers with the evaluation system, teacher participants offered suggestions to help those who were already experiencing the process. These recommendations include offering on-going support, retraining teachers over time, offering more conferencing opportunities, and offering more specific training opportunities.

Offering on-going support. Almost half of the participants recommended some form of on-going support for teachers during the evaluation process. One teacher said, "I think it would be useful to have more check points [in the evaluation process]. 'This is kind of what you need to have up to this point.' …So maybe just more check points and guidance along the line" (1514C1520). A veteran teacher suggested, "a refresher course, [a] little refresher seminar probably would be helpful because very little was said about the notebooks [document logs] this year [the second year of the process]" (1C120+). A non-continuing contract teacher felt she had this support in the form of her mentor. This teacher explained, "Definitely, I think, having a mentor was very helpful. …I could have gone to my administrators, and they would have help[ed] with anything, but she [my mentor] was right there…" (106N1).

Retraining teachers over time. A few teachers thought it would be important to receive more training over time, especially for those teachers who experienced the process early. One teacher explained,

> We were all learning together, so I think it would be beneficial to go back and say, "Okay, we have been through this a couple of years. Here are the things that we [administrators] are looking for. Here is what we would like to see," and maybe retrain. (1514C1520)

A veteran teacher recognized the need for additional training even though the division was starting its third year of the process. He or she suggested, "Some in-service during the work days and maybe for veteran teachers if [they] feel like [they] need in-service. It could be optional, but continue to offer that …help…just for anyone who needs help with their notebook [document log]" (119C220+). Another teacher saw this as an opportunity to help new teachers and retrain experienced teachers. This teacher suggested, "I think maybe each year, because we will have new teachers…have maybe an hour session once again to review older teachers…" (313C120+).

Offering more conferencing opportunities. While there were already conferences that took place around each observation and the final evaluation conference, some teachers believed more conferences would be helpful. A non-continuing contract teacher said,

It would be helpful to have some sort of mid-year meeting with all those things [components of the document log], especially teachers who are new at it, just to…go over again, now that you have experience, 'This is what we [administrators] are talking about when we say this.'(106N1)

A veteran teacher agreed,

Throughout the year I…get a little relaxed. They [administrators] might want to…maybe check more than once in the middle of the year, because I guess I pretty much get relaxed from when I make my goal to when they check me off…in the middle of the year. Then I get relaxed again from the middle of the year to…the end. … If every six weeks, we [teachers] turn in a little summary [of] what we have done and…[that] we are seeing improvement, that might help. I may regret I said that. (313C120+)

Offering more specific training opportunities. A variety of training opportunities were provided, but teachers gave recommendations for more specific training that they would find helpful. An experienced teacher offered, "To me, I felt like it [the evaluation training] should be more about the information inside [the document log], just maybe being a little more clear cut with how to go about doing everything" (412C12320). Some small-group meetings were held, and more were suggested. One teacher felt that "maybe having…follow-ups in smaller groups with people…[that] have things in common…. If this happened, I missed it" (1415C2520). Teachers recognized the differences in grade levels and specialty areas and thought that smaller group meetings tailored to each group might be helpful. A veteran teacher suggested, "I think maybe they [administrators] need to meet with each grade, each grade is different…" (313C120+). This teacher continued, "Then definitely [administrators] meeting with the specialty teachers is a plus because ours is a little different…than the [regular] classroom" (313C120+). Finally, this same veteran teacher shared this suggestion: "I could use a class on technology on how to do charts, on how to do graphs…that work with our evaluation system, so I don't have to pay the technology teacher" (313C120+).

Recommendations to help administrators as they implement the evaluation system. Teachers and administrators offered recommendations that might be useful for administrators as they implemented the new teacher evaluation system currently or in the future with a new teaching staff. These recommendations included: Giving honest feedback, being supportive of teachers, providing more time, scoring document logs and evaluations as a team, being flexible with due dates for the individual components, getting into the classroom more, and re-evaluating the process. These recommendations are shared below.

Giving honest feedback. Some advice given by teachers for administrators would end up serving them well. It seemed, from these comments that teachers were asking for more open, honest feedback and communication from administrators. A veteran teacher of students with severe disabilities said,

> The only thing I would say is…don't necessarily be afraid of my classroom… Go ahead and ask me why I do certain things, go ahead and say, 'You know, I have this suggestion.' I don't think they [my administrators] feel competent to make suggestions in my room, to be honest with you. It's just a whole different ball game from what those people [administrators] do know anything about. That would be the only thing …a little more interaction between the two [evaluators and teachers] I guess. (2C120+)

Another experienced teacher recommended "more constructive criticism…" (1514C1520).

An administrator recognized the need for more, or better, communication. This administrator said, "I think we need maybe [to] do a better job…working up and down between grade levels, and communicating concerns if there are concerns" (95A1). He or she continued, "And having positive conversation with teachers as much as you can" (95A1).

Being supportive of teachers. One way administrators could be supportive of teachers is to help them understand not to stress. One teacher suggested,

> I [would say] you don't need to stress about anyone. If there is something you don't understand, there are people, lots of people to help you, and that's what I [if I were an administrator] would…be sure to tell them [teachers], that it's not as scary as it appears. (119C220+)

A veteran teacher confirmed, "Once again, it helps when the administrators tell you not to stress over it [the evaluation process]" (313C120+).

An administrator saw his or her role as one of support of teachers just by being available to them. This administrator said,

I mean I think they [teachers] come for help more, and…I tried to make sure that I'm around to answer any question that they might have regarding this information as to collecting their evidence and their data [for their document logs]. I guess just maybe making yourself more available. (810A2)

A non-continuing contract teacher suggested more individual help, saying, "Maybe…just explicitly sitting down with us [teachers] and telling us exactly what needs to be in there [the document log], what exactly they are looking for…because…we are all so different…[and] we all need to put different things in there" (137N2).

Another way administrators could support teachers would be to foster their relationships with one another. One administrator recognized that "everybody is working towards the same goal, …and if they [teachers] can work together…trying to build that camaraderie and build that dedication to the craft of teaching…" (810A2). He or she added,

That's a big part of my job [as an administrator]…to…foster that…relationship. And if they [teachers] continue to do that, that makes you feel good about the school that you walk in to. And I think that changes the climate of your school and changes the culture of your school. (810A2)

Providing more time. There are so many hours in a day, but if there were a way to provide more time for the process, it would be accepted. One administrator did not have many recommendations regarding the new evaluation system except for providing more time. This administrator said, "Oh, my goodness. That's [the time it took to complete the process is] one of the areas that I do think we need to figure out a way to work on…" (810A2). This administrator

mentioned the recommendation of more time on four occasions, realizing the time spent by both teachers and administrators. This administrator acknowledged that "so much is based on that seventh standard [student data], and you've got to wait until the end of the year to get it [that data], it's really hard. So it takes a long time…" (810A2), concluding from his or her office, the amount of time involved makes the evaluation "a big, big challenge" (810A2).

Scoring document logs and evaluations as a team. The administrator that saw time as a challenge provided one possible solution to the issue of time, suggesting, "Beyond that [having more time], I think working as a team with someone, maybe scoring them [teachers' evaluations] as a team…" (810A2). Apparently this administrative team did work on their evaluations together in the new evaluation system. This administrator shared, "That's one thing [scoring teacher evaluations as a team] that [the other administrator] and I did and I think it was nice because we were able to sit together and talk about it and compare evidence" (810A2). A non-continuing contract teacher perhaps did not understand that administrators worked together in the scoring of final evaluations. This teacher said,

> I think it's really hard for them [evaluators] sometimes because we have two principals who look at our notebooks [document logs] depending on who is evaluating us. Last year I had one person looking at my notebook and this year I had another person looking at my notebook, and I think some teachers have found it difficult because they [administrators] may have different standards so it would be very helpful to have one person do it throughout the year[s] than…switching each year because there are different standards maybe for us. (137N2)

Being flexible with due dates for the individual components. It is not possible to add more hours to the day, but one suggestion was that maybe the individual due dates for the

components of the evaluation system could be changed. A veteran teacher hoped for a later due date, but realized the problems that might cause for administration, saying,

[For] full evaluation, we wouldn't have to turn it [the document log] in quite so soon as we did [on] April 1st, but then again if you [the administrator has] got to look at them all, I don't know when they [would] find time to look at them all. (313C120+)

An administrator thought about changing the timing as well, saying,

I don't know how we would do it, but if there was a way to be able to fix the timing where it's spread out though the year [speaking about having to do so many observations]. It's just…sometimes you do get overwhelmed and you don't feel lucky to do a good enough job with each one of them. …If there was a way that we could figure out how to space out the evaluations [observations] and make them a little bit more meaningful instead of trying to do three or four [a] day and not getting…really good detail and good conversation. (95A1)

Getting into the classroom more. One administrator felt that one way to improve the process would be for administrators to get into the classrooms more. This suggestion was made to help a new administrator with the process, "I think for any new administrator…getting them into the classrooms would be the biggest thing I would suggest to help them to get started [in the new evaluation process]…" (95A1). This administrator continued, "But getting into the classroom as much as you [administrator] can and seeing what's going on in the classroom, and doing those…walkthroughs and getting them to teachers…" (95A1) were viewed as an important part of the process for existing administrators.

Re-evaluating the process. An administrator recognized the need to re-evaluate the evaluation system over time. This person realized,

There [are] still some small tweaks we can make [to the evaluation system]…to make it better, but once we [the division] get another year or two on our belts, I'm sure we'll come back and evaluate it again and see [if] this is being productive and see where we can go from there. (95A1)

He or she added, "That's [reviewing the evaluation system is] what I like about [this division] and what we've done with the evaluation system…we're always looking at it. Can we improve it? What can we tweak…to make it better for everybody?" (95A1).

Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 included the results of this study, presented in the words of the participants. The researcher told the stories of the experiences of teachers and administrators throughout the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system. A summary of findings is included in the following chapter along with conclusions, discussion, and the reflections of the researcher.

Chapter 5

Summary, Tentative Conclusions, Discussion, Recommendations for Practice and

Additional Research, and Reflections

This chapter has six sections. The first section is a summary of the case study. The second and third sections are the researcher's tentative conclusions and discussion of the findings based on the data from the study. The fourth section is recommendations to the school division where the study took place, which could extend to other divisions seeking to implement a new teacher evaluation system. The fifth section includes recommendations for additional research. Finally, reflections on the study are provided by the researcher, including an introduction to the Legg Model of Change.

Summary

The purpose of this case study was to understand how teachers and administrators experienced the new teacher evaluation system used in an elementary school in a small school division in southwest Virginia. In-depth interviews of 13 teachers and two administrators were conducted. Data were collected and presented on many aspects of the new evaluation system.

The implementation of the new teacher evaluation system in this small school division in southwest Virginia commenced on July 1, 2012, a date mandated by the Virginia Department of Education. The researcher, in her role as a principal in the school system, was familiar with all aspects of this evaluation system and how it was to be implemented. To gain approval to conduct research on this topic in this school system, a letter was sent to the school superintendent. Following his approval, an email was sent to prospective participants asking if they would agree to participate in the study. Data were collected through structured interviews by an outside interviewer. A company's services were purchased to transcribe interview data.

The researcher analyzed the transcript data using the constant comparative method (Maykut &
Morehouse, 2002).

Two primary research questions were used to guide this study: (1) How do teachers
experience the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system? and (2) How do
administrators experience the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system? Research
and interview questions were formed using defined domains: affective, relationships between
administrators and teachers, relationships between teachers and peers, time, outcomes, learning,
and other. Participants' responses to interview questions were used to identify the major
findings of the study and to guide the researcher's tentative conclusions about the
implementation of the new teacher evaluation system as it was experienced by participating
teachers and administrators.

