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## Clarity Precedes Competence: The Impact of a Revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on Teaching and Learning

Kyra Schafte

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Clarity Precedes Competence: The Impact of a Revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation  
Instrument on Teaching and Learning

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Clarity Precedes Competence: The Impact of a Revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation  
Instrument on Teaching and Learning

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Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements of  
Doctor of Education

National Louis University  
2020

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## ABSTRACT

This study is a program evaluation to determine the impact of evaluators' use of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on instructional practice in a mid-sized, public school district serving approximately 43,000 Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth-grade students. The primary research question explored in this program evaluation is what theory of action for the evaluation system will establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality in the school district under study. Employing a mixed-methods approach, with data gathered from a principal survey, focus group transcriptions, and instructional practice and student achievement data, this study informed and improved current practices surrounding observation and evaluation processes. Policy implications and recommendations support a multidimensional view of teacher effectiveness through the inclusion of multiple measures of data, including deliberate practice and self-assessment, classroom observations, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth.

## PREFACE

Educational leaders' use of classroom observations provides an instrumental structure to improve instructional practice and student achievement when building on the foundation of a research-based framework with clear and consistent execution of processes surrounding observation and evaluation. "The theory of action embedded in such process-based systems is that changes to teacher practice through an iterative process of observation and conferencing – all focused on improving lesson planning and preparation, the classroom environment, and instruction – should lead to direct changes in student performance" (Steinberg & Sartain, 2015, p. 537). Classroom observations should provide teachers with actionable feedback to support continuous improvement opportunities that impact student achievement positively.

As a new district administrator in a public-school district, the Deputy Superintendent tasked me with oversight of the instructional evaluation system. My analysis of summative evaluation data from the 2016-2017 school year revealed a discrepancy between the intended role of teacher evaluations as a measure to determine the impact of a teacher on student learning outcomes and student achievement as measured by student performance on State Standards Assessments. Multiple measures are factored into the summative evaluation of teacher performance to determine effectiveness: (1) Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice and (2) Value-added measures/student achievement data. Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice occurs during formal and informal classroom observations and accounts for 67% of the teacher's performance evaluation rating. Value-added measures

or student achievement data serve as the final 33% and measures the impact of the classroom teacher on student learning growth.

My previous experience as a Peer Evaluator in a neighboring district facilitated an increased knowledge base to identify effective teacher behaviors. Consistent application of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) increased my knowledge base to identify effective teacher instructional behaviors within the research-based structure of domains and components. Experience leveraging a successful Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument fuels my desire to replicate those successes for the district under study. I will use the results of this study to identify successes and shortcomings related to classroom teacher evaluation and strengthen the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student access to high-quality education.

On my journey throughout this program evaluation, I learned the importance of prioritizing educational decisions based on the needs of students not what is most comfortable for adults. When administrators conduct observations with the end goal of providing actionable and relevant feedback to classroom teachers, conversations of resolve show commitment to growing teacher instructional practice, thereby improving the quality of instruction teachers deliver to students. The aspiration to promote collective stakeholder efficacy remains my influencing vision at the forefront of advancing the transformation of the current evaluation system.

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I would like to thank the district leaders, school leaders, and instructional personnel in the district of my study who generously participated in various elements of my research. Without their input and collaboration, none of this work would have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends and colleagues with whom I have worked during the last three years for their support and encouragement. I have grown personally and professionally in our time together. Each of you gave me the courage and provided me the support structure I needed to complete this journey successfully.

## DEDICATION

“Moral purpose is about both ends and means. In education, an important end is to make a difference in the lives of students” (Fullan, 2007a, p. 13).

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The context of this study is a mid-sized, public school district serving Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth-grade students. The school district has a student enrollment of approximately 43,000 students. The racial composition of the school district is 49% White, 23.9% Hispanic, 19.7% Black, 5.2% Multiracial, 1.6% Asian, and 0.4% American Indian/Alaskan Native. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students is 63.0%, and 15.4% of the students are Students with Disabilities (SWD). Diversity is present in the student population, with 5.5% of students enrolled classified as an English Language Learner (ELL). Examining the 2017-2018 District Grade Report, student achievement on State Standards Assessments in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies is lower than the state average. The graduation rate in the district under study is 78%, which is four percentage points lower than the state (Citation withheld to preserve confidentiality).

The school district under study is approximately 1,600 square miles with a total population estimate of 354,353. The population breakdown by age is 18.8% persons under 18 years, 52.6% persons 18-64 years, and 28.6% persons 65 years and over. The agricultural sector drives the local economy as 3,870 farms span 321,474 acres or 31.4% of the district. According to the United States Census of Agriculture (2014), the school district under study's largest contributing sectors are its valued inventory of horses and ponies as well as crop items such as hay, peanuts, and watermelon. The total market value of crop and livestock sales is \$188,174,000. In 2017, the median household income was \$41,964, with 16.2% of the population living in poverty. Veterans reside in a

multitude of areas across the school district and account for approximately 10.1% of the total population. With veterans serving as frequent volunteers at schools, the school district prioritizes the role of citizenry and patriotism through daily work structures with the ultimate mission to develop successful citizens.

