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THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A
MULTIFACETED MODEL FOR DIFFERENTIATED
TEACHER EVALUATION TO IMPROVE
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

By
Nancy L. Schumacher

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
March 2003

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved April 10, 03

Abstract

Nancy L. Schumacher

The Development and Implementation
of a Multifaceted Model for
Differentiated Teacher Evaluation
to Improve Student Achievement

2003

Dr. Theodore Johnson
School Administration

Effective teacher evaluation is a meaningful experience that improves student achievement. The first purpose of this study was to examine the current evaluation system used in a special services school district in southern New Jersey. The second was to revise that system to reflect current research-based practice. An examination of the district's evaluation procedures, data from a questionnaire, and interviews with teachers revealed that the current system did not reflect their varied expectations and experience and was limited to classroom observations. The Personnel Evaluation Committee developed a new differentiated model of teacher evaluation. It uses a collection of data from multiple sources for evaluation and for individualization, it implements evaluation pathways based on career status. The first year of this process (2002-03) focused on enhancing the skills of beginning teachers. Data collected after the 4-month pilot-test indicated that the new evaluation process had a definite impact on improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers and that they would be willing to continue the process. It was recommended that the school district create ways to provide time for the

necessary developmental activities and allocate funds to secure the appropriate resources to promote the new multifaceted evaluation process.

Mini-Abstract

Nancy L. Schumacher

The Development and Implementation
of a Multifaceted Model for
Differentiated Teacher Evaluation
to Improve Student Achievement

2003

Dr. Theodore Johnson
School Administration

An examination of evaluation procedures in one school district resulted in recommendations for revisions that would reflect current research-based practice. A multifaceted process of teacher evaluation was developed by a committee and pilot-tested by beginning teachers to improve instruction. Study participants indicated positive results and willingness to continue.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Focus of the Study

The one common teacher evaluation instrument used to evaluate all personnel in the school district for this study was in place for the last ten years and written following the laws, rules, and regulations of the State of New Jersey. Following state and school board requirements for personnel evaluation was adequate but did not take advantage of the plethora of researched-based information available to teachers and administrators for the purpose of designing and implementing a more effective collaborative teacher evaluation system. The current system needed to be revised. It was not teacher-centered and was not linked to research or professional growth and development; therefore, the process did not serve a relevant and useful purpose for the staff it was intended to help.

The focus of this study was to determine the effectiveness of a variety of research-based and teacher-centered collaborative personnel evaluation techniques that could be used to revise the current evaluation process, so it would be more productive and improve the quality of teaching and learning in the district.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was twofold. The first purpose was to examine the effectiveness of the current evaluation process and the intent it presently serves. The second purpose was to describe and assess the effectiveness of a new collaborative, teacher-centered performance evaluation. To encourage collaboration, the goal was to have both staff and administrative volunteers actively involved in the process of developing this new policy based on an understanding of a variety of research-based

practices. The new evaluation process was intended to encourage professional development that will enhance teacher performance and improve the delivery of instructional services by certified staff to special education students.

The study resulted in Tier 1 of a new differentiated model of evaluation focused on beginning teachers and an analysis of teachers' attitudes toward its purposefulness. The proposed changes will be presented to all staff members, union representatives, administrators, and the school board for their consideration for future personnel evaluations.

Definitions

The following list contains key terms, concepts, and terminology used in this study that are important to clarify:

Accountability – being held responsible and answerable for specified results or outcomes of an activity including the negative consequences of poor results

Collaboration – formal involvement of people besides administrators working together toward a common goal

Collegiality – relationship among people within a profession in mutual support characterized by trust, openness, concern, and cooperation, while each assumes individual responsibility for his/her own growth and leadership

Differentiate – a process of providing distinct activities for individuals or groups based on varying needs and abilities of each

Effective teaching – teaching performance that leads to desirable student outcomes, usually measured by standardized test scores

Evaluation -- judging performance based on established criteria to bring about change in the behavior of those receiving the information

Experienced teacher – See “*expert teacher*”

Expert teacher – a teacher who has demonstrated a high level of proficiency in a content area or skill that is worthy of imitation or modeling

Formal evaluation – total and systematic process of performance evaluation within a given time period

Formative evaluation – evaluation that is used to modify or improve products, programs, or activities and is based on feedback obtained during their planning and development

Generalization – the results from one study or context can be transferred to another setting

Idle teacher – a tenured teacher that is performing below an acceptable level or minimum standard

Mentors – trusted and experienced supervisors or advisors who have personal and direct interest in the development and/or education of younger or less experienced individuals

Observation – Data collection by a trained observer to record a teacher’s ability while he/she is teaching

Personnel evaluation – see “*teacher evaluation*”

Pilot program – testing a new or revised process or program

Professional development -- activities to enhance professional career growth and teaching competency

Reflection – process of determining or judging the appropriateness or value of something with respect to specified objectives or standards through reviewing past performance

Self-Assessment or Self-Evaluation – review, critique, and monitor one's one teaching ability to improve performance

Staff development – employer-sponsored activities or provisions such as release time and tuition grants, through which existing personnel renew or acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes, related to job or personal development

Stakeholders – Teaching staff, district staff, administrators, students, parents, school board members, taxpayers, and community members

Summative evaluation – evaluation at the conclusion of an activity or plan to determine its effectiveness

Teacher evaluation – the process of determining how well a teacher has fulfilled his/her teaching responsibilities by using a variety of methods of data collection

Tenured teacher – a permanent employee of the school district after completing a probationary period

Veteran teacher – See “expert teacher”

Limitations of the Study

A major limitation in this study was its short duration. Researching, designing, implementing, and assessing a new personnel evaluation system is a long-term process. This seven-month project presents an overview of the components of a differentiated model of teacher evaluation and an assessment of the implemented pilot-program. It was

the intention of this study to review the currently used process and to make recommendations for ongoing analysis and development of an effective, meaningful personnel evaluation system that would become part of the district's three to five year strategic plan.

The study was also limited because there was a shortage of substitute teachers. Since the school district in this study had a finite number of available substitute teachers, it was difficult to release the staff to collaborate with each other for this project. If substitutes were available, then time for staff or administrators to collect comprehensive information related to designing and developing new evaluation strategies was usually limited. Coordinating staff and administrators release-time from multiple sites in the district also hindered collaboration.

Another limitation of the study was that the participants were volunteers from a very small, non-random sample population that had an interest in developing a new teacher evaluation system. There was reluctance from most staff members to participate. Even though the present system may be of little or no value, there was unavoidable resistance to changing it. Some non-participants felt unprepared for involvement in a new system. Others were distrustful and feared that repercussions would occur if they became involved in designing or implementing a new evaluation system. Many believed that involvement in the activities related to this study would take too much of their free time and therefore were unwilling to participate. For these reasons, the population used in this study may not represent the characteristics of the larger group.

Furthermore, there was limited administrative support at the implementation site. The administrator expressed concern that the new teachers involved in the pilot-program would be overloaded and they needed to be protected.

Evaluator expertise was not considered a limitation in this study since the formal observation instrument intended for use by qualified observers was not completed in time to be piloted for this study.

The research findings in this study would be restricted to other school districts that experience the same limitations in this study.

Setting of the Study

This study was conducted in the Salem County Special Services School District. This countywide school district is located in a rural area of southern New Jersey in the Philadelphia Metropolitan area. Salem County is 337.8 square miles with a population of approximately 193.3 people per square mile. The total population of Salem County is approximately 65,000 with a median household income of \$42,378. Eighty-one percent of the county residents are white, 14.8% are African-American, and 3.0% are Hispanic.

The Salem County Special Services School District was established in 1990 and is composed of six different educational sites located throughout Salem County. It serves an average of 60 moderate to severe special needs students. This population includes students classified as any one the following: Educable, trainable, neurologically impaired, perceptually impaired, emotionally disturbed, visually handicapped, learning or language disabled, behaviorally disabled, or multiply disabled. The average cost per pupil for the special education students is \$28,000. The district's alternative middle and high school

programs focus on approximately 25 at-risk students who may not be eligible for special education services. The average cost per pupil for alternative education students is \$12,500. Due to the nature of the district's student population, the student mobility rate for this district is 84.1%.

English (97%) is the predominant language in this school district. A typical class has five students with a 2.8:1 student to faculty ratio. The student to administrator ratio is 18.1:1 and the faculty to administrator ratio is 7.7:1. The school day is five hours and thirty minutes with five hours of instructional time.

There are 30 certificated staff members, 35 non-certified paraprofessional staff members, and 10 related services personnel. The average faculty salary is \$38,000. Eighty-one percent of the faculty have a BA/BS degree and 19% have a MA/MS degree.

The average salary of the administrators of the district is \$61,697. Two of the four administrators have Ph.D's.

Organization of the Study

The four remaining chapters of this study will be organized as follows: Chapter 2 is a "Review of Literature" that will provide the guiding context and ideas for the design of this study by relating current knowledge from existing research to personnel evaluation in the Salem County Special Services School District. Chapter 3 is the "Design of the Study." It will detail the research design used for this study. This includes a description of the research instrument used, the sample population, the data collection approach, and a description of the data analysis plan. Chapter 4 will present the "Research Findings." Detailed explanations of the results of the study are discussed in this chapter. Chapter 5

is the last chapter of this study. It describes the important conclusions of the study, the implications of the study for the school district, and addresses the need for further study.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

Teacher evaluation is conducted in schools for many reasons. When conducted properly, evaluations provide two-way communication between staff and administrators. A reliable evaluation can be used to identify a teacher's strengths and weaknesses and indicate areas that may need to be addressed through staff development activities or personal improvement plans. Evaluations are also used to make decisions regarding personnel placement, promotion, or dismissal. The main purpose of teacher evaluation is to enhance instruction and to ensure that each student in every classroom is receiving a quality education.

A successful evaluation process is effective. An evaluation procedure that is not clearly understood by each person involved, does not achieve usable outcomes for professional growth and development, and/or does not measure what it purports to measure is not worth the time and effort necessary to conduct it. According to Deborah Ellermeyer (1992) in the *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, "criteria used to analyze teacher's work should be consistent with what is known about effective teaching" (p. 162). A well-designed evaluation system that is developed based on a review of research associated with teacher evaluation is necessary to improve our schools. Teacher evaluation drives the school improvement process and must be a district priority. Hence, a successful teacher evaluation system will motivate teachers to improve their performances.