Tentative Conclusions

The conclusions of this study were based on the data received from the 15 interviews.
The conclusions are tentative because they are based on a small group of individuals
experiencing an evaluation system in one school division. These conclusions will likely change
over time as the evaluation system is accepted by those involved and the process becomes a part
of the norm. Given these data, the conclusions that follow are offered by the researcher. The
conclusions are listed thematically. The major conclusion derived from the study was that
teachers and administrators experienced the implementation of the evaluation system in various
ways. This conclusion was based on the range of experiences of the administrator and teacher
participants regarding all aspects of the new teacher evaluation system. Those experiences of
teachers and administrators are presented in this section. Teacher participants were evaluated
during one of the first two years of the new evaluation system's implementation, and those

teachers were grouped into three experience categories. Additionally, both administrators in the school participated in this study's interview process. Conclusions regarding the experiences of teachers and administrators are detailed below. Conclusions are grouped within seven thematic sections: the introduction to the evaluation system and the training involved, the purpose and components of the evaluation system, the responsibilities of those involved in the evaluation system, the uncertainty regarding the evaluation system, the outcomes of the evaluation system, the thoughts and feelings regarding the evaluation system, and the recommendations offered as a result of the evaluation system.

The introduction to the evaluation system and the training involved. Several conclusions were made by the researcher involving the introduction and training involved with the new evaluation system.

The implementation of the new evaluation system was expected. Teachers and administrators spoke of being familiar with the new teacher evaluation system prior to its implementation. Through both formal and informal discussions with members of the evaluation committee, building-level administrators, and the Director of Testing, participants were expecting a new system to be implemented. Pre-implementation activities were teacher group discussions, a division-wide meeting which provided an overview of the new system to staff, and building-level faculty discussions.

Many training opportunities involving the teacher evaluation system were provided for teachers and administrators. Training for the various components of the evaluation system took place at various times throughout the implementation year. All participants spoke about one of the beginning-of-the-year activities. Central office and building-level administrators planned a district-wide in-service for the beginning of the 2012-2013 academic school year where the

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document log was introduced and reviewed. A document log table of contents was provided for

teachers to use throughout the year as a reminder of what evidence was required and what

evidence might be optional for each of the seven standards of the evaluation system. Teachers

new to the division experienced a smaller, new-teacher in-service prior to this larger whole-

group discussion. Teachers spoke about building-level faculty meetings, small-group or grade-

level meetings, and one-on-one support either in person or by e-mail with their administrators or

the Director of Testing. Administrators spoke about their own training and support meetings

where the evaluation system was discussed.

   Teachers had differing opinions as to what training was most effective, with a majority

of people preferring the one-on-one opportunities that were provided for them. Most teachers

spoke positively about the one-on-one new teacher evaluation training opportunities in which

they participated. Building-level administrators, the Director of Testing, and other teachers

(including mentors) offered assistance in the form of personal meetings or e-mails. Most

teachers preferred this one-on-one method because it was customized to their particular needs,

whether it was a question about the document log or how to write a SMART goal.

   The implementation of the new evaluation system in this division was overwhelming

for many at first, but attitudes appeared to improve over time. The researcher expected that

teachers might be hesitant or have reservations about being evaluated at first considering the new

evaluation system was such a big change from the previous teacher evaluation system. Some

teachers doubted that the new system would be more beneficial than the old one. A veteran

teacher wondered if the new evaluation system would be an improvement over its predecessor.

Some people had their suspicions and tended to be negative at first. Finding success in the

system could have helped cause a change in their attitudes. When asked if he or she would

change anything about the process, a veteran teacher replied that she did not know how a teacher could affect change anywhere in the process. This attitude appeared to change as time went on and teachers became more familiar with the new evaluation system. In fact, this same veteran teacher admitted to learning from the new system when he or she stated that the new system had helped teachers focus on the need to have students performing.

The purpose and components of the evaluation system. Teachers and administrators identified the purposes and components of the new evaluation system as they understood them.

Accountability was viewed as a purpose of the new teacher evaluation system by both teachers and administrators. Teachers and administrators spoke about teachers being aware of what they were doing in the classroom and being held accountable for their performance and the performance of their students. Several teachers spoke specifically about being accountable and held to standards as in other professions. Accountability was viewed negatively by some teachers. These teachers felt that the purpose of the evaluation system was to find and get rid of bad teachers.

Facilitating teacher and administrator instructional improvement was viewed as a purpose of the new teacher evaluation system. Both teachers and administrators viewed the new teacher evaluation system as one which fostered their learning and professional growth. Administrators, as instructional leaders, were expected to help teachers identify instructional strengths and weaknesses and offer recommendations to help teachers improve. Many teachers viewed the evaluative process as a time for personal reflection related to their professional development. Discussions with both peers or administrators were noted as contributing to the improvement of teachers' practice. Administrators recognized their ability to learn from the process through their conversations with teachers. When one teacher was initially dismayed by

her overall evaluation score, administrators realized that they truly needed to emphasize that this new system was based on a three-point scale rather than the older four-point scale. This teacher thought her new overall evaluation score was much lower than she had been accustomed with the older evaluation system.

Some purposes identified by teachers and administrators aligned with purposes expressed by the division. Most people would agree with the division's primary stated purpose of the evaluation system which was to foster student achievement. Some of the teachers and administrators recognized this indirectly by suggesting that improvement in the work of the teachers and administrators would result in the growth of students. The purposes as expressed by teachers and administrators did align with the expressed purposes of the division, not word for word, but in concept.

Teachers and administrators identified some new components of the teacher evaluation system. There were new components to the new teacher evaluation system that were noted by both teachers and administrators. These identified new evaluation components were: the document log and the document log table of contents and teachers' being expected to set student and personal goals (SMART goals), which included the use of student growth data. Another new component identified by participants was that the final evaluation was scored differently than it had been in the past, using the seven standards and student progress component. Some teachers were uncertain if the new system had six or seven standards, but all teachers understood that the document log was where they collected evidence for each of the standards.

Teachers and administrators identified components of the new teacher evaluation system that were similar to components in the previous evaluation system. Selected components of the new evaluation system were similar to the evaluation system used formerly.

Components identified as similar were: classroom observations, instructional walk-throughs, and conferencing about observations and evaluations. All participants were familiar with the concept of scheduled classroom observation.

One similarity between the old evaluation system and the new one was that teachers and administrators still spent quality time conferencing about teaching, learning, professional development, and teacher professionalism. Conferences were often focused on observations of teacher instruction. One teacher mentioned the pre-observation conference, which is not a requirement of the new teacher evaluation system. All teachers and administrators spoke about the post-observation and evaluation conferences, but some used the terms interchangeably. The post-observation conference took place as a follow up to the observation. Finally, a meeting took place at the end of the year to review the overall performance of those teachers on full evaluation (final evaluation conference).

Teachers viewed the document log in one of two ways: helpful to them or not meaningful at all. Some teachers spoke about the organization of the document log and explained that it helped them keep up with their student data and other materials. Some spoke about how the document log helped them to be more reflective. Other teachers stated that the document log was a waste of time to them and often referred to the collection of data as stuffing the white notebook. For them, it was just another task that they had to check off their lists. It was even noted that this process of completing the document log could easily make a teacher look stronger instructionally than he or she might truly be.

The responsibilities of those involved in the evaluation system. The evaluation system brought forth new responsibilities for both teachers and administrators. Some responsibilities of

the new system were carried over from the previous evaluation system, and were not unfamiliar to teachers and administrators.

The teachers and administrators identified and described new responsibilities in the evaluation process. Teachers shared what they believed to be their administrators' responsibilities, which were mainly to support teachers in the process of implementing this new evaluation system. Administrators understood their role as helping teachers learn the process and providing them what they needed (data) to write their SMART goals. Administrators were expected to be instructional leaders and offer recommendations to help teachers become better at their craft. Administrators agreed, especially in that they were to help support teachers in the process. Administrators now had to review the SMART goals for every teacher and the document logs of those teachers who were on full evaluation. Administrators had to assign a score to the final evaluation, which was different from how evaluations were scored previously. Teachers now had to collect and organize data for their document logs as evidence of what they were doing to meet each of the seven standards. Both teachers and administrators had to understand the new process to successfully navigate this new evaluation system.

Teachers and administrators identified responsibilities associated with the new evaluation system which were similar to responsibilities of the previous evaluation system. Teachers and administrators both recalled responsibilities that were present in the old system. For example, administrators would observe teachers in the classroom setting and then the administrator(s) and the individual teacher would meet for a post-observation conference to discuss areas of commendation and concern. Teachers were expected to use administrator recommendations as a basis for improvement.

The uncertainty regarding the evaluation system. There were several areas of uncertainty in the new teacher evaluation system as identified by study participants.

Teachers experienced some uncertainty with both the implementation and the components of the evaluation system. With this new evaluation system and the changes it included, teachers experienced some uncertainty with either the implementation or the components of the system. Uncertainty is defined by the researcher as confusion or concern. At the beginning of the year, teachers were introduced to the entire new evaluation system, which was a lot for them to take in at one time. In the beginning, teachers seemed uncertain about the process as a whole. Regarding specific components of the new system, the document log seemed to cause the greatest teacher uncertainty. Many teachers were confused about what information or data to collect, where to put it in the document log, and then how long it stayed in the log before it was to be updated. Teachers were uncertain about writing SMART goals. They were unsure how to write a goal that met the five areas as required that would be both rigorous but attainable. Some teachers were confused about how the new evaluation system would be scored. The scale was different from that used in the previous system, and the new student growth standard was given a heavier weight than the other standards.

Specialty and special education teachers experienced uncertainty as to how they would be evaluated under the new evaluation system. Some teachers, such as specialty or special education teachers, did not fit into the mold of the evaluation system as easily as core teachers. These teachers of art, library, music, physical education, technology, along with special education teachers, had difficulty writing SMART goals for their student populations. Special education teachers had students often in the general education classroom and found it difficult to write a goal when they were there as a support for the student (or small group of students) and

the general education teacher was also responsible for instructing the entire class. A teacher of students with severe disabilities noted that this process did not work well for her purposes either. Specialty teachers were confused because it was their understanding they needed to write a SMART goal for all of their students, which for them included every child in the building. When they realized that they could select a group of students for which to write SMART goals, it was still difficult because they only saw each child once a week for 45 minutes. The art teacher was uncertain how to document growth when her content area is often seen as being so subjective to evaluate.

The outcomes of the evaluation system. Administrators and teachers identified anticipated (process and product outcomes) and unanticipated outcomes as a result of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system.

Process and product outcomes were identified by teachers and administrators. The educational process outcomes identified by teachers and administrators included the following: changes in teacher performance, changes in teacher instruction, changes in documentation, and changes in school climate. Product outcomes as identified by participants included these beliefs: the effect on student learning, personal value, and personal costs. Not every teacher believed the new teacher evaluation system affected their performance positively, but those who did believed that they were being more reflective and were more readily recognizing their own areas of strengths and weakness. Some teachers did not believe the system would cause these changes in their performance because they believed that they were doing these things anyway as a conscientious educator. Instruction certainly became data-driven, if it had not been previously. With the use of SMART goals, teachers had to collect and analyze data for student growth. The intent of the SMART goal was the identification of student weaknesses followed by re-teaching

or remediating according to student needs. Many teachers indicated that they paid more attention to the data because of the system, but one teacher questioned if it was because of the new teacher evaluation system or the fact that the school had been in school improvement. A product outcome that was prevalent in teacher responses was stress as a personal cost. Some teachers experience stress when being evaluated, but added to that was the stress brought by the uncertainty of whether or not they were implementing the system correctly.

Unanticipated outcomes were identified through the process by teachers and administrators. Unanticipated outcomes were identified by a teacher and an administrator. The teacher was a specialty teacher who now feels that with the increased accountability and focus on student data he or she must now purposefully promote her program as having value. An administrator worried that the increased accountability, with the focus on student data, would cause teachers to quit.

The thoughts and feelings regarding the evaluation system. The thoughts and feelings of teachers and administrators were the basis of this study and those spoken thoughts and feelings helped the researcher view the implementation of the new evaluation system more through their eyes as it was experienced by them.