Understanding the broader context surrounding the school district under study requires the full perspective of the state's educational enrollment breakdown. The state's total student enrollment population is nearly three million students in more than 70 school districts. The racial composition of the state in which the school district under study lies is approximately 37% White, 34% Hispanic, 22% Black, 4% Multiracial, 3% Asian, and less than one percent Pacific Islander. The percentage of economically disadvantaged students is slightly over 55%, and just over 14% of the students are Students with Disabilities. Statewide, roughly 10% of students enrolled are English Language Learners (ELLs). In comparison to the 2017-2018 District Grade Report, state student achievement on State Standards Assessment is 10 percentage points higher in English Language Arts (ELA), nine percentage points higher in mathematics, six percentage points higher in Science, and three percentage points higher in Social Studies (Citation withheld to preserve confidentiality). The school district under study demonstrated improvement in student performance from 2015-2018; however, in comparison, student performance continuously fell below the state average as measured by the percentage of students demonstrating a passing score (satisfactory, above satisfactory, or mastery) on the State Standards Assessment Program as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1.

*Three-Year Comparison of State and District Student Performance*

	English Language Arts			Mathematics			Science			Social Studies		
	District	State	Difference	District	State	Difference	District	State	Difference	District	State	Difference
2015-2016	45%	53%	-8	45%	54%	-9	52%	56%	-4	63%	69%	-6
2016-2017	47%	55%	-8	48%	57%	-9	52%	56%	-4	69%	70%	-1
2017-2018	46%	56%	-10	50%	59%	-9	53%	59%	-6	68%	71%	-3

**Purpose of the Program Evaluation**

President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) on February 17, 2009 (United States Department of Education, 2009b, para 1). The legislation provided approximately \$100 billion in economic stimulus funding advancing educational reforms and improvements to help turn around a struggling economy. One of the components of ARRA funding was the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). According to the United States Department of Education (2009b):

Under the \$5 billion in SFSF reserved for the Secretary of Education to make competitive grants, the Department will conduct a national competition among states for a \$4.35 billion state incentive “*Race to the Top*” fund to improve education quality and results statewide.

Educational leaders at The White House (2015) outlined four key components of reform designed to drive substantial gains in student achievement:

- (1.) Development of rigorous standards and better assessments.
- (2.) Adoption of better data systems to provide schools, teachers, and parents with information about student progress.
- (3.) Support for teachers and school leaders to become more effective.
- (4.) Increased emphasis and resources for the rigorous interventions needed to turn around the lowest-performing schools. (United States Department of Education, 2009c, para. 2)

The four-year span of the ARRA leveraged competition among states as a means of motivation with funding disbursed in phases after approval. In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded *Race to the Top* Phase 1 and Phase 2 grants to 11 States and the District of Columbia (United States Department of Education, 2013, p. 2). The state in which lies the school district under study was awarded funds in September 2010 as part of Phase 2 of the *Race to the Top* competition (United States Department of Education, 2012, p. 4). Under the governor's leadership, the state's *Race to the Top* Application for Initial Funding outlined six clear expectations, contained in Figure 1 for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) focusing reform on the educator and instruction (United States Department of Education, 2010).

Strategy	Examples of Race to the Top (RTT) Supporting Initiatives
<p><b>#1. Standards and Assessment:</b>            Increase student achievement in Reading/Language Arts, mathematics, and science by implementing the internationally benchmarked Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, which build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; measure achievement of the Common Core Standards through a high-quality system of formative, interim, and common summative assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of Common Core State Standards, aligned coursework, and formative assessments</li> <li>• STEM program for gifted students</li> </ul>

<p><b>#2. Data Systems to Support Instruction:</b> Provide easier access to state and local data that support the continuous improvement of instruction, policy, operations, management, and resource allocation, contributing to the effectiveness of teachers and leaders and increased student achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data based decision making and data-driven policy analysis</li> </ul>
<p><b>#3. Great Teachers and Leaders:</b> Engage teachers in evidence-based, job-embedded professional development that supports continuous instructional improvement and results in students prepared to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematic evaluation practices with the incorporation of professional development</li> </ul>
<p><b>#4. Great Teachers and Leaders:</b> Systematically implement human capital practices that improve individual and overall teacher and school leader effectiveness, measured primarily by student performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific competencies within observation tools</li> <li>• Determine student growth as measured by state-based assessments</li> </ul>
<p><b>#5. Great Teachers and Leaders:</b> Ensure equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals, particularly in high-poverty, high-minority schools and in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas, by strengthening the pipeline of effective educators and investing in actionable performance data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher preparation programs and increased certification requirements</li> </ul>
<p><b>#6. Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools:</b> Provide persistently lowest-achieving schools and their feeder pattern schools with the tools, resources, and support to improve student achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a Summer Academy</li> <li>• Train, recruit, and retain highly effective administrators</li> </ul>

*Figure 1. Six strategies with examples of supporting initiatives outlined in the state's Race to the Top Application for Initial Funding submitted to the United States Department of Education on January 19, 2010*

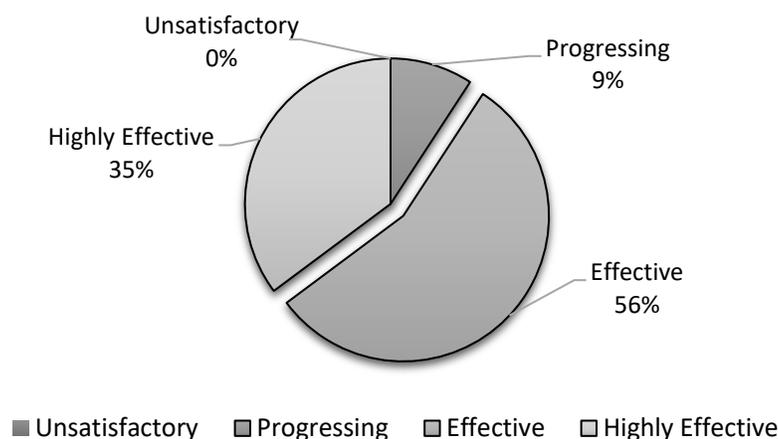
In 2011, the school district under study adopted and developed an instructional evaluation framework based on Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching (2011)*. Lynch, Chin, and Blazar (2017) found, "Classroom observation protocols were developed for several reasons, but they shared the goal of providing observers across contexts standardized metrics to evaluate instruction" (p.