A Difficult Task

The voluminous amount of research on teacher evaluation has not solved the major problem of designing and implementing evaluation systems (Wareing, 1990). Evaluation is a difficult task. Whether a new evaluation process is produced, an old system is replaced, or a current system is revised, generalizations about teaching that are derived from research can only act as guides – there is no template from which to work (Mitchell, Wise, & Plake, 1990). Mitchell et al. (1990) found that “teaching research has demonstrated that effective teaching behaviors vary for different grade levels, subject areas, types of students, and instructional goals. Thus assessment of relative teaching proficiency...cannot be made on the basis of uniform, highly specific behavioral indicators” (p. 158). Therefore, evaluations must be based on broad criteria and have accommodating rating scales.

Duke (1986) concurred that changing an evaluation system is difficult and complex. He contended that meaningful change requires a clean understanding of what is already in operation, substantial skill development, and adequate resources. Duke’s study also indicated that it is important to understand existing evaluation procedures before attempting revision so that areas of greatest concern are addressed. This can be done through the use of questionnaires. Conley (1987) suggested that committees could be formed to (a) gather information that will help assess the current system, (b) recommend changes, (c) pilot-test new approaches, (d) introduce the staff to the new system, and (e) review the system.

Improvement will not happen quickly and is not inexpensive. Successful evaluation programs must address local needs, standards and norms (Barrett, 1986) and must abide

the law, union contracts, and board policies. Time and financial resources are necessary to consistently tie evaluation goals to state regulations, district plans, and union policy.

Funds are also necessary to train administrators and staff adequately when implementing the new system. Both evaluatees and evaluators “should know how to use evaluation instruments to acquire useful objective data, to interpret results, and to use those results to their advantage” (Sawa, p. 29). Also, effective systems require professional growth and development opportunities. Financial resources for training are necessary if teachers are to be motivated to address identified problems (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988). When there are few funds available for staff development, there is little incentive for teachers to grow and improve and the evaluation system will be unsuccessful at improving teacher performance (Conley, 1987).

A combined effort and a common goal will lead to a reliable, cost-effective system that will guide school improvement.

Components of an Effective Teacher Evaluation System

Assessment of teacher performance is generally divided into two major goals: formative and summative (Nolin & Farris, 1994). Formative evaluations are “improvement-oriented.” They can be conducted by the principal, a supervisor, or another teacher who focuses on supporting teachers, improving teacher effectiveness, and promoting excellence in teaching through skill enhancement and professional development (Stanley & Popham, 1988). Summative evaluations are usually less descriptive and more judgmental than formative evaluations. They are conducted by the principal primarily for the purpose of making personnel decisions regarding about a

teacher's tenure, dismissal, reassignment, or probation and therefore are more threatening to the evaluatee (Stanley & Popham).

An effective formative and summative teacher evaluation process uses both quantitative data from formal and informal observations and qualitative data from professional development options for reliable performance assessment information (see Appendix A). It is a critical mistake to assume that all teachers must be evaluated the same way on the same schedule (Duke & Stiggins). According to Sawa (1995) "it is no longer acceptable to judge teaching ability according to a set of pre-determined criteria" (p. 10). Comparing teachers with one common evaluation tool is not realistic for two reasons: (a) Using just one method for evaluation does not represent the complexities of teaching and (b) there is no differentiation between expert, competent, and novice teachers (Duke, 1993). The result is only a partial picture of a teacher's capabilities that may be inaccurate (Stanley & Popham). A multifaceted approach to evaluation results in individualization based on differentiated teacher needs and experience which is more effective than using only one approach (Conley, 1987).

Having more than one person evaluate a teacher also increases the usefulness of the formative evaluation and the reliability of the summative evaluation. Principals should not be the sole evaluators for many reasons. First, all administrators are not skilled evaluators, nor do they consider evaluation a priority (Ellermeyer). Second, most principals do not have enough time to conduct evaluations for an adequate amount of time or number of times (Kauchak, 1984). Third, "the judgmental relationships of an evaluation inhibit the trust and rapport that [the principal] needs to motivate a teacher to improve his/her performance" (Mitchell et al., p. 163). And fourth, some principals do

not intend to use evaluations to improve instruction. For them, a teacher observation simply satisfies an administrative duty (Kauchak). Ellermeyer (1992) suggests that using more than one evaluator also eliminates “personal biases that frequently interfere with accurate perceptions” during an evaluation observation (p. 163).

An evaluation system that encompasses a variety of evaluators gives teachers a “sense of safety” that one person’s evaluation is not going to result in unreasonable consequences (McLaughlin & Pfeifer). Employing expert teachers or using a committee approach to assist the principal in the evaluation process is more likely to result in teacher improvement (Mitchell et al.), especially at the secondary level where a principal’s lack of content knowledge is a weakness in the evaluation process (Weiss & Weiss, 1998).

Mitchell et al. noted that no matter which strategies a district chooses to implement for its teacher evaluation system, teachers and evaluators must have a shared understanding of criteria and a shared sense that the evaluation process will “capture” the criteria of teaching. Stakeholders must comprehend the evaluation system’s methods of data collection, expectations, and importance. They must also agree that the results accurately reflect performance (Conley, 2001).

Feedback is another important component of an effective teacher evaluation system. Feedback is defined as the information and recommendations provided to a teacher about his/her performance based on the results of that teacher’s evaluation in order to help the teacher improve his/her performance and make decisions concerning professional development and improvement (Evaluation Glossary). It is conducted in a timely manner while events are fresh at a post-observation conference to identify for the teacher his/her strengths and weaknesses (Boyd, 1989).

Competent evaluators must know how to improve teaching through valid recommendations (Mitchell et al.). Successful feedback after an evaluation requires two-way communication and an “interpersonal link between the teacher and the observer” if growth is to occur (Duke & Stiggins, 1986, p.32). The “principal’s comments should not be of a superficial nature; instead, each piece of feedback should be directly related to research findings in the area of effective teaching” (Ellermeyer, p.162). Ideas and suggestions should be delivered in a positive tone that maintains a balance of praise and criticism. The information given should be useful and not overwhelming (Boyd).

Feedback gives meaning to the evaluation only if it results in change. When the teacher in the post-observation conference is not open to constructive feedback and will not listen to what the principal has to say, even if the principal is knowledgeable about teaching and his/her evaluation records are valid and reliable, it will not serve a meaningful purpose and does not promote improvement (McLaughlin & Pfeifer, 1988; Duke, 1993). A variety of reasons for resistance are cited by Duke (1993) including: (a) disillusionment, when veteran teachers are cynical of new attempts at professional development after they have witnessed other attempts come and go; (b) preoccupation with other concerns, when teachers are overwhelmed and have no available personal resources for professional development; (c) fear of failure, when teachers feel threatened that an unsuccessful attempt at professional development will cause disappointment and loss of respect; and (d) lack of awareness, when teachers deny the need for their own growth and are unwilling to explore new methods. Duke continued to suggest that this type of rationalization causes most teachers to choose “safe” rather than meaningful goals.

Nevertheless, having the opportunity for quality professional growth to occur is key for further action to be taken by the teacher after he/she receives feedback. School systems should encourage and support teachers to take risks. Experienced, effective teachers should be challenged to continue professional growth. Consequently, resources for professional development must be available to demonstrate the district's commitment to "growth-oriented" evaluation if significant change is to take place (Duke & Stiggins). Teachers also need time to read, discuss, and visit other settings to become aware of ideas that will enhance their professional goals. If individual improvement and learning are not a high priority, teachers will not take evaluation seriously and it will be of little or no value (Duke & Stiggins; McLaughlin & Pfeifer).

Collaborative Design and Implementation

The traditional "dominant model" of teacher evaluation uses one common instrument and fixed procedures to evaluate all teachers. It is hierarchical rather than dialogical, as it does not promote two-way communication between teachers and administrators. Teachers are excluded from participation in the design and implementation of the evaluation process when the dominant method is used. This gives the evaluator total control (Ellermeyer). Teachers believe that an evaluation based exclusively on one evaluator's perception is inefficient and a waste of time. It not only makes the teacher feel threatened, manipulated, and hopeless, but results in little improvement as well (McLaughlin & Pfeifer; Mertler).

Conversely, the collaborative model of teacher evaluation recognizes that teacher ideas and contributions are valuable. This model promotes teacher involvement in the

design and implementation of an evaluation system that gives a more thorough assessment than the dominant model (Mertler). Stanley and Popham cited that “strong involvement of teachers is necessary if evaluation systems are to be successful” (p. 16). The collaborative model allows teachers to be involved in improving their own performance evaluation process because responsibilities are shared with administrators and other key stakeholders (McLaughlin & Pfeifer) which “strengthens rather than weakens its effectiveness” (Striefer, 1987). Furthermore, “teachers and supervisors do not always agree on what constitutes effective teaching” (Osmond, 1978, p. 4). When their efforts are merged and teachers and supervisors work cooperatively in the development of the evaluation process, teachers are more satisfied with the evaluation procedures because “they can affect the criteria on which they are judged” (Mitchell et al.). This results in a greater potential for acceptability (Sawa).

Conley (1987) suggested that five factors are essential to the success of an effective collaborative evaluation approach: (1) the system must be flexible to change; (2) continual assessment must occur; (3) innovative evaluation approaches must be explored and pilot-tested; (4) attention must be given to the union contract, school policy and the changing law constraints; and (5) staff members need to be introduced to the new system (p. 63).

Currently Used Methods of Personnel Evaluation

There are numerous methods currently in use from which to choose when designing a multifaceted evaluation process for evaluating teachers. Of these, classroom observations are the “most popular evaluation method” even though research criticizes classroom

observations as “potentially biased, invalid, and unreliable” (Barrett, 1986, p. 2).

According to Mitchell et al., “classroom observations reveal little about the coherence of the curriculum, the depth and breadth of content covered,” teaching techniques, the variety of materials used, or the assignments (p. 158). However, teachers generally accept classroom observations as reasonably reliable providing the evaluator has the knowledge and training to make meaningful, accurate observations (Stanley & Popham).

More recent studies have also revealed that “teachers are willing to be observed by someone other than administrative personnel” (Ellermeyer, p. 163). Teachers interviewed after the study conducted by Sawa indicated a preference for an evaluation system that includes peer assistance. One teacher quoted from that study believes that “you can learn more about teaching by watching peers teach than you can by having someone observe you and write an evaluation” (Sawa, p. 36). Mertler (1997) found that when the collegial relationship is viewed as non-threatening, peer evaluation provides an additional perspective from which both the observer and the observed may learn. Also, since peer evaluators assist administrators, the number of observations a teacher has throughout the school year increases.

Teachers perceive informal student feedback to be beneficial as well in identifying strengths and weaknesses (Mertler). They reason that it is only logical to have students assess their performance because the students are in class with them everyday. Student feedback involves and empowers students and encourages their collaboration in the evaluation process.