Thoughts and feelings varied among teachers and administrators. A majority of teachers who had negative feelings in the beginning seemed to feel better about the process as time moved forward and they became more comfortable and confident in what they were doing. Many teachers thought the new system was just something else for them to do, or that the pendulum was swinging again, as is often heard in education. Many teachers remarked that the system was not as bad as they had anticipated it being in the beginning.

Thoughts and feelings remained the same among some teachers and administrators.
Some teachers who had negative feelings in the beginning maintained those feelings throughout
the process. They were unable to find value in the process, even after becoming more
comfortable with the expectations. Some teachers from start to finish felt that the document log
was worthless and the system was comparable to a witch hunt, trying to get rid of bad teachers.
Some teachers and both administrators had positive feelings in the beginning and maintained
those feelings throughout the process. Both administrators supported the process from the
beginning, and while they may have had suggestions for improvements in one area or another,
they were supportive in the end. Some teachers realized that the process was necessary and
looked at it with a positive attitude, one of allowing them to grow professionally from the start.

A majority of participants felt that the evaluation system consumed too much time.
Everyone who participated in the study mentioned the idea of time at one point or another. The
evaluation process was new and had new components that had to be learned, so it did take more
time than its predecessor had taken. It took time to collect and analyze data and organize the
document log. Several teachers felt this time took away from their instruction and even their
personal time at home, as it could not all be completed during school hours. Both teachers and
administrators noted that the evaluation system seemed to take less time during the second year
of implementation as teachers and administrators became more comfortable with the process.

***A majority of teachers and administrators were positive about their relationships with
each other throughout the process.*** Most teachers indicated a positive relationship with their
administrators, which they found helpful throughout the evaluation process. Teachers seemed
comfortable with their observations and the associated conferences with administrators. Most
teachers felt comfortable with the final evaluation conference. Teachers felt supported by their

administration.   One teacher spoke positively about both administrators but indicated a preference for one over the other because he or she had known them longer. One newer teacher expressed a negative thought concerning her relationship with her administrators. She acknowledged that she and her administrators possibly just had not had time, as yet, to establish a positive relationship.

Recommendations for participants in the evaluation process and for change in the evaluation system. Teachers and administrators provided recommendations that would be helpful to new teachers experiencing the process and to administrators as they continued to implement the process.

Teachers and administrators believed there were ways to make improvements upon the system so that the process might be easier for those involved. Many of the suggestions were intended to help teachers cope with change. Teacher and administrators recommended having patience with the process and reminding those being evaluated not to stress about it. For teachers, the immediate understanding of an entire evaluation system is a lot to expect at the beginning of a school year. Administrators believed that teachers should be patient with themselves and with one another because everyone was new to the process. Teachers and administrators believed that everyone must understand that, like life, things will get in the way, and they will have to find the time and a system that will work for them. Some specific recommendations were following a model, understanding the system and making it your own, and using the process for reflection. Other things that would be helpful for teachers as suggested by teachers involved additional, focused training and support. Recommendations were made to help administrators further support teachers. Examples included giving honest feedback to teachers and re-evaluating the process throughout its implementation.

Discussion

The conclusions are the researcher's interpretation of the data collected in 15 interviews regarding the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system. The researcher was involved with the implementation in another school within the same division so many aspects of the implementation were familiar. In this section, the following issues are discussed because they are of importance to the researcher: the effects of the new evaluation system versus the effects of the school improvement process, the implementation of the new evaluation system as it relates to change theory, the new evaluation system and its effect on professionalism of teachers, the new evaluation system and teachers who are not on the full evaluation cycle, and the new evaluation system and non-core classroom teachers.

The effects of the new evaluation system versus the effects of the school improvement process. One area of interest to the researcher was related to a question presented by an experienced teacher who wondered if the improvements or changes that were occurring within the school were a result of the new teacher evaluation system or because the participating elementary school was in school improvement (regarding state accreditation) during the time of the study.

While the elementary school was in school improvement, teachers were working to collect data to guide instructional decisions, making improvements in lesson planning, among other things, which were required by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a school in need of improvement. Many of these improvement strategies were parts of the new teacher evaluation system. Only one teacher, however, specifically asked if the changes he or she was experiencing in the school had to do with the new evaluation system or the fact that the school was in school improvement. Several other teachers commented that they were doing some of these things

anyway, like collecting data, but they did not indicate that might be because of the school improvement status. Thus, attributing any outcomes observed by the teachers and administrators in this study to the evaluation system is speculative. In studies such as this one, historic variables (other events occurring previously or at the same time) confound the relationships between the conditions studied and the potential outcomes of those conditions.

The implementation of the new evaluation system as it relates to change theory. The change process, as it has been described in the literature (Fullan, 2008; Marzano et al., 2005), was evident in the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. The implementation of the new teacher evaluation system is a second-order change (Marzano et al., 2005) for the division studied. Second-order changes are considerably different from what is expected. First-order changes are seemingly natural, taking place as one might expect. A second-order change does not take place naturally and can cause uncertainty because new skills must be learned and those experiencing the change must determine its value over time. It may not be evident from the start how a second-order change will lead to improvements. The new evaluation system was a second-order change because other components were added to the evaluation system that were considerably different from the past. Teachers were being asked to incorporate student growth data, collect evidence to show how they were meeting the seven standards outlined in the evaluation process, and store those data in a document log. All of these components were markedly different from the previous evaluation system, and teachers were uncertain of their value in the evaluation system.

Examples were present in this case study that related to Fullan's (2008) six secrets to change. The six secrets are: loving your employees, connecting peers with purpose, building

capacity, learning as one works, being transparent, and learning as a system. Each one of these is addressed below.

Loving your employees. Leaders must create conditions for employees to experience success. The leaders of this school saw it as their mission to make their teachers successful in the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. Administrators provided teachers with the opportunity to serve on the evaluation committee.   They planned division- and school-wide in-service opportunities to help teachers learn about the process. With this evaluation system, teachers were given the opportunity to make personal professional goals where they could demonstrate success. In addition, teachers wrote SMART goals for their students, geared toward their students' weaknesses, in which they were to use student growth as a measure of success. No longer were standardized test scores the sole measure of whether a child learned or was successful. In this way, by looking at student growth, teachers could experience more success. Building-level administrators took extra time to make sure that teachers were comfortable with the changes from the old evaluation system. The school division's Director of Testing worked one-on-one with a number of teachers in their classrooms, which many teachers noted as being supportive of their needs. Finally, with the stress that often comes with being evaluated, administrators were supportive and positive about the process, helping teachers through the process. Both teachers and administrators acknowledged that the primary responsibility of administrators during this process was to make sure that teachers had every opportunity and what they needed to succeed.

Connecting peers with purpose. Fullan (2008) referred to people working together for the greater good. Through the implementation of the new evaluation system, teachers increased collaboration with their peers and with their administrators. The stated goal of this collaboration

was to help teachers more fully promote student learning. Teachers came together as grade-level teams to discuss students' strengths and weaknesses and to plan with students' needs in mind. While much of the work associated with this new evaluation system was independent teacher work focused on the document log or on the establishment and on-going assessments of SMART goals, teachers stated that other teachers on their grade level were often their first point of contact for assistance and advice. While people were working to meet their individual goals, some realized the benefit of working together as a team to make instructional decisions, such as writing student goals as a team. Teachers were positive in their discussions concerning support from peers. More conferences took place between teachers and administrators because of SMART goals, observations and final evaluations.

Building capacity. Fullan (2008) wrote about risk-taking and the encouragement by school leaders to take risks without a fear of punishment. Risk-taking is difficult to assess in the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. While people were not afraid of punishment, they were worried that their work efforts or habits might affect their evaluation. Administrators encouraged teachers by telling them not to stress and by offering specific help on parts of the evaluation system with which teachers were having difficulty. Two of these were the writing of SMART (specific, measureable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals specifically focused on student learning outcomes and collecting data for the document log.

Writing SMART goals held many opportunities for capacity building for teachers. .Teachers worked on student and professional goals, including the use of student data, in an effort to make better, more-sound instructional decisions. Some teachers went a step beyond and worked together as a group, seeing not only their classroom of children, but every child in their grade level as their child. The biggest risk many teachers took was writing a rigorous goal that

they realized perhaps they could not reach by the end of the year. Some worried it might affect their evaluation. Others realized, to get the best results, they had to expect the most of their students, which is what they did. Teachers learned how to look at data for meaning and not just to collect it. Teachers became better at data interpretation. Teacher discussions with peers and administrators, along with their personal reflections related to these goals, supported helping teachers more fully understand both state and local evaluative expectations.

Learning as one works. Everyone must learn from work every day. It was evident through the interview data that teachers and administrators were trying to make this new system work. If they did not understand it, they sought help from a peer or a building administrator, but most often from the Director of Testing. Another example of on-going professional growth or continuous improvement was that teachers were constantly looking at student data and using it to guide instructional decisions to maximize student learning and attain their SMART goals.

Being transparent. This Fullan (2008) secret is simply what it suggests; being open about the process, which, in turn, creates a sense of trust. Participants revealed that the implementation of the new evaluation system was not a surprise to them. They spoke to division-wide, school-focused, and individual meetings in support of their learning about this new process. The administration appeared very transparent during the implementation process. Participants revealed that they communicated frequently with one another and the administration about student data and the evaluation process itself. Regarding the evaluation process, teachers acknowledged that division and building-level administrators started talking about the process prior to its implementation. An evaluation committee was formed of teachers from each building whose responsibility was to share information about the upcoming implementation. Teachers and building-level administrators noted that division administrators established learning

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opportunities for teachers at the onset of implementation. While some teachers detailed that early meetings proved overwhelming to them, those meetings were intended to explain the process and build teachers' confidence in what they would be expected to do.

Learning as a system. This secret is about people working together to make meaning. The implementation of the new evaluation system caused people to work together. Grade-level teams came together to work on their reading and math SMART goals. Specialty and non-core teachers came together for support to help make sense of this process for them as it related to them and their students. Leaders emerged with mentor teachers stepping up to help non-continuing contract teachers through the process, even though the process was new to the mentors as well. Division administration learned that even a well-thought out plan does not work for everyone. At the end of the first and second year of implementation, administrators met together to discuss what might need to be changed in the process and made those necessary changes.

The implementation dip. With the above mentioned ways to bring about change as suggested by Fullan (2008), he warned of the implementation dip (Fullan, 2011). In the beginning of the change process, there is a great deal of activity and excitement, which was evident in this case study. In this case, there was much to learn: Scheduled in-service opportunities, faculty meetings, and individual meetings took place. As the process of change continued, there was a lag in the implementation, known by Fullan as the implementation dip. The school year started, and people were busy being teachers and administrators. The evaluation system was no longer at the top of everyone's priority list. One veteran teacher made the point that the new evaluation system was very time-consuming, and he or she did not feel comfortable that building administrators were able to guide teachers through the process as well as needed.

Without support at the point of the implementation dip, there is the chance that the change will fail. Several teachers commented about a lack of support during the second year of implementation, which for them was a non-evaluation year. The document log was introduced during the first year and was the topic of many meetings, but that was not the case during the second year of implementation, leaving some teachers to wonder what they were supposed to do. A relatively new teacher indicated that he or she felt a lack of support. A veteran teacher indicated a lack of support by the school's administration in the second year of implementation as well. He or she wondered aloud how the new teachers had even been trained on the new evaluation system as he or she had heard very little about the new system during the second year. This comment indicated a failure of the administration to recognize the implementation dip in that teachers in the second year of the process need help as well. Other examples of the implementation dip were presented in the data. One teacher spoke of competing demands on teachers wondering if teachers should be more focused on teaching and learning or on the documentation of their students' learning.

One teacher acknowledged being given due-dates during the second year of implementation, but he or she instead was more focused on teaching, leaving the document log to be completed when it was almost due. It appeared that administration provided some support, which he or she did not necessarily follow. The excitement of the change lagged until it was time for the document log to be due and the teacher became anxious about the looming deadline.