617). Multiple measures are factored into the summative evaluation of teacher performance to determine effectiveness: (1) Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice and (2) Value-added measures/student achievement data. Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice occurs during formal and informal classroom observations and accounts for 67% of the teacher's performance rating. Value-added measures or student achievement data serve as the final 33% and measures the impact of the classroom teacher on student learning growth. Pursuant to state statute, at least one-third of the performance evaluation must be based upon data and indicators of student performance, as determined by each school district. According to State Statute § 1012.34, this portion of the evaluation must include growth or achievement data of the teacher's students for at least three years (2018).

The school district under study utilizes two different scoring models to identify student achievement measures on the summative evaluation. The first measure is the state's value-added model (VAM) rating. One-third of teachers within the school district receives a state VAM rating annually. This rating measures the contribution of a teacher to student learning growth. The state's Bureau of Accountability Reporting releases this calculation yearly for teachers who instruct ELA grades 4-10, Mathematics grades 4-8, and Algebra 1 grades 8 and 9 only. The state's complex calculation considers various metrics to determine the expected learning growth of similar students within comparative sample sizes. The second scoring model utilizes the local student achievement rating. These measures are specific to the district under study as this calculation takes into account particular courses while using a combination of state and local assessments. Every course has a unique scoring logic based on pre- and post-assessment measures with

corresponding scales to identify pre-determined expectations for student performance.

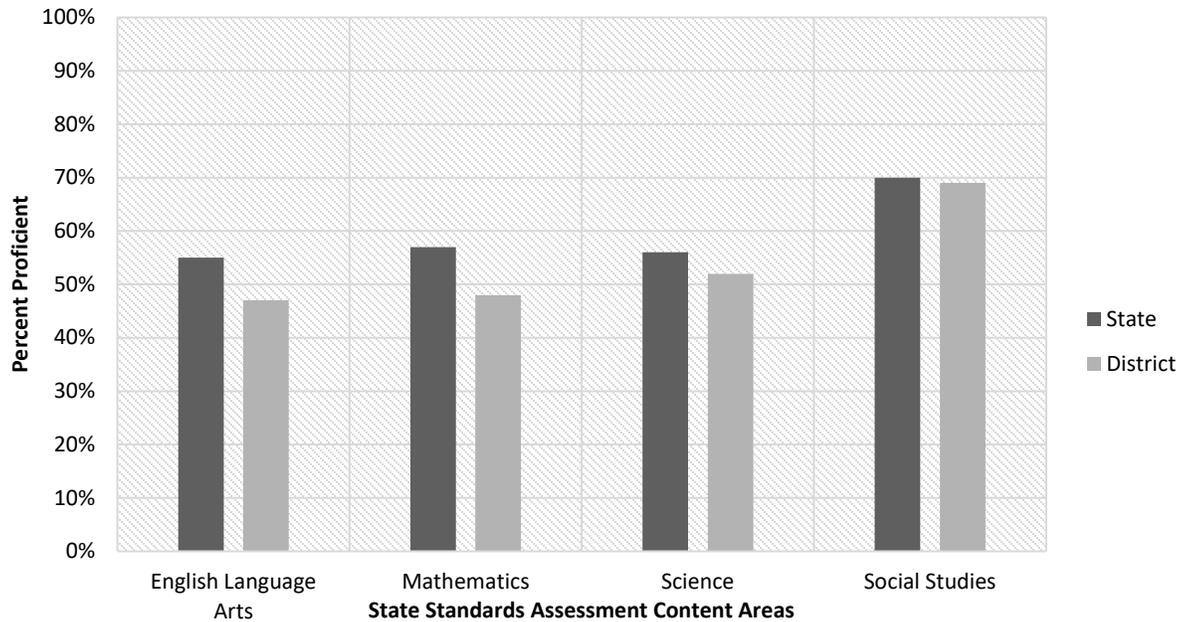
My analysis of summative evaluation data from the 2016-2017 school year revealed a discrepancy between the intended role of teacher evaluations as a measure to determine the impact of teacher quality on student achievement and student achievement as measured by student performance on State Standards Assessments. As illustrated in Figure 2, summative evaluation ratings showed 90.8% of classroom teachers rated as effective or highly effective based on evaluator instructional practice ratings and student achievement data.