Self-assessment is considered another effective method of teacher evaluation. Self-evaluation techniques include reflective journals, portfolios, and videos (Mertler). Boyd

noted that the self-evaluative method of evaluation cannot stand alone since it may be biased from the teacher's perspective. However, when used with other sources of information, self-evaluation methods identify weak areas relatively quickly and easily.

What the Review of Research Literature Indicated for My Study

Teaching is a complex act. It is not possible to document the nuances of teaching using one format for all educators. As McLaughlin and Pfeifer illustrated, a standardized evaluation system is not able to capture the complexities of teaching.

The one common teacher evaluation instrument used to evaluate all personnel in the school district for this study has been in place for ten years. It is not flexible or collaborative. Improvements are long overdue. According to Duke (1993), "when the evaluation experience of teachers is based, year in and out, on the same set of basic teaching competencies or performance standards, the standardization of practice – rather than professional growth – becomes the chief focus of attention" (p. 702). If the main purpose of teacher evaluation is to enhance instruction and to ensure that each student in every classroom is receiving a quality education, then an effort must be made to obtain a thorough and representative assessment of teachers' performance.

To discover the alternative types of evaluation procedures available, teachers and administrators need to collaboratively access the expanding research base on teacher evaluation that consider a variety of skills. This will improve the current evaluation system, foster professional development, improve teacher effectiveness, and promote school improvement.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The year prior to this study, the author gathered background data to assess the current Salem County Special Services School District (SCSSSD) personnel evaluation system. After a review of the district's teacher evaluation instrument, the district's evaluation procedure, the district's policy and teacher's union contract on staff evaluation, and the state laws, rules, and regulations concerning the evaluation of teachers, it was concluded that the SCSSSD evaluation process, which was written ten years ago, follows state policy and only wavers slightly from the actual wording of the law in the evaluation guidelines for the State of New Jersey. Examples of exceptions and omissions from SCSSSD guidelines and procedures for staff members include: (a) specific procedures for the observation and evaluation of non-tenured teachers pursuant to New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC) 6:3-4.1, (b) regulations regarding required signatures pursuant to NJAC 6:3-4.3 (e4), (c) the number of observations required pursuant to NJAC 6:3-4.3, and (d) provisions to be added to the annual review by the evaluated staff member pursuant NJAC 6:3-4.3 (f5).

It was also concluded at that time that the formal observation instrument and the evaluation procedure currently in use were ineffective at promoting professional growth and development because the same methods of data collection and for reporting teacher performances was identical for all certified staff and was used for each evaluation of every teacher yearly. This common teacher evaluation instrument used to evaluate all

personnel at SCSSSD was not research-based and did not serve a relevant and useful purpose. By taking advantage of the plethora of information available to teachers and administrators regarding effective collaborative teacher evaluation systems, the current evaluation system was revised differentially so it would be a more productive experience and improve the quality of teaching in the district. It was proposed that the implementation of this new process would promote professional growth and development, enhance the delivery of instructional services, and ensure that each student in every classroom is received a quality education.

General Description of the Research Design

A four member Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC) was established to revise the current SCSSSD evaluation system and to undertake the task of researching, designing, implementing, and assessing a more effective and meaningful collaborative teacher evaluation that represents the complexities and nuances of teaching. The PEC reviewed the current literature on personnel evaluation. The committee suggested that teachers in different stages of their career be evaluated with different instruments and with alternative methods. They chose to differentiate the evaluation into four pathways: Tier 1 – Beginning Teachers; Tier 2 – Non-tenure Teachers; Tier 3 – Tenured Teachers; and Tier 4 – Idle Teachers. The PEC also decided that because of the time requirements involved with this undertaking, this project would be a long-term process that would become part of the district's 3-5 year strategic plan.

A questionnaire and interview format was used to determine from experienced teachers in the district what their perceptions were regarding the current evaluation system. The new process is currently focused on Tier1: Beginning Teachers. New

teachers at two sites were also surveyed using questionnaires regarding their sense-of-self at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the year. Neophyte teachers at one of these two sites were involved in the implementation process collaboratively developed by the PEC to pilot-test alternative methods of evaluation. The beginning teachers at the other site were not involved except for the pre-post survey. New teachers involved in this study were also interviewed regarding their view of the newly developed evaluation process for beginning teachers. They were also asked to provide feedback on the proposed alternative methods of evaluation and to give their perception of what was effective and meaningful about the process.

Development and Design of the Research Instrumentation

Several questionnaires from prior research on teacher evaluation were reviewed for their applicability to gain insight on the perceptions of experienced teachers in the district about the current evaluation process. Daniel Duke's "Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire" (TEEQ) from his work for the American Association of School Administrators (ASSA) in *Teacher Evaluation: Five Keys to Growth* was selected because it seemed most appropriate to help the PEC to introduce collaborative, growth-oriented differentiated evaluation experiences. The TEEQ is a 55-question, 5-point Likert scale formatted survey. The final question has an open-ended format. Permission to reproduce this document was obtained via Internet e-mail from Marion H. Hunt of the ASSA organization.

The questions formulated at the beginning of the study for the one-to-one interviews of experienced teachers regarding their perceptions of the current evaluation system were selected from the variety of questions available on the questionnaires that were reviewed

for distribution, but were not chosen to be used for this study. The interviews were “partially structured” in that the open-ended questions were phrased precisely; however, additional questions and modifications were made when deemed appropriate (see Appendix B).

The first year teachers were asked to complete a Beginning Teachers’ View-of-Self (BTVOS) questionnaire developed by Dr. Gerald M. Mager of Syracuse University, New York. This questionnaire from the Office of Teaching Initiatives is considered to be in the public domain of the World Wide Web and may be reproduced without permission (Office of Teaching, 2002). The interview questions for the beginning teachers at the end of the pilot program were formulated using the same method described above for the experienced teacher interviews.

No formal training was necessary to administer either questionnaire. Scoring and interpreting the results of the BTVOS questionnaire would have been easily done by comparing pre-post scores of each individual participant. An increase in a score in an area indicated increased positive self-image in that area and that progress had been made in developing strength in that area. The PEC expected to witness significantly more increases in areas of positive self-image of the beginning teachers involved with the pilot program when compared to the scores of the beginning teachers that were not involved in the new evaluation process. However, due to the poor response rate, there was insufficient data for this comparison to be made.

Scoring and interpreting the results of the TEEQ was difficult without explicit knowledge of the process. For this study, the PEC interpreted the results by calculating the number of times each question was answered a certain way on the 5-point Likert scale

and computing the percentage for each. This information was useful in getting detailed information on the numerous likes and dislikes that experienced teachers have of the evaluation system.

The data gathered from the TEEQ was used along with the data from the experienced teacher interviews, the BTVOS, and research-based advances in the evaluation of teachers to help develop Tier 1 of the new collaborative, teacher evaluation system. As such, the existing formal observation instrument was differentiated for beginning teachers through revision, omission, or expansion, and alternative methods of evaluation were offered based on this knowledge.

Description of the Sampling and Sampling Techniques

The TEEQ survey was mailed to all 18 certified teachers in the school district that had been employed as teachers in this district the year prior to this study. Respondents in the TEEQ survey (n=9) formed a small, non-random sample population of volunteers that had an interest in developing a new teacher evaluation system for SCSSSD.

The experienced teachers who volunteered to be interviewed were also employed as teachers in this district the year prior to the study. These teachers (n=2) wanted to participate in the project but did not desire to join the PEC. Because of the interviewer's familiarity with the interview participants, the qualitative data collected may be skewed since acquaintances tend to give the researcher what they believe is the desired response to look good or to please the researcher.

There were four inexperienced teachers in the school district. Beginning teachers that participated in the pilot-test program, and completed the pre-post BTVOS questionnaire and interview process (n=2), were purposefully selected because of their status as first

year teachers at one site in the district. Their BTVOS scores were compared to the pre-post score of two beginning teachers at another site in the district.

Description of the Data Collection Approach

The instrument used to collect the data on perceptions of the experienced teachers, the “Teacher’s Evaluation Experience Questionnaire,” was self-administered. To protect each respondent’s anonymity, it was mailed in September 2002 to all certified teachers in the Salem County Special Services School District for the 2002-03 school year who also taught during the 2001-02 school year. A letter of explanation about the questionnaire, along with a stamped and addressed envelope to return the questionnaire, was also provided in the mailing. Reminders to return the questionnaires promptly to the Personnel Evaluation Committee were given to these teachers by their administrators at the first staff meeting in September. In addition, extra copies of the questionnaires were furnished at each site for those teachers who were unable to locate their original.

By October 1, 2002, nine surveys had been returned to the PEC. Subsequent requests to submit the completed questionnaire made after that time by the site administrators or the PEC did not yield any more responses.

The participants in the experienced teacher interviews (n=2) were questioned after school during September 2002. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The interviews were conducted to reveal rich, descriptive data regarding personnel evaluation that may have been excluded in the survey format. Another purpose of the interview was to reveal similarities and differences between the survey data and the interview data.

The data collection approach chosen to focus the PEC’s design and implementation of Tier 1 for beginning teachers was the test-retest approach using the BTVOS

questionnaire. Because of time constraints and the distance between SCSSSD sites, the pilot program for new teachers was restricted to one site. After gaining permission from the school district's superintendent to proceed with the study using the new teachers, and presenting the plan for Tier 1 of this study to the site administrator, the two beginning teachers at the site were recruited for this study.

A meeting was scheduled in November 2002 with the beginning teachers to introduce the new system and to present an overview of the objectives of the Personnel Evaluation Committee and the role and responsibilities of the committee and the new teachers involved in the process. Each was given the BTVOS questionnaire at this time and was asked to complete and return it to the PEC via interoffice mail in five days. The beginning teachers at the other SCSSSD site who were not involved in the pilot program were also asked to complete the BTVOS at the same time. The results of the four beginning teacher's first BTVOS survey from November 2002 were compared to the results from second BTVOS survey in February 2003 after the pilot program had been implemented for four months.

Data was also collected during the pilot program by the peer mentors that were assigned to each beginning teacher and from their study groups that were formed as part of the PEC's new evaluation process. Participants were instructed to conduct formal meetings and classroom observations and to hold pre- and post conferences for each to gather data and to monitor the process and progress of the pilot program. They were asked to log the dates and times of each meeting along with a brief, written narrative description or note taking of what, how, and/or why it took place.

Interviews were also conducted in February 2003 with the beginning teachers in the pilot program.