The new evaluation system and its effect on professionalism. Another area that arose from the interview data for the researcher was the idea of professionalism in teaching. Teachers and administrators were asked about their responsibilities in the new teacher evaluation system.

Some strong assertions were made in the interview data about the roles of teachers and administrators.

Some teachers replied such that a continuum of professionalism was created in the mind of the researcher, with one end of the continuum representing the highest level of professionalism that may be found in teaching and the other extreme representing the lack thereof. Participants fell along this continuum without any evident relationship according to their years of experience. Participants' responses raised this question for the researcher: What is a teacher as a professional today?

On this continuum of professionalism, several teachers replied in ways that would indicate a lack of professionalism in teaching. One veteran teacher stated that it was the evaluator's responsibility to make sure that teachers were doing what they should be doing. This teacher's response gave the impression that teachers simply do what they are supposed to do. It seemed that he or she believed that there was an idea of what he or she was supposed to do (like a checklist of items to complete) and that someone (the administrator) was there to enforce that idea. Is an evaluation tool simply a checklist of items to which teachers must adhere or demonstrate mastery to say that they are meeting the requirements of their job? If that is a prevalent belief, what message does this send about the professionalism of teaching? Must administrators check up on teachers to ensure they are doing their jobs? A veteran teacher lamented that administrators just told teachers what to put under each section of the document log. By making this comment, this teacher sounded as if he or she expected to be told what to do.

The maintenance of the document log had some teachers question the professionalism of teaching as evidenced in the new evaluation system. One teacher recalled working on his or her

document log at home and wondering if that was what it meant to be a professional teacher today. This teacher felt diminished as a professional as a result of the documentation process, which was a feeling expressed by others as well. Teachers questioned why they had to prove they were doing their jobs. Was it not evident when the administrators visited their classrooms?

One teacher felt that the evaluation system was administrator-directed. A veteran teacher explained that it was important for teachers to work to meet expectations set forth by administrators. While this comment might sound responsible on the part of the teacher, it could be construed to mean that the evaluation process is administrator-directed and that teachers are to do just what administrators expect. It is the teacher's responsibility to find out what the evaluator wants, and once he or she learns what the evaluator is looking for, they must do it. This takes the professionalism out of teaching and being an administrator.

Teachers are selected for employment because they seem to best meet a list of qualifications and expectations set forth by the personnel team. Many administrators may agree to a set of qualifications and expectations for new teachers, but they acknowledge that they also want teachers to be creative, ingenious, intuitive, cooperative, collaborative, child-focused, and potentially willing to do whatever is needed to help students succeed. This means that sometimes teachers must be willing to "think outside of the box" about what is best for selected learners. Successful teacher and administrator teams should constantly be in dialog related to best instructional practices and then figuring out how together to best meet the needs of their learners. Most teachers and administrators know that there is never one right answer to concerns related to student achievement. Most administrators acknowledge that they are not the single source of best instructional knowledge. Teachers supporting learners by working collaboratively with other teachers, who are working cooperatively with parents, who are working supportively

with the community, all working with school administrators—that speaks to educator professionalism.

On the opposite end of the professionalism continuum were teachers who believed that professionalism does exist in their field. One example is an experienced teacher who viewed the administrators' role as one to make recommendations based on observations and evaluations, but saw his or her responsibility as using those recommendations to become a better teacher. This teacher obviously views him or herself as a professional who should use the advice of the evaluator to reflectively improve what he or she was doing. A doctor is often seen as highly professional, being responsible for his or her own behavior. A competent, confident, highly skilled, child-focused teacher can be viewed in this same manner. A confident teacher's response impressed the researcher when he or she stated that his or her administrator could come in at any time for an observation, because an observation was like any other day with the teacher supporting students' learning. This person does his or her job to the best of his or her ability every day and does not put on a dog-and-pony show for the observation. Finally, another teacher impressed the researcher with his or her professional demeanor when the teacher noted that teaching was a calling, and an evaluation system would not change his or her feelings toward the job of promoting student learning.

The new evaluation system and teachers who are not on the full evaluation cycle. Another area of interest to the researcher involved the evaluators' responsibilities to teachers when they were not in a full-evaluation year. One teacher remarked that he or she was not on full evaluation during one of the implementation years so he or she did not complete a document log. The teacher said that no one stated a need to keep a document log, so it was not done. No one asked to see the teacher's data. This person made it sound as if teachers in non-evaluation

years did not collect or utilize data for evaluation. In reality, teachers were responsible for drafting a SMART goal every year, regardless of their evaluation status, so those data should have been reviewed, even if the document log itself was not.

The new evaluation system and non-core classroom teachers. While experiencing this process, some teachers came to understand that they did not fit into the new evaluation system mold as easily as they would have liked. The new teacher evaluation system simply did not work for all teachers. During interview responses, participants identified the problem of evaluating specialty and special education teachers. It became evident that special education teachers were having difficulty with the document log and SMART goals because their role often focused on helping classroom teachers reach all learners. Most special education classes were inclusion classes, meaning that special education students received services within the general education setting. It was not easy for special education teachers to set goals and show progress for their special education students. Another veteran special education teacher not only found his or herself in the position of what to do as a special education teacher, but was also a veteran teacher who had just moved from another school system, which placed him or her in probationary status in the school system. This teacher lamented that fact. This teacher had twenty years of experience and, for the researcher's purpose, was classified in the 5 – 20 years of experience category. When he or she was interviewed, he or she indicated that the current year marked twenty-one years of teaching experience, so the researcher changed the experience level to more than 20 years of experience. Division records indicated that this person was on full evaluation during the first year of implementation. During the interview, this person indicated that he or she was not certain that there had been a full evaluation completed for him or her. This was a source of frustration for the teacher and the researcher. The teacher experienced

frustration because he or she was uncertain of the full evaluation or probationary status as a teacher with twenty-one years of teaching experience. The researcher experienced frustration because the change in the categorization of this one teacher required that another teacher be added to the first category in an effort to get at least two teachers per experience group. When this coding problem surfaced, the researcher feared that other personnel coding errors might potentially exist in the data, but when other interviewees answered demographic questions according to the appropriate category, those fears were alleviated.

Recommendations to the School Division

Based on the participants' responses and the researcher's understanding of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system in this school division, the following recommendations have been made: analyze the division's process for change, re-evaluate the new teacher evaluation system, develop a question and answer handbook as a support method, and replicate the study in higher grades to be aware of teachers' experiences using growth data provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Analyze the division's process for change. As in school divisions everywhere, change is inevitable for the school division in this study. Because change is inevitable, the school system should analyze its process for change, specific to this teacher evaluation system, with a view toward improving the next change process. As a review of the process, central office administrators should bring school administrators and the evaluation committee of teachers together to discuss varied aspects of the recent evaluation change. Foci for the meeting might include the discussion of what teacher evaluation system processes worked well and where improvements should be noted from this recent change. A plan for future change should begin with an analysis of how well the division implemented this major evaluation system change.

Re-evaluate the new teacher evaluation system. Another recommendation for the division would be that the central office administration continually evaluate the new teacher evaluation system by surveying teachers and administrators in the division. Now that the initial implementation has taken place, the division should look for ways in which it can improve the process, making it more meaningful for all those involved. This includes on-going training and support, as some teachers felt out of the loop when they were not in their full evaluation year. This will be helpful to teachers who are new to the division.

Develop a question and answer handbook as a support method. Another recommendation to the administration of the school division would be to develop a questions and answers teacher evaluation handbook that would serve as a guide to all teachers, but especially those who are new to the process. Questions that have arisen throughout the implementation process should be included, along with examples of documentation for the document log and SMART goals. Teachers could use these samples as a guide when making their own SMART goals and document logs.

Replicate the study in higher grades to be aware of teachers' experiences using growth data provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Finally, it is recommended that the division consider replicating the study in higher grades where student growth data were provided by the state. This would include reading and math in grades four through eight. Student growth percentiles were not mentioned by any teacher in the study as they were not applicable. Teachers involved in this study had to show growth using their own data through their SMART goals, but data based on students' standardized test scores was not mentioned in the interviews. It would be interesting to understand the experiences of teachers who had to use data provided by the state.

Recommendations for Additional Research

In addition to the recommendations provided to the division studied, further recommendations are presented that may add to the literature on the change process, teacher evaluation systems, or the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems. These recommendations include several comparison studies and a mixed-methods study.

Comparison studies. School divisions across the Commonwealth of Virginia were required to implement a new teacher evaluation system incorporating the use of student growth data by July 1, 2012. The division studied used a model very similar to the one offered by the Virginia Department of Education and implemented the process within the division in the way thought to be most beneficial and easily understood by all involved. One topic for further study would be to compare the implementation of the new evaluation system in the division studied to other divisions across the Commonwealth of Virginia to see how implementation practices varied. This proposed study would allow the researcher to determine if selected implementation strategies proved to have different results than others. Another possible comparison study would be to compare the evaluation systems used by divisions across the Commonwealth of Virginia to see how they compare to the example provided by the Virginia Department of Education.

The evaluation of specialty teachers and special education teachers was an issue in the early stages of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. It would be interesting to see how other divisions across the Commonwealth have handled the evaluations of teachers who instruct in non-core subject areas. A study comparing Virginia's differing school division models for evaluating both specialty and special education teachers would provide practical implications for school administrators. A follow-up to this current study investigating how this school division continues to evolve in its on-going implementation of its teacher evaluation

system might prove beneficial. A review of one school division's evolving decisions focused on improving its teacher evaluation system might reveal the complex nature of school change.

Longitudinal study of teacher change. Another possibility for future research, now that the evaluation system has been in place for a few years, would be to conduct a longitudinal study on how teachers have changed over time based on the articulation of their SMART goals. The researcher could examine teacher perceptions of SMART goals over time and their impact on student learning. Do teachers believe that the evaluation system makes a difference in student performance in the end? After a specified period of time, five years, for example, the thoughts and feelings of the teachers and administrators experiencing the new evaluation system could be reviewed again to determine if feelings are different and the actual purposes were realized.

Reflections

This section includes the reflections of the researcher on this study. Many thoughts were noted regarding the experiences of the teachers and administrators in this division regarding the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system. Reflections are presented on the development of an ideal evaluation system, a reminder to consider the perspectives of others, thoughts on using an outside interviewer, and disappointment in selected ways the evaluation system was used. General, overall reflections related to the implementation of this new evaluation system will also be detailed, and the Legg Model of Change will be introduced.

The development of an ideal evaluation system. This topic of teacher evaluation has been one of interest to the researcher for some time, dating back to the revision of the school division's previous evaluation system. As evidenced through data, the division made an effort to introduce administration and faculty to the new teacher evaluation system prior to its implementation in the academic year of 2012-2013. This effort was made by involving teachers

on the newly formed evaluation committee and sharing information as it was received so everyone would be familiar with the process. Central office and building-level administrators worked together to make decisions regarding the components of the process and how the implementation would occur, including training opportunities. From discussions with colleagues in other school divisions, the researcher believed this school division to be a step ahead, and viewed this evaluation system as almost ideal. This belief was shared by another building-level administrator who deemed this division preparing to implement its new system before some nearby school divisions had begun their new evaluation system discussions. While the new teacher evaluation system has fostered many improvements in the school division, it was not an ideal system, as implemented. Rather, it was an evolving teacher evaluation system that improved as concerns were noted and changes were warranted. In reality, the school division's model for implementing a new teacher evaluation system may have been wholly appropriate. The model used provided a strong implementation framework that also allowed for evolving concerns to be registered and acted upon after thoughtful consideration.