*Figure 2.* Classroom teacher summative evaluation scores for the 2016-2017 school year

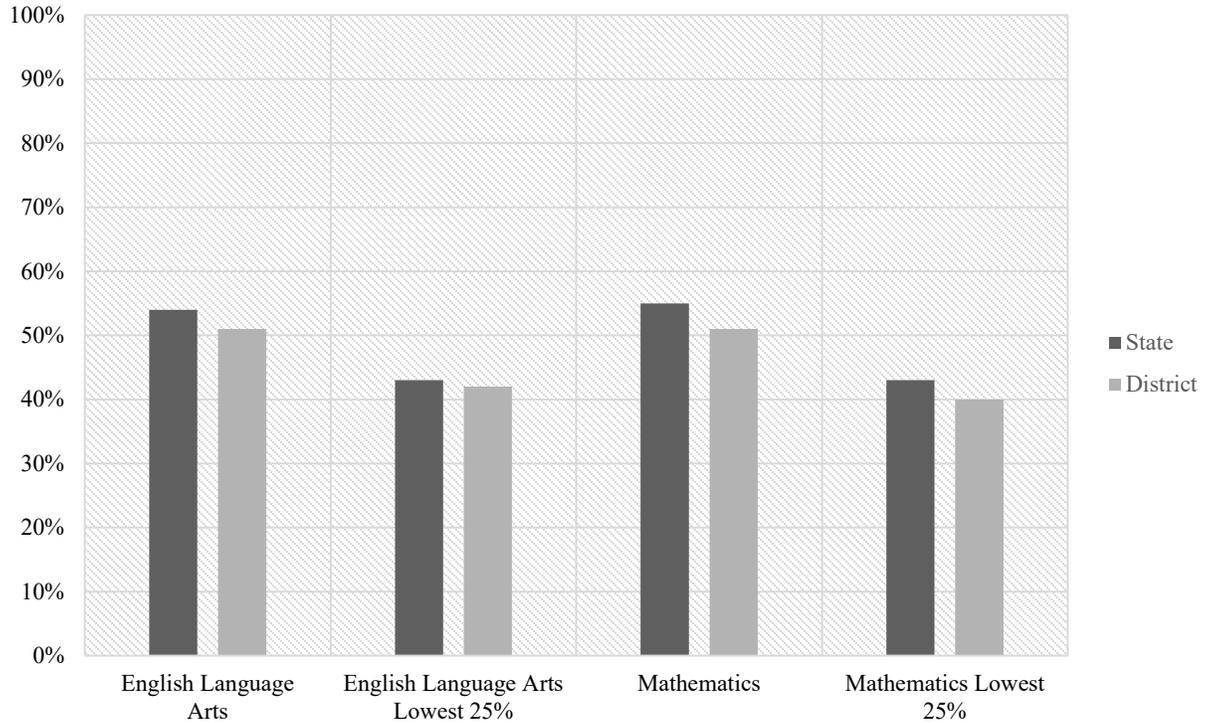
The district under study derives summative evaluations from a combination of instructional practice and student achievement measures. Instructional practice accounts for 67%. The school district's online performance evaluation platform contains a scoring logic set to calculate instructional practice from evaluator formal and informal ratings. The student achievement measure accounts for the remaining 33%. Assigned course allocation determines if the teacher receives a VAM score or local student achievement measure. In comparison with Figure 2, the isolation of student performance and learning

gains during the 2016-2017 school year showed the district under study lagging behind the state average across all core content areas, as shown in Figures 3 and 4.



*Figure 3.* Comparison of state and district student performance as measured by the percentage of students demonstrating a passing score (satisfactory, above satisfactory, or mastery) on the State Standards Assessments during the 2016-2017 school year

Figure 4 provides the comparison of state and district student performance. This is measured by the percentage of students making learning gains. Learning gains means that the student demonstrates growth from one year to the next. The state outlines specific learning gains criteria for State Standards Assessment scores and State Standards Alternate Assessment – Performance Task scores: i.e., students who increase at least one (1) achievement level on the State Standards Assessment in the same subject area.



*Figure 4.* Comparison of state and district student performance as measured by the percentage of students making learning gains during the 2016-2017 school year

The misalignment between student learning gains and instructional practice ratings perpetuated the need for district administrators to engage in a root cause analysis. District administrators determined a flawed Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, which hindered inter-rater agreement among evaluators. The language within the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument did not allow evaluators to delineate evidence of instructional practice within component performance measures. In some cases, the evaluator could place evidence in both effective and highly effective performance measures. Additionally, the progression of language with the performance measures did not correlate with the language rooted in Danielson’s research-based framework.

The necessity to initiate a revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Tool was a directive by the Deputy Superintendent as part of the change implementation plan for

increasing student achievement in the district under study. The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of evaluators' use of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on instructional practice and student achievement in the district under study. "Powerful evaluations provide actionable information to teachers and cultivate cultures of continuous improvement" (Curtis & Wiener, 2012, p. 3). I will use results from this study to identify successes and shortcomings related to classroom teacher evaluations and strengthen the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student access to high-quality education.

### **Rationale**

During the fall of 2009, a neighboring school district embarked on a journey of educational reform through participation in the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) grant funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Seeking Tangible, 2010). The data collected during the MET project helped to shape the rollout of the Empowering Effective Teachers initiative which, "put into place a three-part teacher evaluation system that incorporates feedback from principals and peer evaluators along with measures of student achievement" (Finkel, 2012, p.74). As a member of the Peer Evaluator cadre of the neighboring school district, I observed, evaluated, and provided actionable feedback to elementary (Pre-Kindergarten-grade 5), middle (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12) instructional personnel. Consistent application of Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) facilitated my increased knowledge base to identify effective teacher behaviors and compartmentalize the behaviors into Danielson's (2011) domains and components as the infrastructure to provide feedback.