Description of the Data Analysis Plan

The data collected from the beginning teachers is not statistically significant; however, the first administration of the BTVOS questionnaire reasonably measured what it intended to measure. Comparisons were not able to be made by the PEC between the results of the initial and final BTVOS for the two beginning teachers in the pilot program and the two beginning teachers not in the pilot program because only one of the four surveys were returned. Likewise, only one mentor log was submitted and the data was also insignificant. Therefore, only the data collected from the experienced and new teacher interviews was used to speculate if there were any changes in knowledge, attitude, and/or behavior that may have been the result of the pilot program. Inferences were made about the data collected as the PEC reflected the revision and implementation process. The examination of the beginning teacher evaluation process up to this point will assist the PEC in making any necessary changes or revisions to Tier 1. It will also serve as a guide for planning Tiers 2-4 of the differentiated model of personnel evaluation for the Salem County Special Services School District.

Chapter 4

Presentation of Research Findings

Introduction

This study was designed to determine first the effectiveness of the existing teacher evaluation process used in the Salem County Special Services School District (SCSSSD) when compared to current research-based practice and then to reveal teacher attitudes toward the effectiveness of a new procedure. Data was collected using a 55-question survey measuring teacher evaluation experience (n=9) and through personal interviews (n=2) to get a clear understanding of what was already in operation. A voluntary Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC) of four educators collaboratively reviewed this data for the purpose of revising the existing system to reflect a more accurate assessment of the relative performance of teachers. The PEC developed a differentiated model of evaluation that relies on a variety of activities and procedures for specific groups of teachers.

The first year of the pilot-program, which was partially implemented during 2002-03, focused on beginning teachers (n=4). Pre- and post data was collected over a four-month period from a 28-question instrument that assessed the enhancement of beginning teacher skills and professional development as a result of involvement in piloting the proposed evaluation system (n=2) and from a control group (n=2) not involved with this process. In addition, veteran teachers (n=2) who worked with the beginning teachers as part of this new process were each interviewed for approximately one hour to identify their views on the impact that the revised evaluation procedures had on the inexperienced teachers.

The interpretation of the data was somewhat difficult due to the small population involved in this study. The sources of information and methods of data collection for the beginning teacher evaluation process pilot program developed by the PEC are shown in Table 1. The implementation timetable for this process is shown in Table 2. Findings from the data collection are organized into three sections: Current Evaluation Procedure, Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self, and New Evaluation Process.

TABLE 1

Sources of Information and Methods of Data Collection

Source	Quantitative collection	Qualitative collection	Purpose
Certified Teachers with One or More Years Experience in the District	Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire	One-to-One Personal Interviews	Assess Existing Evaluation Procedures
Beginning Teachers	Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self Survey (1 st Administration)	--	Assess Strengths and Weaknesses Before Pilot Program
Beginning Teachers	Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self Survey (2 nd Administration)	One-to-One Personal Interviews	Assess Strengths and Weaknesses After Implementation of Pilot Program
Veteran Teachers Participating in Pilot Program	--	One-to-One Personal Interviews	Assess Effectiveness of Pilot Program
Veteran Teachers Participating in Pilot Program	Logs Of Meeting Times and Dates	Reflective-Note taking of Describing Professional Development Activities	Assess Effectiveness of Pilot Program

TABLE 2

Implementation Timetable

Date	Event	Person(s) responsible
August 2002	Complete Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire (TEEQ)	Certified Teachers with One or More Years Experience in the District
August 2002	Identify New Teachers (Names and Site Locations)	Administrator
September 2002	Recruit Veteran Staff Members for Personnel Evaluation Committee from Pennsville Site (PEC)	PEC Project Chairperson (Administrative Intern)
September 2002	Interview Certified Teachers with One or More Years Experience in the District	PEC Project Chairperson
October 2002	Initial PEC Meeting (Orientation)	PEC
October 2002	Record Findings and Implications From TEEQ and Certified Teacher Interviews	PEC
October 2002	Plan Revisions to Current Evaluation Procedures	PEC
November 2002	Complete Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self Survey (BTVOS)	New Teachers at Daretown Site and Pennsville Site
November 2002	Recruit Beginning Teachers for Pilot Program from Pennsville Site	PEC Project Chairperson
November 2002	Beginning Teacher Orientation	PEC Project Chairperson
November 2002	Monthly PEC Meeting	PEC
November 2002	Identify Peer Coaches and Study Group Leaders for Pilot Project	PEC
December 2002	Begin Peer Coaching and Study Groups	Veteran and Beginning Teacher Volunteer Participants in Pilot Program
Continued on next page		

December 2002	Monthly PEC Meeting	PEC and Volunteer Participants in Pilot Program
January 2003	Monthly PEC Meeting	PEC and Volunteer Participants in Pilot Program
February 2003	Monthly PEC Meeting	PEC and Volunteer Participants in Pilot Program
February 2003	Complete Draft of Beginning Teacher Handbook and Formal Evaluation Forms	PEC
February 2003	Interview Beginning Teachers in Pilot Program	PEC Project Chairperson
February 2003	Complete Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self Survey (posttest)	New Teachers at Daretown Site and Pennsville Site
February 2003	Interview Peer Coaches and Study Group Leaders	PEC Project Chairperson
February 2003	Record Findings and Implications From BTVOS (posttest) and Teacher Interviews to Assess Effectiveness of Pilot Program	PEC
March 2003	Monthly PEC Meeting	PEC and Volunteer Participants in Pilot Program
March 2003	Submit Project Findings and Proposed Draft to Key Stakeholders	PEC

Current Evaluation Procedure

The “Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire” (TEEQ) was distributed in September 2002 to the 18 certified teachers who had taught in SCSSSD at least one year prior to this study. The participants were asked to describe their experiences concerning the current teacher evaluation system in detail. Fifty percent (n=9) of the teachers responded. Demographic data was obtained from this group for the number of years of experience each has had as a teacher and the grade level each is currently teaching. The frequencies of responses are included in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Demographics of TEEQ Respondents

	Number	Percent
Teaching experience in years		
0 to 1	1	11.1
2 to 3	2	22.2
4 to 5	1	11.1
6 to 10	3	33.3
11+	2	22.2
Grade level taught		
Elementary	2	22.2
Middle	2	22.2
Secondary	5	55.5

Responses were measured by calculating the frequency of each on a 5-point scale ranging from A (*no impact*) to E (*strong impact*). Based on the tabulation of responses to 50 of the 55 questions that used the 5-point rating scale (discounting questions 11, 12, 34, 35, and 38) overall, teacher opinions on various aspects of their previous performance evaluations were judged to be generally poor. Only 42% of the nine respondents indicated that teacher evaluation procedures had a *strong impact* on them in the past by choosing D or E on the questionnaire while 58% of the respondents indicated that the procedures had *little to no impact* on them by choosing A, B, or C. This suggested that the majority of the educators who taught in SCSSSD last year either accepted the current teacher evaluation practice because that is the way things have always been done, or they were dissatisfied with status quo.

An examination of the responses to the TEEQ and the one-to-one interviews revealed the following:

Question 24. Usefulness of suggestions for improvement. A majority of respondents (six of nine) agreed that it was “useful.”

Question 13. Experience with teacher evaluation prior to most recent experience. A majority of respondents (six of nine) believed it was a “waste of time.”

To validate if evaluations were *useful* or a *waste of time* for teachers in the past, responses from the two personal interviews were sought. When asked if there was anything in the evaluation that was useful in improving performance, the responses were “I don’t think so” and “No, I don’t think it did.” This suggested that the existing teacher evaluation process did not promote professional development--which is an important

component of the proposed research-based teacher evaluation process--and was of little value in helping teachers improve.

Question 49. Time allotted during the day for professional development. All nine respondents indicated there was very little time, if any time at all, for professional development, by choosing A, B, or C.

Question 50. Available training programs and models. Again, 100% of the respondents thought that there were few, if any, available programs for professional development. When both interviewees were asked if they had had the opportunity to develop a plan for [their] professional development following the previous evaluation, one reported that it was implicitly suggested that she “continue to hone [her] skills.” The other said, “It never led to anything because it was just another evaluation where everything was checked off as *good*.” This further indicated that the current process used for teacher evaluation is an empty exercise.

Question 2. Rate the strength of your professional expectations of yourself. Survey results showed that more than 75% of the respondents demand a great deal. This indicated that there is a willingness to pursue professional growth and development opportunities if they were available.

The literature review for this study noted that feedback is another fundamental element of an effective evaluation process. A large majority of the respondents reported on questions 40, 42, and 44 in Section D of the TEEQ that feedback from the evaluator varied from *infrequent* and *shallow*, to *non-specific*. One interview subject reported that for her, feedback was “Here, sign this.” The other subject indicated that she has never had a post-conference meeting after an observation for an evaluation.

Likewise, the purpose for teacher evaluation was also unclear. On the 5-point A to E rating scale from *vague* to *clear* for question number 51, only one respondent chose E, while two chose A, two chose B, two chose C, and one chose D. One interviewee stated that the purpose of evaluation is to “give the staff person a sense of where they’re going right and where they need to improve.” The other concurred, “I think it should tell you what your strengths and weaknesses are and give you some ideas for correcting your weaknesses.” As indicated previously, it should be clear to all teachers that the intention of evaluation is to promote professional growth and development to improve student learning and achievement.

Question 37. Average length of formal observation. Two respondents reported that their formal observations were only a few minutes in length. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes Annotated (N.J.S.A.) 18:A 27-3.1, an observation shall be conducted for a minimum duration of one class period in a secondary school, and in an elementary school for the duration of one complete subject lesson. This indicated that a percentage of formal observations conducted in the district were not meeting the legal requirements as stipulated by the State of New Jersey.

Open-ended responses in Section F of the TEEQ asked respondents to specify “...factors that you think are related to the success (or lack of success) of your past teacher evaluation experiences that should be included....” Sample responses are listed in quotation marks below along with the corresponding data from other TEEQ questions if available or from interviews. Suggestions for additions to the present system based on current research are italicized.

1. "After all these years I'm still petrified of evaluations after that bad experience." Both interviewees indicated that the use of pre- and post conferences are not used on a regular basis at this time. (*Use pre- and post observation conferences.*)
2. "My evaluations have been based only on my teaching performance at one particular time and it can be typical or atypical." (*Use multiple data sources.*)
3. "I've had the gambit from having an administrator at one site think almost everything I did was wonderful to having an administrator the next year at another site think that everything I did was lousy. Neither of them was a true picture of my skills and what I was doing on the job. One was too glowing and one was too negative." Seven of nine people indicated on Question 38 that they had been observed by the supervisor only. (*Use multiple observers.*)

Beginning Teachers' Views-of Self

In November 2002, the "Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self" (BTVOS) was distributed to the four beginning teachers that started teaching in SCSSSD in September 2002. The new teachers were asked to describe their views of themselves as beginning teachers by placing their responses on a 7-point continuum. It is noted on this instrument that the 28 items are drawn from the literature on beginning teachers. Two of the teachers (treatment group) piloted specified elements of the new evaluation system proposed by the Personnel Evaluation Committee that were ready to be field tested in the course of this short study. The two remaining new teachers at a separate site (control group) were not exposed to any element of the pilot program.