A reminder to consider the perspectives of others. Understanding the nature of change and the different ways that individuals are affected by change, it should not have been disappointing to realize that the evaluation system was not viewed as an ideal system by all involved. This research effort, aimed at trying to understand the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system as it was experienced by teachers and other administrators, was enlightening. It was a good reminder to consider the perspectives of others. When the initial implementation took place, and all of the trainings were planned and document logs were made, there was a feeling that the division was prepared. Even a well-planned district-in-service can be overwhelming, especially when those participating (mostly classroom teachers) are not as

knowledgeable in the subject area. Administrators had spent time in the summer shaping the new evaluation system, preparing for its implementation, and providing meaningful training opportunities for teachers. There were several new components to this new evaluation system over its predecessor. These new components included the document log, the document log table of contents, and the establishment of a SMART goal set by teachers for their students and for themselves as professionals. An in-service at the beginning of the year was a great idea so teachers knew what to expect, but it was also an awful idea in that teachers were likely thinking about their classrooms and possibly had a million other things on their minds.

Thoughts on using an outside interviewer. Although the researcher was not a direct supervisor of anyone in this school, it was still decided to use an outside interviewer. The use of an outside interviewer helped to protect the identity and ensure confidentiality for the participants. The researcher had been involved in the development of the new teacher evaluation system, and, as a principal, she was implementing the new evaluation system in another building within the division. The outside interviewer and the commercial transcription service were used to alleviate some of the concern that participants might have had about sharing their true thoughts and feelings about their experience with the new evaluation system

The researcher participated in the test interviews with the teacher and administrator from the expert panel. The researcher listened to these test interviews as they were conducted and made personal notes to discuss with the interviewer once the interviews were completed. The researcher found personal value in the test interviews and was disappointed not to be able to participate in the actual interviews. Participation in the test interviews made the researcher feel more a part of the process. Tone, inflection of voice, hand gestures, and body movements could be noted. These could not be seen or heard in the transcripts.

The researcher spent much time with the outside interviewer to discuss what she hoped for as a result of the study. The interviewer, too, wanted to ensure that he met the researcher's expectations. He did. While an experienced interviewer cannot take the place of first-hand experience, the researcher had first-hand experience with the evaluation system and that understanding was equally as important to her.

Disappointment in selected ways the evaluation system was used. As a building-level administrator, the researcher expected that all teachers would take the evaluation system seriously and use it for personal professional growth. It was disappointing to realize that some teachers were looking at the evaluation system as a collection of evidence for the document log that you "stuffed" until you had time to organize it and make yourself look good. While this approach might have put students first, the document log was intended as a way for reflective teachers to demonstrate their proficiencies. Stuffing the notebook sounded less than reflective. The hope is that the two beliefs, one calling for students to be kept at the forefront of any school change, and a second belief supporting the notion of teacher growth based on reflective, best practices focused on student learning, will go hand in hand. In time, data from the document log may be used appropriately to guide classroom instruction, and classroom instructional practices will be documented and shared with other professionals.

An overall understanding. Feelings of disappointment related to the division's new teacher evaluation plan existed for the researcher until she experienced a similar situation. The year following the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system brought the implementation of the new administrator evaluation system. In many regards, this system was similar, including the setting of SMART goals and maintaining a document log. As an administrator, the researcher experienced firsthand what teachers experienced during the

implementation of their evaluation system. With the best of intentions, the researcher began the process stating that she would stay ahead of deadlines so as not to rush to complete assignments. Unfortunately, she found herself, like many teachers, compiling data and completing reports at the eleventh hour. From personal experience, it can be said that life happens, which is independent of implementing a new evaluation system. As one of the teachers interviewed reminded, things will get in the way.

Understanding that things will get in the way and that life happens, it was somewhat disappointing, but not surprising to learn that cynicism existed regarding the new evaluation process. A non-continuing contract teacher's advice to a new teacher going through the evaluation process was to fake it, believing that no one would get fired over a sheet of paper. By itself, that statement might be understandable. A more veteran teacher went on to say that teachers do not get paid enough to worry about evaluation systems. This teacher recognized that the components of the evaluation system were something he or she had to do, but realized that his or her main job was teaching. While the researcher understood that some staff members might be cynical about the new teacher evaluation system, the reading of actual, spoken words of cynicism from selected interviews made the researcher stop to reflect. The researcher, along with other building-level and central office administrators, had spent hours attempting to figure out ways to support staff as the new teacher evaluation system was implemented. On-going attempts were made to involve all stakeholders in the implementation process. Cynical thoughts from stakeholders were a little hard to initially understand. The researcher became more understanding of various viewpoints as the new administrator evaluation system was implemented.

The Legg Model of Change. What started as a study of the experiences of teachers and administrators with the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system was later recognized as an understanding of how these teachers and administrators experienced the change process. Change is responsive as well as proactive, and administrators may not know exactly how people will respond. From the findings of this study, the researcher offers the Legg Model of Change that may be applied to any change process experienced in education.

1. Develop a team to support the process. This might be the administrative team or a team of administrators and teacher leaders. The responsibility of the team is to investigate the change process and understand what is expected of the change that is implemented. The team is expected to be supportive throughout the process, by whatever method of support is warranted at the time: e. g., one-on-one or group support.

2. Allow the team to experience the process first. In this study, the teacher evaluation system was implemented a year prior to the new principal evaluation system. The researcher believes that a more thorough understanding of the change and the implementation of that change by the team might have helped with the implementation of the new system with all of the teachers and administrators.

3. Share the familiar components of the system first. Second-order change involves many unknowns, which could make people uneasy. Sharing the familiar components, or the components that are similar to the former system, could help alleviate some of the fear associated with the change.

4. Introduce the new or unfamiliar components of the system over time, if possible. In this case, the evaluation system was approved over the summer and introduced at the

beginning of the following school year, which was necessary because teachers had to

set goals and collect data over the course of a year. Other change process, however,

might be better suited to phasing components in over time. Taking time to introduce

the new components over a longer period might help keep participants from feeling

overwhelmed.

5. Provide the necessary time to successfully implement change. Realize that change

does not happen overnight. Allow time to navigate the process and remind those

involved that the process does take time. Sufficient time is necessary to make the

process successful.

6. Provide support and recognize achievements. As the change process progresses,

recognize that different people are in different stages of the process, and the change

process puts people at risk. They worry about how it is going to affect them. As an

administrator, one must learn to deal with these differences to implement successfully

the change. Recognize the achievements of those who are realizing the benefits for

themselves and support those who still need it.

Chapter Summary

This case study focused on the experiences of teachers and administrators during the

implementation of a new teacher evaluation system in an elementary school in a small school

division in southwest Virginia. The researcher summarized the case study, presented tentative

conclusions, and discussed the findings based on the data that were collected from the study.

The researcher made recommendations to the school division where the study took place and for

additional research. Finally, reflections on the study were provided by the researcher, including

the Legg Model of Change, which is presented as a result of the findings of this study.

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Appendix A: Letters to Gain Access to the School Division and School

Letter to the Superintendent Requesting Permission to Conduct the Study

Dear Superintendent,

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask permission to conduct this study at Stoney Brook Elementary School.

I am interested in interviewing the administrators in the building and 12 non-continuing or continuing contract teachers at varied experience levels, who completed the full evaluation process in one of the first two years of implementation. A written report of my work will be provided to you at the conclusion of the study.

Should you have any questions regarding this study, I would appreciate the opportunity to speak to you personally to answer those questions for you. Otherwise, I am asking for your permission to conduct the study at Stoney Brook Elementary School. Please let me know of your decision as soon as possible at leggx4@vt.edu.   I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to the Principal of Stoney Brook Elementary School to Request a Meeting

Dear Principal,

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask permission to conduct this study at your school and to ask you to be a participant in the study.

I am interested in interviewing the administrators in the building and 12 non-continuing or continuing contract teachers at varied experience levels, who completed the full evaluation process in one of the first two years of implementation. A written report of my work will be provided to you at the conclusion of the study.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak to you personally to further describe the research proposal, to ask for your permission to conduct the study in your school with your participation, to contact your assistant principal and 12 of your teachers to participate and to answer any questions you might have. Please let me know of a meeting time that will be convenient for you by emailing me at leggx4@vt.edu. I look forward to speaking with you about this study and appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to Assistant Principal of Stoney Brook Elementary School

Dear Assistant Principal,

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask you to be a participant in the study.

I am interested in your experiences with the new teacher evaluation process. An outside interviewer will be used to ensure confidentiality. The interviewer will hold all interview responses in confidence and will not share those responses with me except through transcripts, which will be prepared by an outside company. You will not be identified in the transcripts or in the report of the study. Interviews will be conducted individually and should last about an hour. The interviewer will obtain written consent regarding your participation in the study before the interview.

I hope that you will consider giving an hour of your time to assist with the study. Please let me know at leggx4@vt.edu if you are willing to participate. I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to Prospective Participants (Teachers) of Stoney Brook Elementary School

Dear Teacher,

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask you to be a participant in the study.

I am interested in your experiences with the new teacher evaluation process. An outside interviewer will be used to ensure confidentiality. The interviewer will hold all interview responses in confidence and will not share those responses with me except through transcripts, which will be prepared by an outside company. You will not be identified in the transcripts or in the report of the study. Interviews will be conducted individually and should last about an hour. The interviewer will obtain written consent regarding your participation in the study before the interview.

I hope that you will consider giving an hour of your time to assist with the study. Please let me know at leggx4@vt.edu if you are willing to participate. I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Follow Up Email to Prospective Participants (Teachers)

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for considering participation in my study of the new teacher evaluation system. If you have agreed to participate, your assistance is appreciated, and I will send you an email to arrange a time for you to talk with Dr. [outside interviewer], who will be conducting the interviews. If you have not yet decided to participate, please reconsider my request and let me know by Monday, June 9.

Interviews, which will take about one hour, will be conducted at times convenient to you over the summer. This is a change in plans. Due to time constraints, the interviews could not be conducted as planned during the teacher work days.

All information collected in the interviews will be held in strict confidence. You will not be identified in the transcripts or in the report of the study. Dr. [interviewer] will obtain written consent regarding your participation in the study before the interview.

I hope that you will participate in the study.   Please email me at leggx4@vt.edu and let me know if you are willing to participate by Monday, June 9. If I do not hear from you, I will assume you are declining participation, and I thank you for considering this request

Appreciatively,

Kristina C. Legg

Appendix B: Interview Protocol: Research Questions, Domains, Domain Definitions, and

Interview Questions

Domains and Domain Definitions

Domains	Definition of Domains
Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of teachers or administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it
Relationships between administrators and teachers	The working relationship between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers
Relationships between teachers and peers	The working relationship between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)
Time	The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process
Outcomes	What comes as a result of the new teacher evaluation process
Learning	What the teacher or administrator has had to learn in order to participate in the evaluation process
Other	Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process

Research and Interview Questions Matrix: Interview Protocol

Research Questions	Domains	Interview Questions	Possible Probes
1. How do teachers experience the implementation of a new evaluation system?			
a. What is the psychological experience of teachers as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?	Affective	Tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system.	When you heard about it? What did you think? How did you feel? During the year of your evaluation? What did you think? How did you feel? At the conclusion of your evaluation? What did you think? How did you feel?
b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationships between administrators and teachers	Tell me about your relationship with your administrators (evaluators) over the last 2 – 3 years.	How does it compare to your relationship before the new evaluation system?
c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationships between teachers and peers	Tell me about your relationships with your peers (other teachers) over the last 2 – 3 years.	How do they compare to your relationships before the new teacher evaluation system?
d. How did the	Time	Tell me about the	How much time did it

Research Questions	Domains	Interview Questions	Possible Probes
amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how teachers experience the implementation of the system?		process you went through to prepare for your evaluation.	take you to prepare for your evaluation?
e. What are the expectations of teachers for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?	Outcomes	Tell me what you think the outcomes are for the new teacher evaluation system.	Do you feel the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? What do you think is the purpose of the new teacher evaluation system?
f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system experienced by teachers?	Outcomes	After completing the evaluation process, what were the actual outcomes of the evaluation system for you?	How were the actual outcomes similar to or different from your expectations?
g. How did teachers experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation system?	Learning	Tell me what you had to do to be prepared to participate in the new teacher evaluation system? Tell me what you have to do as a result of the evaluation.	What experiences helped prepare you for participating in this evaluation process? What professional development opportunities were offered to prepare you for participation in this new evaluation system? (PD as a result?) What did you learn as a result of the

Research Questions	Domains	Interview Questions	Possible Probes
			process?
h. How did teachers experience other components of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Other	Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	Of your experiences, what might you tell another teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time?
2. How do administrators experience the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?			
a. What is the psychological experience of administrators as they implement a new teacher evaluation system?	Affective	Tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system.	When you heard about it? What did you think? How did you feel? During the year of your evaluation? What did you think? How did you feel? At the conclusion of your evaluation? What did you think? How did you feel?
b. How are relationships between administrators and teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationship with subordinates	Tell me about your relationship with your teachers over the last 2 – 3 years.	How does it compare to your relationship before the new evaluation system?