As a Peer Evaluator, I served as a catalyst to spark reflective conversations for continuous professional growth opportunities with observed instructional personnel. Experience leveraging the implementation of a successful evaluation tool fuels my desire to replicate those successes for the district under study. In my current role as a district-level administrator, my primary responsibility involves the oversight of the instructional evaluation system. Capitalizing on my previous role as a Peer Evaluator, my historical experience drives my desire to serve as a change agent charged with shifting the mindset of compliance surrounding observation and evaluation. When teachers have the opportunity to engage in a collaborative peregrination to refine and enhance their teaching practices, students become the ultimate beneficiaries of their journey of reflection. Classroom observations provide organic structures for reflective conversations designed to help teachers develop their leadership abilities within an environment that empowers, inspires, and promotes an innovative future. The aspiration to contribute to an educational community where all stakeholders share responsibility for student achievement remains my influencing vision at the forefront of advancing the transformation of the current evaluation system.

Prioritization of time in classrooms observing instruction and describing the impact of the classroom teacher on student learning, as outlined by the universal language of the instructional framework, provides evaluators with factual data to develop a common vision and shared understanding of effective instruction. “An instructional framework can help accelerate the development of a shared vision for high-quality teaching and learning” (Fink & Markholt, 2011, p. 90). The instructional framework provides evaluators with the necessary tool to capture the relationship between teaching

and learning. “The theory of action embedded in such process-based systems is that changes to teacher practice through an iterative process of observation and conferencing – all focused on improving lesson planning and preparation, the classroom environment, and instruction – should lead to direct changes in student performance” (Steinberg & Sartain, 2015, p. 537). Classroom observations are a necessary time investment as they provide explicit evidence to gauge teacher quality and student achievement.

### **Goals**

The intended goals of my program evaluation were to describe the district’s implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Tool, understand stakeholder perceptions of the implementation of the system, and to determine how to support every teacher’s professional growth. The centrality of the evaluation process to a school district’s facilitation of teaching and learning requires the use of a common language for continuous improvement. The opportunity to bring clear and consistent structures to the formal observation process ensures fidelity while fostering a landscape where all stakeholders assume the collective responsibility to impact student learning positively. Invitations for authentic stakeholder input to examine current practices of the district under study should promote a collective focus centered on trust and collaboration. Observing the current reality of instructional practice provides individualized and targeted instructional feedback designed to meet the evolving needs of students, the district, and the community at large. “Schools both respond to change in society and are themselves agents of change. The way in which schools educate children influences the role that those children will play in the world of tomorrow” (Robinson, 2012, p. 18).

Schools must not only be responsive to change but assume the responsibility for leading the advancement of innovation processes.

### **Definition of Terms**

I will use the following terms in my study to describe my program evaluation.

- Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* - encompasses the foundational ideas on which the observation process is based and guides how the district under study defines effective teaching. The framework offers a description of practices that, based on research and empirical evidence, have been shown to promote student learning. Danielson divides the complex activity of teaching into twenty-two components clustered into four domains of teaching responsibility: (1) Planning and Preparation, (2) The Classroom Environment, (3) Instruction, and (4) Professional Responsibilities (Danielson, 2007).
- Classroom teacher - staff members assigned to the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations, including basic instruction, exceptional student education, career education, and adult education, including substitute teachers (Stat. §1012.01 (a), 2018).
- Economically Disadvantaged - students determined to be eligible for free and reduced meal prices under the National School Lunch Program.
- English Language Learner (as defined in the district under study) - an ELL student is one who: was not born in the United States and whose native language other than English is most relied upon for communication; or is an American Indian or Alaskan Native and comes from a home in which a language other than English has had a significant impact on his or her level of English language

proficiency; and who as a result of the above has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms in which the language of instruction is English.

- Formal observation process (as defined in the district under study) - consists of a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, and a post-observation conference.
- Informal classroom observation (as defined by the district under study) - the informal observation process complements the formal observation process by enabling site-based administrators to conduct additional, unannounced observations to gather more information about the teacher's practice. An informal observation provides the evaluator with the context to collect information about a teacher's performance in Domains 2 (*The Classroom Environment*) and 3 (*Instruction*). Informal observations are shorter in length and may not reflect an entire lesson. Informal observations last between 20 to 30 minutes.
- Instructional personnel - any K-12 staff member whose function includes the provision of direct instructional services to students. Instructional personnel also include K-12 personnel whose functions provide direct support in the learning process of students (Stat. §1012.01 (a), 2018).
- Inter-rater agreement - the degree to which two or more evaluators using the same rating scale give the same rating to an identical, observable situation (e.g., a lesson, video, or a set of documents). Inter-rater agreement is a measurement of the consistency between the absolute value of evaluators' ratings (Graham,

Milanowski & Miller, 2012, p. 5).

- Robert Marzano's *Focused Teacher Evaluation Model* - an evaluation process for teachers and school leaders emphasizing 23 essential behaviors to measure teacher effectiveness within four areas of expertise: (1) Standards-Based Planning, (2) Standards-Based Instruction, (3) Conditions for Learning, and (4) Professional Responsibilities (Marzano, 2007).
- State Standards Assessment Program - the State Reading Standards Assessment shall be administered annually in grades 3 through 10. The State Writing Standards Assessment shall be administered annually at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. When the Reading and Writing Assessments are replaced by English Language Arts (ELA) Assessments, ELA Assessments shall be administered to students in grades 3 through 10 (Stat. §1008.22, 2018).
- Students with Disabilities (SWD) - a student who is documented as having an intellectual disability; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment, including blindness; an emotional or behavior disability; an orthopedic or other health impairment; an autism spectrum disorder; a traumatic brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculia, or developmental aphasia (Stat. §1007.02, 2018).
- Summative evaluation (as defined in the school district under study) - the principal/administrator evaluation component comprises 67% of the teacher's summative evaluation rating. The performance ratings for each domain are

averaged and weighted according to the domain: Domain 1– 20%, Domain 2 – 30%, Domain 3 – 40%, and Domain 4 – 10%. The remaining 33% is comprised of the state value-added or local student achievement score.