In February 2003, the BTVOS was re-administered to all four first year teachers as a posttest to measure the effectiveness of the beginning teacher evaluation pilot program by comparing it to the first administration.

The first administration of the BTVOS assessment revealed that new teachers have a positive image of their development in many areas as indicated by the scores of 5, 6, or 7 from all four respondents on the items listed below in Table 4 as their strengths. The majority of these items can be categorized as representing strengths in either a high degree of collegiality (items 18-22) or the importance of teaching (items 25-28). Table 5 illustrates the response frequency for the remaining sixteen BTVOS items for the treatment group. Table 6 represents the control group.

TABLE 4

Areas of Strength Items on 1st Administration of Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self (Treatment and Control Groups)

Items	Scale						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I can adjust a lesson in the midst of teaching it if I feel it is appropriate to do so.					2	2	
15. I have established expectations for students' behavior that they understand and respond to.					2	1	1
16. I discipline students in ways that I feel are appropriate and effective.					2	2	
18. I feel like I have found a place for myself with the faculty and staff in the building in which I teach.					1	3	
19. I know where to turn in the school when I need to resolve problems.					1	3	
20. I feel comfortable in approaching and working with other teachers, the school administrators, and other staff.					1	2	1
21. I feel I am part of the district as well as my school.					1	3	
22. I feel comfortable in exchanging ideas with the people with whom I work.						4	
25. I can see teaching is work through which I can express myself.					1	2	1
26. I see that as a teacher, I will be able to make an important contribution to society.					1	1	2
27. Teaching has enhanced my sense of self.					1	2	1
28. Through my efforts, I can enhance the quality of the school and district in which I teach.					2	2	

TABLE 5

First Administration of Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self (Treatment Group)

Items	Scale						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I know and use a variety of instructional methods appropriate to the content area(s) I teach.			2				
2. I can sequence activities such that student learning is maximized.				2			
3. I have identified individual differences among my students and adjust for those differences in my planning and teaching.					2		
4. I can pace my lessons so that students are neither overwhelmed nor bored.				1	1		
6. I teach in such a way that students do participate or perform as I would like them to.				2			
7. I am well organized for carrying out my work efficiently and effectively.			1			1	
8. My daily planning consistently results in lessons which turn out the way I intended them to.				1	1		
9. I know how to use the curriculum guides for my content area(s) which are available in my district.			1	1			
10. I can make reasonably accurate judgements about the progress my students are making.				1	1		
11. I use several different techniques to evaluate my own teaching.				2			
12. I have established a good rapport with my students, as individuals and as a group.			1	1			
13. I use management skills which make good use of time and other resources, minimize interruptions, and keep students engaged.			1		1		
14. I have established class routines which students understand and follow.					2		
17. I understand the general procedures used in the building in which I teach.				2			
23. I am a participant in professional activities that enhance my work and sense of self.					2		
24. I manage well the demands of teaching along with the demands of my personal life.					1	1	

TABLE 6

First Administration of Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self (Control Group)

Items	Scale						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I know and use a variety of instructional methods appropriate to the content area(s) I teach.		1		1			
2. I can sequence activities such that student learning is maximized.		1				1	
3. I have identified individual differences among my students and adjust for those differences in my planning and teaching.		1		1			
4. I can pace my lessons so that students are neither overwhelmed nor bored.			1		1		
6. I teach in such a way that students do participate or perform as I would like them to.				1		1	
7. I am well organized for carrying out my work efficiently and effectively.	1					1	
8. My daily planning consistently results in lessons which turn out the way I intended them to.	1				1		
9. I know how to use the curriculum guides for my content area(s) which are available in my district.	1		1				
10. I can make reasonably accurate judgements about the progress my students are making.			1		1		
11. I use several different techniques to evaluate my own teaching.	1				1		
12. I have established a good rapport with my students, as individuals and as a group.					2		
13. I use management skills which make good use of time and other resources, minimize interruptions, and keep students engaged.				2			
14. I have established class routines which students understand and follow.		1				1	
17. I understand the general procedures used in the building in which I teach.			1	1			
23. I am a participant in professional activities that enhance my work and sense of self.		2					
24. I manage well the demands of teaching along with the demands of my personal life.			2				

The results of the comparison between the pre- and post administration of the Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self were inconclusive as only one survey was returned.

New Evaluation Process

The objective of this study was to compare current research-based practice on effective teacher evaluation procedures to the Salem County Special Services School District's (SCSSSD) current evaluation procedure. Interviews with veteran teachers, a review of the existing policies and procedures, and the data gathered from the Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire (TEEQ) and the first administration of the Beginning Teachers' Views-of-Self (BTVOS) survey were used to develop a new research-based evaluation process for SCSSSD. Based on the information gathered and assessed, areas of weakness were identified in the existing evaluation system. The Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC) made suggestions for revisions to the existing procedures. The intention of the proposed pilot program was to improve the meaningfulness of teacher evaluations in the district and to promote effective formal and informal evaluations, professional development, collegial collaboration, and self-reflection and assessment with the ultimate goal of improved student learning and achievement (see Figure 1).

Multifaceted Model for Differentiated Teacher Evaluation

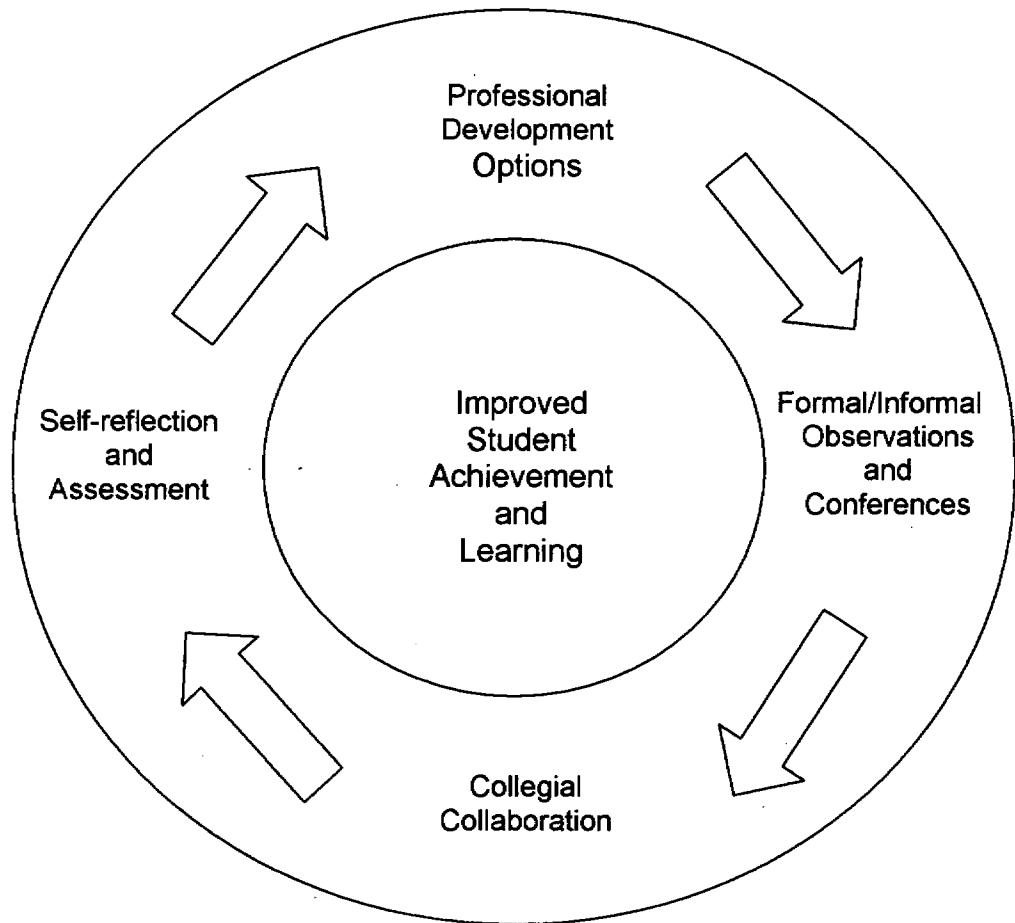


Figure 1. The proposed teacher evaluation process as presented to the Salem County Special Services School District by the Personnel Evaluation Committee.

The first year of the new evaluation process pilot-program (2002-03) focused on enhancing the skills of beginning teachers. The veteran teachers and new teachers who volunteered to be participants in this study were asked to keep logs to document meeting dates, times, and topics for professional development activities that developed as a result of this experience. However, as with the BTVOS survey, only one log was submitted. This log provided insufficient data to judge the effectiveness of the pilot program.

Therefore, the new evaluation process was assessed solely through personal interviews. Three of the four teachers involved with the study were present for their 20-minute interviews. The questions were designed to judge the effectiveness of the new evaluation process by revealing the perceptions of the new and veteran teachers that participated in piloting the new system.

Question 1. Was the purpose and intention for having a new beginning teacher evaluation process clearly communicated to you?

Beginning teacher: "Yes it was."

Veteran teacher A: "Absolutely."

Veteran teacher B: "Yes."

Question 2. Were the expectations for the two professional development options chosen by you, peer coaching and study groups, made clear to you?

Beginning teacher: "Yes."

Veteran teacher A: "Most of the time."

Veteran teacher B: "Yes."

Question 3. What expectations/purposes were communicated to you about this process?

Beginning teacher: "Basically, if I have any problems or concerns I can go to a coach teacher."

Veteran teacher A: "The purposes and expectation were that this would just be a support network for new teachers and I thought that was a good idea."

Veteran teacher B: No response.

Question 4. Did being involved in this pilot-program this year promote collegial communication?

Beginning teacher: "Yes, it fostered it more."

Veteran teacher A: "I think it really helped the new teachers in particular to be more vocal towards their coaches which I think is really good because I think that for myself as a first year teacher, I was a little reluctant to go to the veteran teachers--so I think that was really good."

Veteran teacher B: "I don't think so because before I became a peer coach I already talked with my mentee since he has my students from last year."

Question 5. How many formal and informal meetings and study groups did you have with your coach?