Research Questions	Domains	Interview Questions	Possible Probes
c. How are relationships among teachers affected by the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Relationships among teacher peers	Tell me about the relationships between teachers as you understand them over the last 2 – 3 years.	How do they compare to your relationships before the new teacher evaluation system?
d. How did the amount of time required to prepare for the teacher evaluation affect how administrators experience the implementation of the system?	Time	Tell me about the process you went through to prepare for completing evaluations.	How much time did it take you to prepare for the evaluations?
e. What are the expectations of administrators for the outcomes of the new teacher evaluation system?	Outcomes	Tell me what you think the outcomes are for the new teacher evaluation system.	Do you feel the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? What do you think is the purpose of the new teacher evaluation system?
f. What are the real outcomes of the teacher evaluation system experienced by administrators?	Outcomes	After completing the evaluation process, what were the actual outcomes of the evaluation system for teachers?	How were the actual outcomes similar to or different from your expectations?
g. How did administrators experience the learning associated with implementing a new teacher evaluation	Learning	Tell me what you had to do to be prepared to participate in the new teacher evaluation system? Tell me what you have to do as a result	What experiences helped prepare you for participating in this evaluation process? What professional development

Research Questions	Domains	Interview Questions	Possible Probes
system?		of the evaluation process.	opportunities were offered to prepare you for participation in this new evaluation system? What did you learn as a result of the process?
h. How did administrators experience other components of the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system?	Other	Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	Of your experiences, what might you tell another teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time? What might you tell a new principal to help them as they go through the process?

Email to Expert Panel (Administrators)

Dear Administrator:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask you to be a participant in the study by completing an online survey that will serve as the content validation instrument.

The purpose of the content validation instrument is to help in the development of interview items used to collect the data for the study. The items are designed solicit the experiences of administrators regarding the implementation of the new teacher evaluation process. I believe your insight will be of great help to me.

The instrument has ten interview items. You are asked to choose the domain each item is most closely related to from a given list and to rate each item for clarity. Your responses will be submitted anonymously. Your feedback will be used to further develop the interview items.

The link to the instrument is below. By clicking on this link and completing the instrument, you are agreeing to be a participant in this study. Your only obligation, should you agree to participate, is completing this instrument. If you choose not to participate, do not complete the instrument and delete this email.

Once the interview items are finalized, I would like to conduct a test interview with an administrator. You are not obligated to participate in the interview, but I ask that you consider it.

(insert instrument link)

I appreciate your consideration and thank you in advance for your help!

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to Expert Panel (Teachers)

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the advisement of Dr. David Parks. My doctoral study is on how teachers and administrators experience a new teacher evaluation system. I am writing to ask you to be a participant in the study by completing an online survey that will serve as the content validation instrument.

The purpose of the content validation instrument is to help in the development of interview items used to collect the data for the study. The items are designed to solicit the experiences of teachers during the first two years of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation process. I believe your insight will be of great help to me.

The instrument has ten interview items. You are asked to choose the domain each item is most closely related to from a given list and to rate each item for clarity. Your responses will be submitted anonymously. Your feedback will be used to further develop the interview items.

The link to the instrument is below. By clicking on this link and completing the instrument, you are agreeing to be a participant in this study. Your only obligation, should you agree to participate, is completing this instrument. If you choose not to participate, do not complete the instrument and delete this email.

Once the interview items are finalized, I would like to conduct a test interview with a teacher. You are not obligated to participate in the interview, but I ask that you consider it.

(insert instrument link)

I appreciate your consideration and thank you in advance for your help!

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Content Validity Instrument for the Interview Protocol for Administrators

Administrator Evaluation Experiences - Content Validity

Instructions:

A. Please read each interview item below carefully.

B. Select the domain that you believe is most closely related to the item. The domains are defined below.

C. Indicate how clear you believe the item is (unclear, somewhat clear, very clear). The first choice is *unclear*, indicating that you

think this item should be omitted. The second choice is *somewhat clear*. If you choose somewhat clear, please offer suggestions for

revision. The third choice is *very clear*, indicating that you think this item should remain as is.

D. By completing this survey, you are agreeing to be a participant in this study. Thank you for your assistance.

Domains:

Domains	Domain definition
Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system	The process teachers and administrators go through from start to finish of the teacher evaluation cycle
Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it

Outcomes

The results of the new teacher evaluation process as expressed by teachers and administrators

Learning

What teachers or administrators have had to learn to participate in the evaluation process

Relationships between administrators and teachers

The working relationship between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers

Relationships between teachers and peers

The working relationship between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)

Time

The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process

Recommendations for teachers

Recommendations or suggestions for teachers to help them adjust to a new teacher evaluation system

Recommendations for change

Recommendations or suggestions to the managers of the evaluation system for change in the system

Other

Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process

Click to write the question text

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is being implemented in your school. Possible probes: How do you go about completing the	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains										Clarity		
process from preparation through completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your teachers' responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibilities? (1)												

If number 1 is "somewhat clear," please write suggested revisions below:

Question 2

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Let's back up a little and please tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	Domains										Clarity		
from when the new system first was discussed to present day. Possible probes: When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Overall													

	Domains									Clarity		
, how do you feel about the new evaluat ion process ? (1)												

If number 2 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 3

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Think about the results that have been achieved by the new evaluation process. What do you think	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains											Clarity		
these are? What do you think these will be over time? Possible probes : How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system ? Changes in instruction in your school ? Learning of													

	Domains										Clarity		
your students? What do you think it was designed to do? How well is it achieving what it was designed to do? (1)													

If number 3 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 4

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation process. Possible probes: What	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Domains										Clarity		
have you learned about the new evaluation process? How were you trained to use it? How effective was this training? How are (were) you involved in the development and evaluation of the system? (1)												

If number 4 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 5

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about your overall relationship as an administrator with the teachers in your school over the last 2-3 years. Possible probes: Please	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Domains											Clarity		
describe how the evaluation process usually works between administrators and teachers. How has the new evaluation system affected how you work with your teachers? Do you see any changes? If so, what are they? (1)													

If number 5 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 6

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the relationships between teachers as you understand them over the last 2-3 years. Possible probes: Do you see any changes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

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	Domains									Clarity		
? If so, what are they? How do the changes affect your overall work in the school? How do you think collaboration among teachers is affected by the new evaluation system? (1)												

If number 6 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 7

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the process you went through to prepare for completing evaluations. Possible probes: How	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains										Clarity		
much time did it take you to prepare for the evaluations? How do you feel about the use of this time to prepare for these evaluations? (1)												

If number 7 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 8

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Of your experiences, what might you tell a new teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time? Possible probes: Preparation time? Dealings with	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains										Clarity		
feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommend ations? (1)												

If number 8 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 9

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be? Possible probes: What	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Domains											Clarity	
do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process? (1)												

If number 9 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 10

Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process. Possible probes:	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

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Domains										Clarity	
What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluatio n process? What have you left unsaid that should be communi cated to the administr ators or manager s of the teacher evaluatio n process? Locally? Statewid e? (1)											

If number 10 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Thank you for your assistance. Your time is appreciated.

Content Validity Instrument for the Interview Protocol for Teachers

Teacher Evaluation Experiences - Content Validity

Instructions:

A. Please read each interview item below carefully.

B. Select the domain that you believe is most closely related to the item. The domains are defined below.

C. Indicate how clear you believe the item is (unclear, somewhat clear, very clear). The first choice is *unclear*, indicating that you

think this item should be omitted. The second choice is *somewhat clear*. If you choose somewhat clear, please offer suggestions for

revision. The third choice is *very clear*, indicating that you think this item should remain as is.

D. By completing this survey, you are agreeing to be a participant in this study. Thank you for your assistance.

Domains:

Domains	Domain definition
Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system	The process teachers and administrators go through from start to finish of the teacher evaluation cycle
Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it

Outcomes	The results of the new teacher evaluation process as expressed by teachers and administrators
Learning	What teachers or administrators have had to learn to participate in the evaluation process
Relationships between administrators and teachers	The working relationship between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers
Relationships between teachers and peers	The working relationship between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)
Time	The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process
Recommendations for teachers	Recommendations or suggestions for teachers to help them adjust to a new teacher evaluation system
Recommendations for change	Recommendations or suggestions to the managers of the evaluation system for change in the system
Other	Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process

Question 1

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is being implemented in your school. Possible probes: How do you go about completing the	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Domains										Clarity		
process from preparation to completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your evaluator's responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibi												

Domains											Clarity		
lities? (1)													

If number 1 is "somewhat clear," please write suggested revisions below:

Question 2

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Let's back up a little and please tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	Domains											Clarity	
from when the new system first was discussed to present day. Possible probes: When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Once													

	Domains											Clarity		
you learned more about the process, what kinds of feelings did you have about the process?														
Overall, how do you feel about the new evaluation process? (1)														

If number 2 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 3

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Think about the results that have been achieved by the new evaluation process. What do you think these	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains									Clarity		
are? What do you think these will be over time? Possible probes: How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? Changes in your instruction? Learning of your students?											

	Domains										Clarity		
What do you think it was designe d to do? How well is it achievi ng what it was designe d to do? (1)													

If number 3 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 4

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Domains											Clarity		
process. Possible probes: What have you learned about the new evaluation process? How were you trained to use it? How effective was this training? What other metho													

	Domains										Clarity		
ds of helpin g teache rs imple ment the new evalua tion proces s might be useful ? (1)													

If number 4 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 5

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about your overall relationship as a teacher with your administrators (evaluators) in your school over the last 2-3 years. Possible	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Domains										Clarity	
probes: Please describe how the evaluatio n process usually works between administr ators and you. How has the new evaluatio n system affected how your work with your administr ators? Do you see any changes? If so, what are they? (1)												

If number 5 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 6

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about your relationships with your peers (other teachers) given the new evaluation process; that is, as it has develop	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Domains										Clarity	
ed over the last 2-3 years. Possible probes: Do you see any changes ? If so, what are they? How do the changes affect your overall work in the school? How do you think collabor ation among teachers is affected by the new											

	Domains										Clarity		
evaluati on system? (1)													

If number 6 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 7

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about the process you went through to prepare for your evaluation. Possible probes: How	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Domains										Clarity		
much time did it take you to prepare for your evaluat ion? How do you feel about the use of this time to prepare for your evaluat ion? (1)												

If number 7 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 8

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Of your experiences, what might you tell another teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time? Possible probes: Preparation time? Dealing with	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Domains											Clarity		
feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommend ations? (1)													

If number 8 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 9

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be? Possible probes: What	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	Domains										Clarity	
do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process? (1)												

If number 9 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Question 10

	Domains										Clarity		
	Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system (1)	Affective (2)	Outcomes (3)	Learning (4)	Relationships between administrators and teachers (5)	Relationships between teachers and peers (6)	Time (7)	Recommendations for teachers (8)	Recommendations for change (9)	Other (10)	Unclear, omit this item (1)	Somewhat clear, make suggested revisions below (2)	Very clear, keep item as it is (3)
Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process. Possible probes:	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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	Domains										Clarity	
What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluation process? What have you left unsaid that should be communicated to the administrators of the teacher evaluation process? Locally? Statewide? (1)												

If number 10 is "somewhat clear," please type suggested revisions below.