- Talent Acquisition - recruiting effective teachers and principals for all classrooms and schools in the country, particularly high-needs schools with concentrations of students from poverty or minority backgrounds; equipping those teachers and principals with the instructional and leadership expertise needed to dramatically improve student achievement and close achievement gaps linked to poverty and race; and rewarding and retaining those who are successful in attaining these objectives and letting go of those who are not (Odden, 2011, p. 1).
- Value-added score – the average amount of learning growth of the teacher’s students above or below the expected learning growth of similar students in the state, using the variables accounted for in the model. Variables may include the number of subject-relevant courses in which the student is enrolled, up to two prior years of achievement scores, Students with Disabilities (SWD) status, English Language Learner (ELL) status, gifted status, attendance, mobility (number of transitions), difference in modal age in grade (as an indicator of retention), class size, and homogeneity of entering test scores in the class (Stat. §1012.34, 2018).

### **Research Questions**

The single, overarching question that drives my program evaluation is: What theory of action for our evaluation system will establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality? Additional research questions are:

1. What is the relationship between observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by state value-added measures based on State Standards Assessments in English Language Arts in grades 4-10; Mathematics in grades 4-8; and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9?
2. How can school district leaders refine the evaluation system to shift the mindset of administrators regarding evaluation from one of compliance to a mindset of opportunity to stimulate professional practice?
3. What structures need to be in place to ensure consistent implementation of observation and evaluation processes?
4. What professional development does district leadership need to provide to evaluators to develop the competencies necessary to utilize the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a tool to provide authentic feedback during high-stakes observations?

### **Conclusion**

Through my program evaluation, I will consider the impact of a revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a reliable measure of instructional practice. According to Opper in the RAND article about *Understanding Teachers' Impact on Student Achievement*, "The best way to assess teachers' effectiveness is to look at their on-the-job performance, including what they do in the classroom and how much progress their students make on achievement tests" (2019, p. 1). My examination of current practices related to teacher evaluation served as the needs-assessment to illuminate a pathway towards refinement. My analysis of the current system may promote shared

ownership among vested stakeholders with a focus on ensuring that all students have access to high-quality teaching and learning.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Review of the Literature

A national comparison of school district evaluation systems shows variance as to the primary research-based instructional framework selected to define effective teaching. Amidst the variability, public schools have a social responsibility to promote the necessary conditions that increase student performance through access to high-quality instruction. Two bodies of literature form the backbone of my program evaluation project: The Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) research project (2017) and Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011). In the MET study, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation utilized the Framework for Teaching as one of the observation protocols to identify the degree to which a teacher impacts student achievement. "The goal of this project is to improve the quality of information about teaching effectiveness and to help build fair and reliable systems for teacher observation and feedback" (Measures of Effective Teaching Project Releases Final Research Report, 2017, p. 3).

The main themes discussed within my literature review are: Historical context of teacher accountability; skilled observers trained in the art of teacher observation and evaluation; clear standards for effective teaching practice; and high-quality feedback with targeted opportunities for continuous improvement. I incorporated varied perspectives through a review of controversial literature surrounding the use of multiple measures of teacher effectiveness as well as data to support the intended and unintended outcomes of research funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. I addressed the conceptual themes that emerge from contemporary research on the measurement of teacher quality through credible evaluation systems.

I approached the concept of teacher evaluation by streamlining my review of existing research into focused concepts to search online library databases. Phrases such as “revising a teacher evaluation rubric,” “teacher effectiveness measures,” “teacher quality,” and “quality classroom observations” provided a results list for review. I utilized *EBSCOhost* and JSTOR research platforms as search engines to review literature pertaining to the abovementioned search fields. While searching for relevant research, I refined the results by setting the parameters to full-text, scholarly journals with a publication date range of 2011 to 2017.

### **Historical Perspective of Teacher Accountability Leading up to Race to the Top**

**A Nation at Risk.** In April 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released a landmark report about the quality of education in America. Convened by then-President Ronald Reagan’s education secretary, Terrel H. Bell, the report forever changed the rhetoric surrounding the role and impact of teachers. The authors of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (United States Department of Education, 1983) warned:

We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. (para. 1)

The Commission presented the findings, data, and recommendations for change in five areas: content, expectations of students, time devoted to education, teacher quality, and financial and leadership support for education. One recommendation by the Commission

called for more rigorous and subject-specific standards for teacher preparation programs. The push for standards-based educational systems at the college and university level influenced the perspective linking teacher quality, salaries based on merit, and student achievement.

**America 2000.** Accountability in schools became increasingly prominent in September 1989 when President George H.W. Bush convened the nation's governors in a historic two-day education summit. "The September 27-28 gathering at the University of Virginia concluded in a haze of bipartisan camaraderie with President Bush commending his future presidential opponent, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton, for his role in helping bring about consensus" (Klein, 2014, p. 1). President Bush facilitated the national movement to increase the role of the federal government in education outlined in the proposed legislation *AMERICA 2000: An Education Strategy*. "The first step is to establish ambitious national education goals – performance goals that must be achieved if the United States is to remain competitive in the world marketplace and our citizens are to reach their fullest potential" (United States Department of Education, 1991, p. 60). The fundamental changes prioritized equitable learning environments for all students and provided educators with greater autonomy for professional judgment with increased accountability for student learning results (United States Department of Education, 1991, pp. 59-60).