Beginning teacher: "Six to eight meetings with my coach. No study groups."

Veteran Teacher A: "I know since the turn of the year I have eight meetings documented in my mentor journal. Prior to that I think we had three or four others. I think we had maybe four study group meetings. I would say we had informal meetings everyday. One of the reasons I think [the new teacher] asked me to get involved is because we were talking about this stuff already. So we spoke a lot, I would say numerous times."

Veteran teacher B: "Eight meetings."

Question 6. How much time would you say you devoted to study groups and meeting with your coach?

Beginning teacher: "I'm not sure."

Veteran teacher A: "Anywhere from 10-15 minutes to 20 minutes after school."

Veteran teacher B: "I met with the new teacher at least once a week. The length of time depended on what we talked about."

Question 7. How often do you think new teachers should meet collegially with veteran teachers?

Beginning teacher: "I don't think there should be a given number. I think it should be done on an *as needed* basis. So you should be able to do it any time you want."

Veteran teacher A: "I think we had it about right – maybe twice a week is probably best. Maybe like a Tuesday and Friday conversation looking at what we are going to do this week and then reviewing at the end of the week."

Veteran teacher B: "New teachers should meet a lot during the beginning of the school year to get acquainted with the policies of the district and then it should back off unless they have a problem that they need to solve."

Question 8. Did you visit your coach's classroom while he/she was instructing? If no, what obstacle impeded this process?

Beginning teacher: "I didn't and the reason was pretty much a staffing issue."

Veteran teacher A: "Fortunately, I was able to do that three times. Yes, I got in there and I sat for an hour each time. You know just trying to blend in as easy as possible. What would impede this process is if the principal in this district was not involved with the faculty. It's great that our principal lets us sit in someone else's room opposed to being on prep or hall duty or any of the other things that could get in the way in a regular public school."

Veteran teacher B: "No. There is not enough staff to get coverage, especially when aides are not substitute certified. Also, by the teacher leaving the classroom, problems start in the classroom."

Question 9. Did your coach visit your classroom while you were instructing? If no, what obstacles impeded this process?

Beginning teacher: "No, for the same reason."

Veteran teacher A: "He did too. I think he came in to my classroom once or twice. But last year he was in my room as an aide seven hours a day, five days a week, so he's familiar with my style. And in fact I think, he incorporates a lot of the things that we did last year that he saw, in his classroom now."

Veteran teacher B: "No."

Question 10. Do you think professional development options should be available to teachers as part of the evaluation process? What are the benefits and/or drawbacks?

Beginning teacher: "Yes, I think so. It promotes good communication and rapport and it may answer any questions or concerns both parties may have. It's good to have an exchange of ideas."

Veteran teacher A: "I think it's good to incorporate this but not as part of a teacher's permanent file. The mentee needs to be able to come to his mentor free of any burden so he or she can admit when they have a weakness and can't do something. The mentor has to be someone who is trusted and can help you through the rough spots."

Veteran teacher B: "Yes, but new teachers need to be willing to participate in the program. They cannot be thrown into the project. The peer coach needs to be somebody they can talk to and relate to. The benefits of the program can help them to become a better teacher since college does not prepare you for everything in the real world. The study groups can help them with different policies or anything else that they need help with."

Question 11. Did this process promote professional development?

Beginning teacher: "Yes, it did. Even if I wasn't formally involved in this process, I would have gone to her [my coach] anyway."

Veteran teacher A: "No doubt. Anytime that you're talking about how to be a better teacher, that's a good thing and it's going to develop good habits."

Veteran teacher B: "I did not get professional development from this."

Question 12: How would you define the meaningfulness of this process?

Beginning teacher: "I think it's good to have somebody who has many years in the field to go to and have that door open to you--so I think it's very useful to a first-time new teacher."

Veteran teacher A: "The more you prepare to be ready, the better you'll be at it."

Veteran teacher B: "The meaningfulness of this process is that the new teacher gets paired up with an experienced teacher to get help and learn different ideas that may work in his/her classroom."

Question 13. What suggestion would you have for improving the beginning teacher evaluation process?

Beginning teacher: "Nothing really to improve it. Just keep the communication line open, that's all."

Veteran teacher A: "This was good--the meetings and the conversations and having a mentor/coach person. I know Rowan [University] runs a Beginning Teacher Institute I think once a month, I like to see our district send our new teachers because I've heard really good things about that."

Veteran teacher B: "The program needs to start at the beginning of the school year and things need to be spelled out so everyone involved knows what they are supposed to do."

The following questions, numbered 14-20, were asked only to the beginning teachers.

Question 14. Were other professional development activities offered to you by the school district that were not part of this pilot program?

"Yes, there were opportunities, absolutely. But, I didn't pick up on any of them."

Question 15. If "yes," how much time did you devote to these other professional development activities this so far year?

N/A

Question 16. Do you feel self-assessment is effective for self-improvement?

"Yes."

Question 17. Did this process help you become more effective as a teacher?

"Yes, absolutely."

Question 18. What are the areas of perceived growth you have experienced?

"I guess in the area of teaching techniques and how to spice things up and do a variety of things. I was able to adapt new teaching techniques."

Question 19. Did this process help make it easier to cope with the stress of the first year teaching experience and lessen the feeling of isolation new teachers sometimes experience?

“No, with my background this really was not that stressful for me.”

Question 20. Do you plan on teaching here, elsewhere, or nowhere next year and why?

“Here.”

The following questions, numbered 21-23, were asked only to the veteran teachers.

Question 21. What form of training would be beneficial/useful to you if you did peer coaching or study groups again?

Veteran teacher A: No response

Veteran teacher B: “There needs to be more time to get together with whomever you are coaching and time to get together with the person in charge.”

Question 22. How did this process help your new teacher become a more effective as a teacher?

Veteran teacher A: “Yes, I think so and I think it goes back to that concept of metacognition – thinking about teaching can only help and the more you do it the better you’re going to get.”

Veteran teacher B: “I think that I helped the new teacher to the best of my ability.”

Question 23. Do you feel your new teacher changed his/her behavior as a result of your advice?

Veteran teacher A: “I know absolutely that he did. I know many times when I talked to him about a problem, I know he tried to implement all the things that we talked about. Some worked and some didn’t and I think that’s good enough.”

Veteran teacher B: “I feel that the new teacher took some of my ideas and tried them. But, dealing with special education children, especially emotionally disturbed children, ideas may work one day and not the next. It is also hard to try new things in a class where students don’t come to school everyday.”

The responses to the interview questions revealed that, overall, the participants were satisfied with the two professional development components of new evaluation process that they chose. The new and veteran teachers reported that the piloted system fostered collegiality, promoted professional development, and provided good support for new teachers, all of which are in alignment with current research-based practice for effective teacher evaluations. They also identified components that must be addressed before further implementation of the program such as (a) the provision of substitute staff coverage for teachers conducting peer visits, (b) the time for training veteran teachers who take on the responsibility of working with a new teacher, (c) the introduction of staff to the new system earlier in the school year, and (d) the development of clearer expectations of the teacher evaluation process.

Based on the data analysis collected from the first year of the study, it is clear that the program should continue. The preliminary findings will be used to inform and guide the planned expansion of the new teacher evaluation process into its second phase next year, Tier 2, which will include non-tenured second and third-year teachers.

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study

Introduction

The review of literature on effective teacher evaluations revealed that many components are needed to obtain a thorough and representative assessment of teacher quality. It also established that teacher evaluations must be positive, meaningful experiences that lead to a teacher's professional growth and development and improved student achievement and learning. With regard to this, research-based practice strongly supports a multifaceted approach to teacher evaluations using multiple evaluation procedures and multiple qualified observers for increased usefulness of this process. It further suggests: (a) differentiating the approach to evaluation based on teacher needs, (b) supplementing the formal process with a peer review approach and other professional development activities, (c) supporting collegial communication and collaboration, and (d) requiring timely feedback and reflective practices.

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, it examined the effectiveness of existing procedures already in operation in the Salem County Special Services School District (SCSSSD), then recommended revisions and changes based on the review of literature. Second, it pilot-tested a research-based approach to teacher evaluation for beginning teachers and assessed the effectiveness of this new process.

Conclusions and Implications Concerning the Current Evaluation Procedures

The data analyzed from the Teacher Evaluation Experience Questionnaire (TEEQ), the one-to-one personal interviews with veteran teachers, and the review of literature

indicated there were several areas that needed improvement to make the SCSSSD teacher evaluation process more effective and meaningful. Findings indicated that administrators dominated the evaluation procedures that existed in SCSSSD. The data suggested that the current procedures did not promote collegial two-way communication between teachers or between teachers and administrators through professional development options such as reflection and collaboration, or through pre- and post observation conferences. In addition, it was found that one common teacher evaluation instrument was used by one observer for all personnel, regardless of the teacher's experience or ability. The study also suggested that more feedback needs to be provided to the teachers.

These results implied that steps need to be taken to address the inefficiencies of the existing evaluation process to benefit the students in the district. It was recommended that the system be revised. A Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC) was instituted to adopt resourceful processes and procedures to assess teachers and to develop a proposal for an appropriate evaluation plan based on effective practice that has been documented in other settings. The goal was to develop a multifaceted system of observation and evaluation based on analysis of the data and suggestions from the literature that link teacher evaluation to professional development and improve student learning and achievement.

Conclusions and Implications Concerning the New Evaluation Process

Interviews with participants who pilot-tested the proposed evaluation process for beginning teachers revealed that the new process was, for the most part, a positive experience. They believed that the professional development activities (peer coaching

and study groups) that they collaboratively chose were non-threatening ways to promote collegiality. The participants also indicated that this aspect of the new evaluation process had a definite impact on improving the effectiveness of the new teachers and that they would be willing to continue the process.

The analysis of the interviews and compilation of information collected in the review of literature also indicated, however, that there were some barriers to overcome before implementation of the next phase of the process. The following revisions were suggested:

1. There needs to be more time for meeting with colleagues.
2. There needs to be a way for participants to get substitute coverage to do peer observations.
3. The process should start earlier in the school year.
4. The process and criteria need to be more clearly explained for better understanding.
5. The veteran teachers need more training to be peer helpers.
6. There should be more key stakeholders involved in the revision process.

Based on the positive response of the participants in the pilot process this year, it is advocated that the new evaluation process continues Tier 1 implementation and start Tier 2 next year with the following recommendations:

1. Create ways to find time for collaboration and professional development activities.
2. Make a commitment to school improvement by allocating resources to cover the costs of substitute teachers, training, and professional development stipends for teacher evaluation and growth.