Thank you for your assistance. Your time is appreciated.

Follow Up Email to Expert Panel (Administrators)

Dear Administrator:

This email is to remind you of the request for your participation in the content validation process for my doctoral study. I would sincerely appreciate your help in this process. If you would like to participate, please click on the link below and complete the survey by 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 31, 2014. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to be a study participant. If you choose not to participate in this process, simply delete this email and do not complete the survey.

While the domains and domain definitions are provided for you, it might be helpful for you to have this page as you complete the survey.

Domains and Domain Definitions

Domains	Domain definition
Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system	The process teachers and administrators go through from start to finish of the teacher evaluation cycle
Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of teachers or administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it
Outcomes	The results of the new teacher evaluation process as expressed by teachers and administrators
Learning	What teachers or administrators have had to learn to participate in the evaluation process
Relationships between administrators and teachers	The working relationships between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers
Relationships between teachers and peers	The working relationships between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)
Time	The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process
Recommendations for teachers	Recommendations or suggestions for teachers to help them adjust to a new teacher evaluation system

Domains	Domain definition
Recommendations for change	Recommendations or suggestions to the managers of the evaluation system for change in the system
Other	Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process

Please click here to complete this survey: (insert survey link)

Thank you in advance for your consideration and your time.

Follow Up Email to Expert Panel (Teachers)

Dear Teacher:

This email is to remind you of the request for your participation in the content validation process for my doctoral study. I would sincerely appreciate your help in this process. If you would like to participate, please click on the link below and complete the survey by 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 31, 2014. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to be a study participant. If you choose not to participate in this process, simply delete this email and do not complete the survey.

While the domains and domain definitions are provided for you, it might be helpful for you to have this page as you complete the survey.

Domains and Domain Definitions

Domains	Domain definition
Process used in implementation of a teacher evaluation system	The process teachers and administrators go through from start to finish of the teacher evaluation cycle
Affective	The attitudes, beliefs, and feelings of teachers or administrators about the evaluation process as they experience it
Outcomes	The results of the new teacher evaluation process as expressed by teachers and administrators
Learning	What teachers or administrators have had to learn to participate in the evaluation process
Relationships between administrators and teachers	The working relationships between administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers
Relationships between teachers and peers	The working relationships between teachers and their peers (other classroom teachers)
Time	The amount of time involved in preparation for any of the steps involved in the evaluation process
Recommendations for teachers	Recommendations or suggestions for teachers to help them adjust to a new teacher evaluation system
Recommendations for change	Recommendations or suggestions to the

Domains	Domain definition
	managers of the evaluation system for change in the system
Other	Any domain not included in those listed above that surfaces as a result of the interview process

Please click here to complete this survey: (insert survey link)

Thank you in advance for your consideration and your time.

Amended Interview Protocols following Content Validity Check

Amended Interview Protocol for Administrators (following Content Validity Check)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we begin, I would like to introduce myself, review the purpose of this study, and if you agree to participate, obtain your written consent.

My name is Dr. _____ _____. I am a retired superintendent with _____ years in education. I have agreed to help Mrs. Legg with her research because _____. She is very interested in understanding the teachers' and administrators' experience with the new system to improve it for the teachers in Galax and, perhaps, for teachers across the Commonwealth. I look forward to speaking with you about your experience with the new teacher evaluation process at your school.

Let's review the informed consent form together. The form has an outline of the purpose of the study, your role in the study, and your rights as a participant. (The consent form follows.) Once consent is given, the interviewer may begin using the questions that follow:

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
Focus on the evaluation system:	
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is	How do you go about completing the process from

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
being implemented in your school.	preparation through completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your teachers' responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibilities? When do you complete these responsibilities? How do your teachers complete their responsibilities? Where do the various activities take place?
Let's back up a little. Please tell me about your experience with the new teacher evaluation system from when the new system first was discussed to present day.	When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Once you learned more about the process, what kinds of feelings did you have about the process? About the teacher-prepared portfolio? About reviewing the teacher-prepared portfolio? About conferencing with your teachers? About observing your teachers? About other points in the process? Any positive feelings? Any negative feelings? Any anxiety? Any fear? Any concern? Any other feelings? Overall, how do you feel about the new evaluation process?
Think about the outcomes of the new evaluation process over the last two years. What do you think these are? What do you think these will be over time?	How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? Changes in instruction in your school? Learning of your students? The satisfaction of your teachers with their work? Your satisfaction with your work as an administrator? The learning climate of the school? The satisfaction of teachers, in general, in your school? Overall, what do you think about the evaluation process? (Distinguish feelings from other thoughts about the evaluation process.) What do you think it was designed to do? How well is it achieving what it was designed to do?
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation process.	What have you learned about the new evaluation process? How were you trained to use it? How effective was this training?

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
	Of all your experiences in learning about the new evaluation process, what was the most effective? Least effective? How are (were) you involved in the development and evaluation of the system? How meaningful has this involvement been to you? How have your contributions been received by others in the planning process? What other methods of helping administrators implement the new evaluation process might be useful? Any suggestions?
Focus on relationships:	
Tell me about your overall relationship as an administrator with the teachers in your school over the last 2-3years.	Please describe your relationships with teachers during the evaluation process. How does this relationship differ with different teachers? What do you think accounts for these different relationships with different teachers? How has the new evaluation system affected how you work with your teachers? Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How has the new evaluation system affected how you interact with your teachers? Do you believe teachers who have been evaluated under both systems have been more cautious, less cautious, or about the same in sharing information with you? If you had the opportunity, what would you tell your teachers about how the evaluation system affects your relationship with them?
Tell me about the relationships between teachers as you understand them over the last 2-3 years.	Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How do you account for these changes? How do the changes in these relationships affect your overall work in the school? How do they affect you as an educator? How do they affect you as a person? How does the new evaluation system affect interactions among teachers? How do you think collaboration among teachers is affected by the new evaluation system?
Other aspects:	
Tell me about the time it took you to complete the evaluations.	How much time did it take you to prepare for the evaluations? Conduct the evaluations? Hold conferences? Complete the reports? How do you feel about the use of this time to complete these evaluations?

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
	What is your assessment of the costs and benefits of the process?
Of your experiences, what might you tell a new teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time?	Preparation time? Dealing with feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommendations?
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be?	What do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process?
Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluation process? What have you left unsaid that should be communicated to the administrators or managers of the teacher evaluation process? Locally? Statewide?
Demographics:	
Are you an administrator?	

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Amended Interview Protocol for Teachers (following Content Validity Check)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we begin, I would like to introduce myself, review the purpose of this study, and if you agree to participate, obtain your written consent.

My name is Dr. _____ _____. I am a retired superintendent with _____ years in education. I have agreed to help Mrs. Legg with her research because _____. She is very interested in understanding the teachers' and administrators' experience with the new system to improve it for the teachers in Galax and, perhaps, for teachers across the Commonwealth. I look forward to speaking with you about your experience with the new teacher evaluation process at your school.

Let's review the informed consent form together. The form has an outline of the purpose of the study, your role in the study, and your rights as a participant. (The consent form follows.) Once consent is given, the interviewer may begin using the questions that follow:

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
Focus on the evaluation system:	
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is being implemented in your school.	How do you go about completing the process from preparation through completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your evaluator's responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibilities? When do you complete these responsibilities? How does your evaluator complete his or her responsibilities? When does your evaluator complete his or her responsibilities in the process? Where do the various activities take place?
Let's back up a little. Please tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system from when the new system first was discussed to present day.	When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Once you learned more about the process, what

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
	kinds of feelings did you have about the process? About preparing the portfolio? About conferencing with your evaluator? About being observed by your evaluator? About other points in the process? Any positive feelings? Any negative feelings? Any anxiety? Any fear? Any concern? Any other feelings? Overall, how do you feel about the new evaluation process?
Think about the outcomes of the new evaluation process over the last two years. What do you think these are? What do you think these will be over time?	How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? Changes in your instruction? Learning of your students? Your satisfaction with your work as a teacher? The learning climate of the school? The satisfaction of teachers, in general, in your school? Overall, what do you think about the evaluation process? (Distinguish feelings from other thoughts about the evaluation process.) What do you think it was designed to do? How well is it achieving what it was designed to do?
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation process.	What have you learned about the new evaluation process? How were you trained to use it? How effective was this training? Of all your experiences in learning about the new evaluation process, what was the most effective? Least effective? How are (were) you involved in the development and evaluation of the system? How meaningful has this involvement been to you? How have your contributions been received by others in the planning process? What other methods of helping teachers implement the new evaluation process might be useful? Any suggestions?
Focus on relationships:	
Tell me about your overall relationship as a teacher with your administrators (evaluators) in your school over the last 2-3years.	Please describe your relationships with administrators during the evaluation process. How has the new evaluation system affected how you work with your administrators? Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they?

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
	How has the new evaluation system affected how you interact with your administrators? If you were evaluated under the previous system, have you become more cautious, less cautious, or about the same in sharing information with your administrators? If you had the opportunity, what would you tell your administrators about how the evaluation system affects your relationship with them?
Tell me about your relationships with your peers (other teachers) given the new evaluation process; that is, as it has developed over the last 2-3 years.	Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How do you account for these changes? How do the changes in these relationships affect your overall work in the school? How do they affect you as an educator? How do they affect you as a person? How does the new evaluation system affect interactions among teachers? How do you think collaboration among teachers is affected by the new evaluations system?
Other aspects:	
Tell me about the time it took you to prepare for your evaluation.	How much time did it take you to prepare for your evaluation? Prepare your portfolio? How do you feel about the use of this time to complete your evaluation? What is your assessment of the costs and benefits of the process?
Of your experiences, what might you tell another teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time?	Preparation time? Dealing with feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommendations?
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be?	What do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process?
Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluation process? What have you left unsaid that should be communicated to the administrators of the teacher evaluation process? Locally? Statewide?
Demographics:	
Are you a non-continuing or continuing contract teacher?	
If non-continuing, is this your first year or second year under the new evaluation system?	
If continuing contract, were you under full evaluation during the first year or second year of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system?	Which category of experience best defines you? 3 – 20 years or over 20 years

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Informed Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
Informed Consent for Participants
in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: The Experiences of Teachers and Administrators with a New Teacher Evaluation System in a Local School Division

Investigator(s):   Kristina C. Legg   leggx4@vt.edu
                                Name   E-mail / Phone number
                                Dr. David Parks   parks@vt.edu
                                Name   E-mail / Phone number

I. Purpose of this Research Project

The purpose of this study is to use teacher and administrator experience with a new teacher evaluation system to offer suggestions or considerations for future implementation of evaluation systems. Information will be gathered from teachers and administrators through interviews. The interviews will be recorded and sent to an outside company for transcription. The results of this study will be used to complete the requirements of a dissertation. A total of 12 teachers of varied experience levels and 2 administrators will be asked to participate in this study.

II. Procedures

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a 60-minute audio-recorded interview. The interview will consist of 10 questions related to the teacher evaluation process and a few demographic questions. The interviewer may ask additional probing questions during the interview, depending on your responses. You are asked to answer these questions honestly about your own experiences with the new teacher evaluation system.

The interview will take place in this room (insert location) using the interview protocol developed by the researcher consisting of 10 main interview questions. By participating in this study, you are only expected to participate in this interview. You may withdraw from participation in this study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, all information you have provided will be destroyed.

III. Risks

Potential risks are minimal. Depending on your experiences with the evaluation process, you may experience anxiety sharing your feelings regarding the process. An outside interviewer is being utilized to ensure confidentiality. The interviewer will hold all responses in confidence and will only share responses with the researcher and her advisor through transcripts. You will not be identified in the transcripts. Your recording will be stored on the interviewer's password-protected computer and will be destroyed by the interviewer at the completion of the study.