**Goals 2000 and Improving America's School Act (IASA).** On March 31, 1994, President William Clinton signed into law the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (United States Department of Education, 1994).

Building off the burgeoning standards movement, the most fundamental

components of Goals 2000 provided grants to states to develop their own standards for increased financial flexibility at state and local levels in exchange for submitting to certain accountability measures. (Superfine, 2005, p.10)

Goals 2000 identified eight national education goals to be met by the year 2000. The first six goals borrowed ideas rooted in America 2000; the last two goals addressed continuous improvement within the teaching force and promotion of parent involvement (Goals 2000, 1994). Simultaneously with Goals 2000, President Clinton enacted Improving America's School Act (IASA), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The IASA (1994) outlined expectations for all children to meet challenging state standards through four comprehensive education improvement efforts: "(1) High standards for all students; (2) Teachers better trained for teaching to high standards; (3) Flexibility to simulate local reform, coupled with accountability for results; and (4) Close partnerships among families, communities, and schools." Additionally, Congress defined "adequate yearly progress" as a measure of a school's and district's ability to enable all children to meet high-performance expectations as determined by State Standards Assessment results.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB).** No Child Left Behind (2001) continued the progression of education reform enacted by the federal government. "Like Goals 2000 and the IASA, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is a federal statute aimed at providing states with the capacities and incentives to develop and implement systems of standards and assessments" (Superfine, 2005, p. 29). As a result of NCLB, signed into legislation by President George W. Bush, "states are obligated to increase standards, ensure achievement by means of tests, expect highly qualified teachers, and give evidence of

greater accountability” (Kessinger, 2011, p. 274). According to Superfine (2005), “if schools and districts fail to make ‘adequate yearly progress’ against performance goals they have set pursuant to NCLB requirements, administrative sanctions such as the institution of public school choice, the institution of supplemental services, and school restructuring are prescribed” (p. 29).

**Race to the Top (RTT).** In 2012, the Obama Administration launched a *Race to the Top* competition at the school district level. The federal initiative aimed at improving education in the United States through the creation of competitive grants to improve the quality of schools (Harris, 2012). “*Race to the Top* has helped drive states nationwide to pursue higher standards, improve teacher effectiveness, use data effectively in the classroom, and adopt new strategies to help struggling schools” (United States Department of Education, 2012, para. 1). The program selection criteria and associated points are below:

- State Success Factors (125 points)
- Standards and Assessments (70 points)
- Data Systems to Support instruction (47 points)
- Great Teachers and Leaders (138 points)
- Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools (50 points)
- General Selection Criteria (55 points)

As a way to improve the teacher and principal quality, RTT linked teacher and principal evaluations to student performance and other criteria of instructional effectiveness (Harris, 2012). The grant application required states to develop conditions

aligned to the following assurances pertaining to improving teacher effectiveness based on performance:

- (i.) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth and measure it for each individual student; (5 points)
- (ii.) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; (15 points)
- (iii.) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools (10 points); and
- (iv.) Use these evaluations, at a minimum to inform decisions (28 points)

According to the report, “Forty-six states and the District of Columbia submitted comprehensive reform plans to compete in the *Race to the Top* competition” (United States Department of Education, 2012, para 3).

### **Skilled Evaluators**

Evaluators must be able to recognize the quality of instructional practice by scripting evidence and interpreting their collected evidence against specific levels of performance. The accurate assessment of instructional practice is a critical, preliminary step in the preparation to engage in collaborative, productive conversations about

instructional practice. Fair, reliable, and accurate assessments of practice require evaluators trained in the recognition and development of quality teaching and learning.

**Site-based administrators.** Focusing on the evaluation variable of measuring teacher quality, the evaluator becomes critical to successful implementation.

Evaluators at each juncture should be trained in the recognition and development of teaching quality, understand how to teach in the content area of the evaluated teacher, and know the specific evaluation tools and procedures they are expected to use (Adams, Aguilar, Berg, Cismowski, Cody, Cohen, Dean, 2015, p. 17).

Kraft and Gilmour (2016) argued the need for principals to expand their leadership responsibilities to prioritize one-on-one learning experiences with teachers as a means to improve instructional practices (p. 8). According to Maxwell (2014), the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) released recommendations to support principals in their instructional responsibilities (p. 24). Federal legislation outlined the need for continuous improvement of principals by “requiring states and districts to spend at least 10 percent of their federal Title II funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act on professional development for principals” (Maxwell, 2014, p. 24).

Implementing evaluation reform is an iterative process requiring reflection, awareness of changing evaluation statute(s), and analysis for potential change processes. The role of the principal has shifted from one of site manager towards that of an instructional leader. “Not only are they responsible for conducting observations and conferences – both of which they need to do skillfully – but they also establish the school’s culture, tone, and expectations around evaluations” (Jiang & Sporte, 2016, p. 3).

Danielson (2016a) advocated for a shift from observations through a lens of compliance towards an opportunity to stimulate professional learning within a community of practice (p. 19). “Being able to spot the difference, and then back up your conclusions with evidence, not emotion, is the hallmark of a good evaluator, the linchpin to a good teacher-assessment system” (Locke, 2011, p. 55).