3. Identify teachers that will be involved in this process in September of the next school year as early as June of the previous school year and induct other teachers as soon as possible.
4. Elicit support from key stakeholders in the revision of the teacher evaluation process.
5. Set the schedule for PEC and professional development meetings in advance to eliminate cancellations.
6. Formalize the process of documenting professional development activities to provide stronger data and to support compliance.
7. Utilize techniques to assess the impact of the new evaluation procedures on student achievement.

Implications of Study on Leadership Skills

According to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders, standard 1 states that a school administrator must have a “knowledge and understanding of effective communication.” If evaluations are to be effective, competent two-way communication is paramount to success. A good administrator can achieve this formally through pre- and post teacher observation conferences and informally by being easily accessible and visible.

Standard 1 also indicates that it is important for educational leaders to promote continuous school improvement. An effective teacher evaluation process that is supported by a literature review and research-based practice will help achieve this goal. Furthermore, this standard notes that when “the school community is involved in school improvement efforts” success of all students is advanced. Additional contributions from

staff and administrators during further development of this process are important for the acceptance of these new procedures.

Also in regard to ISLLC Standard 1, an administrator must have “knowledge and understanding of information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies.” The implication for this study is that school leaders must understand the importance of using multiple sources and methods of information collection to accurately measure and assess teacher performance.

Other implications of this study on leadership skills are stated in ISLLC Standard 2. Therein, it is advised that school administrators have an understanding of “principles of effective instruction.” Therefore, school administrators must continually evaluate and assess current instructional methods and practices. This knowledge is useful for input and decision-making in future revisions of the teacher evaluation process. Lastly, school administrators interested in improving student achievement must believe in “professional development as an integral part of school improvement.” This means they must commit themselves to promoting an allocation of resources be available for such activities.

Implications of Study on Organizational Change

Teachers generally accepted the existing teacher evaluation procedures, whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory, in order to resist changing status quo. For a new evaluation procedure to be accepted, key stakeholders must have a clear and shared understanding of what is required and why it is required. If involvement with professional growth and development activities is to be intensified in the new process, the pilot-program must achieve useable outcomes.

Change is a continual process. Teachers will need time to become acclimated to the new process through literature reviews, discussions, and question and answer sessions. The administrator must accept that this is a long process and that some teachers will never want to participate.

Further Study

The current data gathered about the piloted evaluation process are based on a single study, which limits generalization. Moreover, due to the short duration of this study, it was not possible to field-test every component of the new evaluation process before the conclusion of the study. The formal observation instruments that were developed for the Beginning Teacher Handbook (see Appendix C) were not presented to the staff or administration to be piloted because they were being completed concurrently as the existing data for this study were being analyzed and presented.

It is suggested that the observation forms in the new handbook be piloted to assess if the criteria used is consistent with effective teaching practices and to ensure that the forms measure what they are intended to measure. It is further recommended that qualitative and quantitative research be conducted first to determine if teachers' skills are enhanced as a result of the professional growth and development options offered in the new process and second to focus on the relationship between the new evaluation process and improved student achievement.

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Appendix A
Teacher Evaluation Options

Suggested Teacher Evaluation Options For Professional Growth and Development

Peer Reflective Conversations

- Invite a peer to discuss and help you reflect on an aspect of your teaching.
- These conversations can be about school-related problems or issues and/or they can reference professional workshops you attended, student work samples, or a professional development activity you are involved in, etc.

Peer Visit with Reflection

- A reflective conversation after a peer visited your classroom at your request to observe a specific aspect of your teaching.
- Should take place minimally two times per school year.

Study Groups

- Brief, informal meetings with peers to discuss current developments in education and experiment with topics of interest.
- Suggested topics may include Due Process, Individual Education Plans (IEP's), teaching strategies, behavior management, and websites for teachers, etc.

Journal Writing

- Self-reflect on professional articles, journals, and websites.
- Articulate in writing your experiences in the classroom related to instructional practices or subject matter.
- Detail progress and critique your teaching.

Peer Coaching

- Collaborate with a veteran teacher who will volunteer to provide encouragement and constructive feedback.
- Schedule formal and informal observations of each other's classroom with your coach.
- Alleviate feelings of isolation and inadequate teacher preparation college.

Professional Portfolio

- Create a factual description of your strengths and accomplishments.
- Highly personalized self-assessment of teaching performance that includes your materials, materials from others, personal and professional responsibilities, and products of good teaching.

Independent Study

- Teachers choose an objective to study that is agreed upon by the administrator and which will increase learning in the classroom.
- Includes college or on-line coursework.
- Share results in writing or through a presentation to colleagues.

Professional Visits

- Schedule a time to observe a peer.
- Do pre-visitation planning to identify the focus of the visit.
- Record in writing the post-visitation conversation following the visit and reflecting on what was learned.

Action Research

- Teams of teachers engage in action research steps: observe, identify, question, collect data, analyze data, determine action needed, implement steps, document, discuss, and share.
- Make formal decisions on how to improve instruction.

Audio/Videotaping

- Provides opportunity to review recorded lesson more than one time.
- Follow with reflective conversation with peer or administrator.

Delivery of Workshop/Courses

- Develop teaching strategies or other instructional information for a targeted audience.
- Present to peers, parents, administrators, or school board, etc.

Formal Observation

- A scheduled, planned observation by a qualified observer preceded by a pre-observation conference.
- Followed by a post observation conference and a written summary.

Other

- This list is not exhaustive.
- Present additional suggestions for professional development options to stakeholders for approval.

Appendix B
Peer Evaluation Interview Questions

Personnel Evaluation Interview Questions

1. Did you have a pre-conference before your last evaluation?
2. Did you ever have a post conference after a formal observation?
3. How many years have you been teaching full-time?
4. What methods have been used to evaluate your teaching performance?
Student test scores? Teacher subject matter test scores? Portfolios of your work?
Formally rated observations? Informal observations? Student questionnaires?
Videotapes? Other?
5. If you had input into the evaluation process, who do you think would be beneficial to add to the classroom observation evaluation process or what other procedures would you like to see used? Your principal? Administrator other than principal? Master teacher? A group of teachers? School board? Students? Parents? Other?
6. Who was involved in evaluating your teaching performance?
7. What do you think about having another teacher come in to evaluate you?
8. Did you have the opportunity to design a plan for your professional development following your last evaluation? In other words, did your evaluation lead to professional development activities?
9. What do you think the purpose of an evaluation should be?
10. Did the information provided the last time you were evaluated provide an accurate assessment of your teaching performance?
11. Was there anything in that evaluation that was useful in improving your performance?
12. What do you think about student input in the evaluation process?
13. What do you think about teacher self-evaluation/assessment?
14. What do you think about parent input in the evaluation?
15. Other comments on personnel evaluation?

Appendix C
Teacher Evaluation Process Handbook

**TEACHER
EVALUATION PROCESS
HANDBOOK
2002-03**

**Tier 1
Beginning Teacher**

**Salem County Special Services School District
Salem County
New Jersey**

Salem County Special Services School District

Superintendent

Robert R. Andrews, Ph.D.
13 South Main Street
Woodstown, NJ 08098

Principal

Daretown Site
James D'Amato, Ph.D.
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Elmer, NJ 08318

Principal

Pennsville Site
Kathleen McCarthy
328 North Broadway
Pennsville, NJ 08070

Personnel Evaluation Committee

Cathy DiBella, Teacher
Chris Huber, Teacher
Nancy Schumacher, Administrative Intern
Stacy Willingmyre, Teacher

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INTRODUCTION

FOREWORD

The Teacher Evaluation Procedures Handbook reflects on current research-based practice. It was cooperatively developed by a voluntary committee of four educators formed to collaboratively review and revise the existing teacher evaluation system. This handbook is grounded in the belief that the intent of evaluation is to judge (summative) and to enhance (formative) teacher effectiveness with the ultimate goal to improve student learning and achievement.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Educators must ensure that each classroom is in the care of a competent teacher. Teacher evaluation is quality assurance. When done effectively, it provides a way for teachers and administrators to work together. It results in commendations for specific strengths and suggestions for improvement that will enhance teacher performance in areas of weakness. Teacher evaluation should be a positive, meaningful experience that is a vehicle for professional growth.

The purpose of the guidelines and instruments developed for this handbook proposed by the Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC) is to achieve fairly and collaboratively an accurate assessment of the relative performance of teachers. It is designed to improve teacher quality and accountability, support professional development, and ensure success for all students.

There must be a commitment to professional growth and improvement by the Salem County Special Services School District (SCSSSD) if this proposal is to succeed. Decisions must be made regarding the allocation of funds to secure the appropriate resources that will promote this multifaceted evaluation process. SCSSSD must also allow teachers the time necessary to take an active role in choosing and implementing their professional development options and for teacher collaboration.

RATIONALE

We, the Personnel Evaluation Committee (PEC), believe that evaluations must go beyond a limited number of observations to be meaningful. Current research suggests that it is no longer acceptable to judge teaching ability with one common evaluation tool because (a) one method for evaluation does not represent the complexities of teaching and (b) there is no differentiation between expert, competent, and novice teachers (Duke, 1993). The result is a partial, and possibly inaccurate, picture of a teacher's capabilities. A careful review of the SCSSSD teacher evaluation process revealed that the current system did not reflect differentiated expectations or experiences and was limited to classroom observations.

Our proposal addresses a differentiated model of teacher evaluation that relies on a variety of activities and procedures for specific groups of teachers. This multifaceted approach to evaluation uses a collection of data from multiple sources, including classroom observations that are necessary but not sufficient as a stand-alone form of data for teacher evaluation. This model also recognizes the developmental needs of teachers at different stages of their professional growth. Therefore, we recommend four evaluation pathways: Beginning Teacher, Non-tenure Teacher, Tenured Teacher, and Idle Teacher to set the evaluation criteria for teachers' working with a special needs population. The result is an individualized evaluation based on the diverse needs and experiences of our teachers that will be useful in encouraging professional growth to enhance teacher performance.

The first year of this pilot-program (2002-03) focused on a developmental process that will enhance the skills of inexperienced beginning teachers. It is based on the teaching standards that are embedded in our existing teacher evaluation guidelines and school board policy. This proposal is in full compliance with New Jersey laws and code and with Salem County Special Services School District (SCSSSD) union contract policies.

The PEC made no revisions or recommendations for the annual summary and review process or Personal Improvement Plan (PIP) at this time.

NOTE: Feedback was obtained from beginning teachers who piloted aspects of this new process. Their recommendations will be considered in the revision of this handbook.