IV. Benefits

As a participant, you might appreciate being able to share your experiences, which could validate your emotions about the teacher evaluation process. No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Data will be collected anonymously. Data will be coded using the demographic information that you provide in the interview. Identifiable information will be stored separately and securely from the coded data and will not be included in the study. An outside interviewer is being utilized to ensure confidentiality. The interviewer will hold all responses in confidence and will only share responses with the researcher and her advisor through transcripts. You will not be identified in the transcripts. Your recording will be stored on the interviewer's password-protected computer and will be destroyed by the interviewer at the completion of the study.

At no time will the researchers release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent.

The Virginia Tech (VT) Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

VI. Compensation

There is no compensation for participation in this study.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

It is important for you to know that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You are free not to answer any questions that you choose or respond to what is being asked of you without penalty.

Please note that there may be circumstances under which the investigator may determine that a subject should not continue as a subject.

VIII. Questions or Concerns

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact one of the research investigators whose contact information is included at the beginning of this document.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or (540) 231-4991.

IX. Subject's Consent

I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

_____ Date_____
Subject signature

_____
Subject printed name

Email to Administrator Requesting Permission for Test Interview

Dear Administrator:

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in my study and completing the content validation instrument for administrators. Your feedback was used to further develop the interview items.

As mentioned previously, I would like to conduct at least one test interview with an administrator and am writing this email to ask if you would consider giving an hour of your time to help test the interview items with the outside interviewer. I would be present during this interview for the purpose of listening to the interviewer and how he probes for information from you. I will also use your information in a test analysis setting to help ensure that my interview items will generate useful data. You are guaranteed confidentiality and nothing that you share will be used in the study in any way except to refine my instruments.

Please notify me by email at leggx4@vt.edu if you will be willing to participate in a test interview. I certainly appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to Teacher Requesting Permission for Test Interview

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in my study and completing the content validation instrument for teachers. Your feedback was used to further develop the interview items.

As mentioned previously, I would like to conduct at least one test interview with a teacher and am writing this email to ask if you would consider giving an hour of your time to help test the interview items with the outside interviewer. I would be present during this interview for the purpose of listening to the interviewer and how he probes for information from you. I will also use your information in a test analysis setting to help ensure that my interview items will generate useful data. You are guaranteed confidentiality and nothing that you share will be used in the study in any way except to refine my instruments.

Please notify me by email at leggx4@vt.edu if you will be willing to participate in a test interview. I certainly appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Final Interview Protocol for Administrators (after Test Interviews)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we begin, I would like to introduce myself, review the purpose of this study, and if you agree to participate, obtain your written consent.

My name is Dr. _____ _____. I am a retired superintendent with _____ years in education. I have agreed to help Mrs. Legg with her research because _____. She is very interested in understanding the teachers' and administrators' experience with the new system to improve it for the teachers in Galax and, perhaps, for teachers across the Commonwealth. I look forward to speaking with you about your experience with the new teacher evaluation process at your school.

Let's review the informed consent form together. The form has an outline of the purpose of the study, your role in the study, and your rights as a participant. (The consent form follows.) Once consent is given, the interviewer may begin using the questions that follow:

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
Focus on the evaluation system:	
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is being implemented in your school.	How do you go about completing the process from preparation through completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your teachers' responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibilities? When do you complete these responsibilities? How do your teachers complete their responsibilities? Where do the various activities take place?
Let's back up a little. Please tell me about your experience with the new teacher evaluation system from when the new system first was discussed to present day.	When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Once you learned more about the process, what kinds of feelings did you have about the process? About the teacher-prepared portfolio? About reviewing the teacher-prepared portfolio? About the use of student academic progress as

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
	student growth percentiles or other measures such as goal setting? About conferencing with your teachers? About observing your teachers? About other points in the process? Any positive feelings? Any negative feelings? Any anxiety? Any fear? Any concern? Any other feelings? Overall, how do you feel about the new evaluation process?
Think about the outcomes of the new evaluation process over the last two years. What do you think these are? What do you think these will be over time?	How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system? Changes in instruction in your school? Learning of your students? How do you think the SMART goals affect the instruction of your teachers? How do you think the SMART goals affect student learning? The satisfaction of your teachers with their work? Your satisfaction with your work as an administrator? The learning climate of the school? The satisfaction of teachers, in general, in your school? Overall, what do you think about the evaluation process? (Distinguish feelings from other thoughts about the evaluation process.) What do you think it was designed to do? How well is it achieving what it was designed to do?
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation process.	What have you learned about the new evaluation process? How were you trained to use it? How effective was this training? Of all your experiences in learning about the new evaluation process, what was the most effective? Least effective? How are (were) you involved in the development and evaluation of the system? How meaningful has this involvement been to you? How have your contributions been received by others in the planning process? What other methods of helping administrators implement the new evaluation process might be useful? Any suggestions?
Focus on relationships:	

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
Tell me about your overall relationship as an administrator with the teachers in your school over the last 2-3years.	Please describe your relationships with teachers during the evaluation process. How does this relationship differ with different teachers? What do you think accounts for these different relationships with different teachers? How has the new evaluation system affected how you work with your teachers? Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How has the new evaluation system affected how you interact with your teachers? Do you believe teachers who have been evaluated under both systems have been more cautious, less cautious, or about the same in sharing information with you? If you had the opportunity, what would you tell your teachers about how the evaluation system affects your relationship with them?
Tell me about the relationships between teachers as you understand them over the last 2-3 years.	Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How do you account for these changes? How do the changes in these relationships affect your overall work in the school? How do they affect you as an educator? How do they affect you as a person? How does the new evaluation system affect interactions among teachers? How do you think collaboration among teachers is affected by the new evaluation system?
Other aspects:	
Tell me about the time it took you to complete the evaluations.	How much time did it take you to prepare for the evaluations? Conduct the evaluations? Review SMART goals? Hold conferences? Complete the reports? How do you feel about the use of this time to complete these evaluations? What is your assessment of the costs and benefits of the process?
Of your experiences, what might you tell a new teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time?	Preparation time? Dealing with feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommendations?
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be?	What do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process?
Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluation process? What have you left unsaid that should be communicated to the administrators or managers of the teacher evaluation process? Locally? Statewide?

Administrator interview questions	Possible probes
Demographics:	
Are you an administrator?	

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Final Interview Protocol for Teachers (after Test Interviews)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before we begin, I would like to introduce myself, review the purpose of this study, and if you agree to participate, obtain your written consent.

My name is Dr. _____ _____. I am a retired superintendent with _____ years in education. I have agreed to help Mrs. Legg with her research because _____. She is very interested in understanding the teachers' and administrators' experience with the new system to improve it for the teachers in Galax and, perhaps, for teachers across the Commonwealth. I look forward to speaking with you about your experience with the new teacher evaluation process at your school.

Let's review the informed consent form together. The form has an outline of the purpose of the study, your role in the study, and your rights as a participant. (The consent form follows.) Once consent is given, the interviewer may begin using the questions that follow:

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
Focus on the evaluation system:	
Tell me about the teacher evaluation system that is being implemented in your school.	How do you go about completing the process from preparation through completion? What are your responsibilities in the evaluation process? What are your evaluator's responsibilities in the evaluation process? Who else is involved in the evaluation process? How do you complete these responsibilities? When do you complete these responsibilities? How does your evaluator complete his or her responsibilities? When does your evaluator complete his or her responsibilities in the process? Where do the various activities take place?
Let's back up a little. Please tell me about your experiences with the new teacher evaluation system from when the new system first was discussed to present day.	When did you hear about it? What did you think at that time? What feelings did you have at that time? Once you learned more about the process, what kinds of feelings did you have about the process? About preparing the portfolio?

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
	About conferencing with your evaluator?
	About being observed by your evaluator?
	About the use of student academic progress as student growth percentiles or other measures such as goal setting?
	About other points in the process?
	Any positive feelings?
	Any negative feelings?
	Any anxiety?
	Any fear?
	Any concern?
	Any other feelings?
	Overall, how do you feel about the new evaluation process?
Think about the outcomes of the new evaluation process over the last two years. What do you think these are? What do you think these will be over time?	How do the outcomes differ from the old evaluation system?
	Changes in your instruction?
	Learning of your students?
	How do you think the SMART goals affect your instruction?
	How do you think the SMART goals affect student learning?
	Your satisfaction with your work as a teacher?
	The learning climate of the school?
	The satisfaction of teachers, in general, in your school?
	Overall, what do you think about the evaluation process? (Distinguish feelings from other thoughts about the evaluation process.)
	What do you think it was designed to do?
	How well is it achieving what it was designed to do?
Tell me about the various ways in which you have learned to work with the new evaluation process.	What have you learned about the new evaluation process?
	How were you trained to use it?
	How effective was this training?
	About writing SMART goals?
	Of all your experiences in learning about the new evaluation process, what was the most effective? Least effective?
	How are (were) you involved in the development and evaluation of the system?
	How meaningful has this involvement been to you?
	How have your contributions been received by others in the planning process?
	What other methods of helping teachers implement the new evaluation process might be useful?
	Any suggestions?
Focus on relationships:	
Tell me about your overall relationship as a teacher	Please describe your relationships with

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
with your administrators (evaluators) in your school over the last 2-3years.	administrators during the evaluation process. How has the new evaluation system affected how you work with your administrators? Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How has the new evaluation system affected how you interact with your administrators? If you were evaluated under the previous system, have you become more cautious, less cautious, or about the same in sharing information with your administrators? If you had the opportunity, what would you tell your administrators about how the evaluation system affects your relationship with them?
Tell me about your relationships with your peers (other teachers) given the new evaluation process; that is, as it has developed over the last 2-3 years.	Do you see any changes in these relationships? If so, what are they? How do you account for these changes? How do the changes in these relationships affect your overall work in the school? How do they affect you as an educator? How do they affect you as a person? How does the new evaluation system affect interactions among teachers? How do you think collaboration among teachers is affected by the new evaluations system?
Other aspects:	
Tell me about the time it took you to prepare for your evaluation.	How much time did it take you to prepare for your evaluation? Prepare your portfolio? Prepare your SMART goal? How do you feel about the use of this time to complete your evaluation? What is your assessment of the costs and benefits of the process?
Of your experiences, what might you tell another teacher to help them as they go through the process for the first time?	Preparation time? Dealing with feelings of anxiety, fear, concern? Other recommendations?
If you could change anything in the process, what would that be?	What do you like about the process? What do you dislike about the process?
Tell me about any other experiences that you feel are important to share regarding the new teacher evaluation process.	What else would you like to share about the new teacher evaluation process? What have you left unsaid that should be communicated to the administrators of the teacher evaluation process? Locally? Statewide?
Demographics:	
Are you a non-continuing or continuing contract teacher?	
If non-continuing, is this your first year or second year under the new evaluation system?	
If continuing contract, were you under full	Which category of experience best defines you? 3 –

Teacher interview questions	Possible probes
evaluation during the first year or second year of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system?	20 years or over 20 years

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Appendix C: Securing Location, Dates, and Times for Interviews

Email to Administrator Participants to Secure Dates and Times for Interviews

Dear Administrator,

      Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Please check your calendar to see if _____ (date) at _____ (time) will work for you. To maintain confidentiality, the interviews are being conducted off-site with Dr. _____ _____ at (set location). When you enter the (site), his office is to the left. I am asking that you travel at your own expense to that location for your interview. Thank you for going to this trouble to help with this study.

      Please confirm your interview date and time by replying to this email at your earliest convenience. If for some reason this time is not convenient for you, please let me know and I will provide an alternate appointment.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg

Email to Teacher Participants to Secure Dates and Times for Interviews

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Please check your calendar to see if

_____ (date) at _____ (time) will work for you. To maintain

confidentiality, the interviews are being conducted off site with Dr. _____ _____at (set

location). When you enter the (site), his office is to the left. I am asking that you travel at your

own expense to that location for your interview. Thank you for going to this trouble to help with

this study.

Please confirm your interview date and time by replying to this email at your earliest

convenience. If for some reason this time is not convenient for you, please let me know and I

will provide an alternate appointment.

Sincerely,

Kristina C. Legg