ELEMENTS OF THE SYSTEM

Tier 1

Beginning Teacher

Purpose: The beginning teacher evaluation phase is designed for all newly hired teachers just starting their teaching careers. Research shows that new teachers leave their positions as special education teachers at an alarmingly high rate. Four of every ten beginning special education teachers will leave the field (Griffin, Winn, & Kilgore, 2001). Tier 1 of the proposed teacher evaluation system is built around a range of data and information sources that will provide the necessary encouragement and support for new teachers.

Goals: The goals of Tier 1 – Beginning Teacher Evaluation are meant to provide the guidance necessary for new teachers to establish themselves as effective educators and to motivate them to stay in the profession by:

- Improving teacher effectiveness
- Providing professional growth opportunities
- Fostering collegiality
- Promoting personal and professional well-being
- Increasing job satisfaction

Observations: During this stage of professional development, teachers should expect a minimum of two formal and/or informal evaluations both announced and unannounced each semester by at least two different qualified observers. Formal observations will follow the guidelines set forth for non-tenured teachers in New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 6:3-4.1, New Jersey Statutes Annotated (N.J.S.A.) 18A: 27-3.1, and Article 15 of the Teacher's Union contract for duration and for submission of documents and signatures. There is no required length or format for an informal observation, although some written documentation is encouraged.

Formal observations for beginning inexperienced teachers will be reported in writing using the criteria established by the Personnel Evaluation Committee that is listed on the Tier 1 Beginning Teacher Evaluation form. Each formal observation will be preceded within ten (10) days by a scheduled Pre-observation Plan conference. A Post-observation Reflection Report conference will follow formal observations within three (3) days after the observation. Sample forms are contained in Parts A, B, and C of this handbook.

Professional Development Options: The beginning teacher will choose two activities from several options to provide the information and experiences necessary to acquire the appropriate data sources for Tier 1 evaluation. Teachers will be trained in implementation of these options. Suggestions for professional development options are included in Part D of this handbook.

PLANS FOR FUTURE TEACHER EVALUATION PATHWAYS

2003-04

Tier 2

Non-tenure Teacher

(New teachers with 2-3 years experience)

2004-05

Tier 3

Tenured Teacher

2005-06

Tier 4

Idle Teacher

(Struggling teachers in need of a plan of intensive assistance)

SAMPLE FORM – PART A

Tier 1

PRE-OBSERVATION PLAN

TEACHER _____ OBSERVER _____

CLASS/SUBJECT _____ GRADE _____

DATE OF PRE-OBSERVATION PLAN CONFERENCE _____

(No more than 10 days before a scheduled observation)

SCHEDULED OBSERVATION DATE _____

In preparation for your classroom observation, please complete this form. Submit the original to your observer *at least two (2) days prior* to your scheduled Pre-observation Plan conference and keep a copy for yourself. You will have the opportunity to make any necessary adjustments to this form at your Pre-observation Plan conference. Use an additional sheet of paper if more space is needed. Thank you.

1. What big ideas, concepts, or issues will my lesson address? Why?
2. Briefly tell how this fits in with my unit of study.
3. What are my planned instructional strategies? How will I stimulate interest in learning? How will I involve all of my students?
4. What methods will I use to evaluate student learning?
5. Are there any special circumstances, concerns, or recent events that I feel the observer needs to be aware of? Do I anticipate any management problems?
6. If the answer to #4 is "YES," how do I plan to address this?
7. On what specific aspects of my instruction would I like the observer to focus during the observation to provide feedback that may help improve my classroom teaching? (e.g. lesson components, teaching strategies, sequencing of activities, on/off task, gender equity, questioning techniques, etc.)

Educator's Signature _____ Date _____

SAMPLE FORM – PART B
Tier 1
BEGINNING TEACHER EVALUATION

TEACHER _____ OBSERVER _____
CLASS/SUBJECT _____ GRADE _____
DATE _____ TIME: In _____ Out _____

Each of the items for the formal evaluation is rated on a 5-point scale as defined below.

(1) (2) (3) (4)
Emerging Developing Skilled Commendable

(0)
Not Observed, Not Applicable, or Not Acceptable
(Addressed in the “COMMENT” section)

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- ☐ Plans activities to encourage positive attitudes through success, participation, and positive experiences.
- ☐ Provides feedback to learners throughout the lesson.
- ☐ Provides learners with opportunities for participation.
- ☐ Uses praise, encouragement, and appropriate humor.
- ☐ Effectively uses appropriate non-verbal cues to maintain appropriate behavior.
- ☐ Promotes a positive attitude toward learning activities.
- ☐ Demonstrates sensitivity, patience, empathy, and understanding to the needs and feelings of students.
- ☐ Creates opportunities that support learner’s social and personal development.

COMMENTS:

INDIVIDUAL ORIENTED

- ☐ Obtains and uses information about learners from school records.
- ☐ Revises instruction as needed using evaluation results and observation data.
- ☐ Responds to each learner in ways that assist in accomplishing his/her objectives.
- ☐ Encourages each learner to work to his/her best ability.
- ☐ Uses a variety of evaluative techniques.
- ☐ Confers as necessary and desired with parent(s)/guardian(s) to foster a constructive parent/teacher relationship to promote learner progress and growth.
- ☐ Provides enrichment and/or remediation where needed.

COMMENTS:

TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

- ☐ Contributes to committees, school-sponsored activities, and faculty meetings.
- ☐ Uses acceptable oral and written expression.
- ☐ Works cooperatively with colleagues, administrators, and community members.
- ☐ Accepts and makes use of constructive criticism.
- ☐ Demonstrates a professional attitude toward school policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and State and Federal laws.
- ☐ Contributes actively to overall school improvement.
- ☐ Submits required reports in a timely manner and appropriate format.
- ☐ Exhibits discretion in dealing with confidential information and shares professionally with other staff members only when appropriate.

- ☐ Maintains regular attendance and is punctual within reason.
- ☐ Acts as a positive role model for students in speech, appearance, enthusiasm, and attitude.
- ☐ Shares and seeks professional materials and ideas.

COMMENTS:

PERSONAL AWARENESS

- ☐ Actively attempts to acquire appropriate information or seeks solutions to obstacles that may interfere with teaching and learning.
- ☐ Identifies areas for growth necessary to maintain or improve teaching performance.
- ☐ Sets attainable goals for him/herself.
- ☐ Obtains information on the effectiveness of regularly employed instructional methods.

COMMENTS:

TEACHING PLANS, PROCEDURES, AND MATERIALS

- ☐ Reinforces previous learning skills.
- ☐ Specifies or selects learner objectives for lessons.
- ☐ Specifies or selects teaching procedures for lessons and for assessing learner progress.
- ☐ Plans instruction at a variety of levels taking into account differences in learner capabilities.

- ☐ Implements learning activities in a logical sequence.
- ☐ Gives understandable directions.
- ☐ Displays evidence of advance planning by having all needed materials, equipment, and instructional aids organized and available.
- ☐ Incorporates hands-on learning activities.
- ☐ Maintains accurate records of student progress.
- ☐ Uses instructional time effectively.

COMMENTS:

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

- ☐ Manages disruptive behavior among learners.
- ☐ Uses teaching methods appropriate for the learners and the environment.
- ☐ Demonstrates ability to work with learners individually, and in small and large groups.
- ☐ Provides a learning environment that is neat and orderly.
- ☐ Encourages learners to contribute to the attractiveness of the classroom.
- ☐ Shows consistency in teacher expectations.
- ☐ Establishes safe practices in the classroom and school building.
- ☐ Promotes learner awareness of the rules, consequences, and reward system.
- ☐ Shapes an environment that is supportive, natural, and tension-free, but is businesslike and task oriented.

COMMENTS:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE LESSON:

OBSERVER'S GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

(To be completed during Post-observation Reflection Report conference)

EDUCATOR'S COMMENTS:

(To be completed during Post-observation Reflection Report conference)

GOALS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

(To be completed during Post-observation Reflection Report conference)

Educator's Signature _____ Date _____

Observer's Signature _____ Date _____

SAMPLE FORM -- PART C
Tier 1
POST-OBSERVATION REFLECTION REPORT

TEACHER _____ OBSERVER _____

CLASS/SUBJECT _____ GRADE _____

DATE OF OBSERVATION _____

POST-OBSERVATION REFLECTION DATE _____
(No more than 3 days after the observation)

Please use an additional sheet of paper if more space is needed. Thank you.

1. What do I think went well and why? What was most effective?
2. What evidence of student learning do I have from this lesson? Did my students learn what was intended?
3. Did anything occur during this lesson that was not typical or anticipated? What was the affect on the outcome?
4. Did I have to adjust my lesson during the observation? Why did I have to make adjustments and how did I do it?
5. Based on my assessment of this lesson and student learning, how would I adapt my teaching plan if I could teach this lesson again to the same group of students? What would I do differently and why?

The Post-observation Reflection Report is to be signed at the Post-observation Reflection conference indicating review of this form with the observer.

Educator's Signature _____ Date _____

SAMPLE FORM -- PART D
Tier 1
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

Peer Reflective Conversations

- Invite a peer to discuss and help you reflect on an aspect of your teaching.
- These conversations can be about school-related problems or issues and/or they can reference professional workshops you attended, student work samples, or a professional development activity in which you are involved, etc.

Peer Visit with Reflection

- A reflective conversation after a peer visited your classroom at your request to observe a specific aspect of your teaching.
- Should take place minimally two times per school year.

Study Groups

- Brief informal meetings with peers to discuss current developments in education and experiment with topics of interest.
- Suggested topics may include Due Process, Individual Education Plans (IEP's), teaching strategies, behavior management, and websites for teachers, etc.

Journal Writing

- Self-reflect on professional articles, journals, and websites.
- Articulate in writing your experiences in the classroom related to instructional practices or subject matter.
- Detail progress and critique your teaching.

Peer Coaching

- Collaborate with a mentor teacher who volunteers to provide encouragement and constructive feedback.
- Schedule formal and informal observations of each other's classroom with your coach.
- Alleviate feelings of isolation and inadequate teacher preparation in college.

GLOSSARY

Administrative Intern – a post-graduate university student majoring in Education Leadership who is participating in the last planned field experience intended to develop administrator competence before principalship certification.

Mentor teacher – a specially trained experienced teacher who works with new teachers as an advisor and coach to support and encourage new teacher growth and development.

Plan of intensive assistance – addresses the deficiencies of teachers who are not performing at a minimal level of acceptance. Usually done to avoid teacher reassignment or dismissal and to document unacceptable teaching performance.

Qualified observer – A certificated educational supervisor or administrator responsible for overseeing the work of a teacher through formal and informal observations.

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