**Peer evaluators.** Peer review, assistance for evaluation, incorporates a collaborative perspective extending the role of observer to classroom teachers. Peer assistance and review (PAR) involves the utilization of co-practitioners as part of the system of support for teachers. Consulting Teachers (CTs) “receive special training to work intensely with an average of 16 to 18 new teachers and/or experienced teachers referred to PAR by their principals” (Karp, 2012, p. 48). While not without controversies, Johnston and Fiarman (2012) suggested: “Peer evaluators can reduce the demand on administrators’ scarce time, provide subject matter expertise that a principal may lack, introduce the teacher’s perspective into the evaluation process, and enable teachers to take greater control of the profession” (p. 21). “Each evaluator is trained [calibrated] to conduct three parts of a cycle that helps teachers gain information and reflect on their practices: pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference” (von Frank, 2011, p. 36).

### **Clear Standards of Effective Teaching**

A global analysis of teacher evaluation systems manifests consistent foundational characteristics. Weinstein and Struthers (2012) stated, “Defining teacher quality, having a clearly articulated purpose, using valid and reliable measures, and securing stakeholder support are the building blocks of successful evaluation systems” (p. 20). The push for

national teacher evaluation reform was prompted by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) signed by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009 (United States Department of Education, 2009a, para 1). The prioritization of establishing clear standards of measuring teacher quality prompted an overhaul of existing evaluation systems. “In order to increase consistency in teacher evaluations, many states adopted detailed, standards-based performance rubrics to ensure some measure of objectivity and consistency among evaluators” (Donahue & Vogel, 2018, p. 33).

Developing and using a common language for effective teaching is a crucial characteristic of an effective feedback system. Adams et al. (2015) stated:

In the same way that good teachers help students understand learning goals that include detailed descriptions of the expected performance accompanied by the exemplars of that performance, teachers should be provided with the same clear expectation in the form of elaborated descriptions of standards, exemplars of good practice, a framework for evaluating their work, and a process for feedback from other knowledgeable professionals. (p. 8)

Kraft and Gilmour’s (2016) research findings identified the use of a shared language between administrators and teachers and specific feedback guided by the rubric were critical features of successful execution of feedback cycles (p. 18). “An observation tool or rubric that is detailed and outlines clear performance standards would help establish a common language for instructional practice across schools and districts” (Almy, 2011, pp. 3-4).

Robert Marzano's *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction* (2007) and Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) are two common research-based teaching frameworks that school districts use to describe effective teaching. Marzano emphasized that teacher evaluation systems must be comprehensive and specific, include a developmental scale, and acknowledge and reward teacher growth (Marzano, 2012, p. 18). Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) provided evaluators with clarity and consistency as a result of an established standards-based blueprint identifying effective teaching behaviors and practices (Locke, 2011, p.53). "The question of what constitutes effective teaching is at the core of efforts around the nation to raise student achievement by focusing on teacher quality" (von Frank, 2011, p. 33).

### **High-Quality Feedback and Professional Development**

Using the evaluation process as a catalyst for continuous improvement and growth requires increased attention to communication and support (Hart, Healey & Spote, 2014, p. 64). According to Hart et al. (2014), "Quality conversations that enable all participants to grow depend on both sides coming to the table knowing the framework and how to use it in a collaborative, constructive dialogue" (p. 66). Evaluation systems designed to grow teacher effectiveness ensure that all observed personnel receive evidence-based feedback from evaluators as a means to promote continuous learning (Coggshall, Rasmussen, Colton, Milton & Jacques, 2012, p.12). Donahue and Vogel (2018) also contend, "The idea that teacher evaluation is a driver of teacher development makes regular feedback essential" (p. 35). Observations can be the best method for

school leaders to collect explicit performance evidence with a focus on feedback for professional growth and the promotion of student learning (Almy, 2011, p. 4).

Looney (2011) advocated for the need to couple teacher evaluation with professional learning as a crucial behavior of well-designed systems that contribute to improvements in the quality of instruction and student achievement (p. 440). Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the federal education law replacing No Child Left Behind, also supports the need for job-embedded learning experiences aligned to school or district improvement plans (Rosen & Parise, 2017, p. 1). According to Hill and Herlihy (2011), immersing professional learning opportunities within an evaluation system enables administrators to provide instructional personnel with substantive, tailored feedback as a means of continuous improvement (p. 5).

### **The Controversy Surrounding Teacher Evaluation and Student Achievement**

For the last 25 years, assessment has been an essential component of national education reforms. Accountability through the implementation and collection of student achievement data derived from State Standards Assessment Programs was the lynchpin of No Child Left Behind federal legislation. Since 2001, high stakes testing “is used holistically to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and the education process present on campuses and within districts” (Roberson, 2014, p. 345). Anderman, Anderman, Yough, and Gimbert (2010) stated, “Controversy about using value-added assessments to measure the effectiveness of schools and teachers centers on the strengths and weaknesses of existing models for tracking individual students’ growth” (p. 128).

**Using multiple measures of teacher effectiveness.** National debate surrounds the use of value-added measures as a contributing measurement linking student

achievement to teacher quality. As cited by Looney, “Value-added measurements of student achievement refer to gains over a given year, which can be attributed to the contributions of the local education area, the school, or individual teachers” (2011, p. 443). Baker, Oluwole, and Green (2013) provided a historical perspective regarding the role of federal legislation in systemic teacher evaluation reform:

Spurred by the Race-to-the-Top program championed by the Obama administration and a changing political climate in favor of holding teachers accountable for the performance of their students, many states revamped their tenure laws and passed additional legislation designed to tie student performance to teacher evaluations. (p. 3)

Hill and Herlihy (2011) advocated for the wise use of value-added scores as one of the multiple measures factored into teacher quality (p. 3). “Although evidence suggests that scores from value-added models are not sufficiently reliable and unbiased to use alone in high-stakes decisions, they do carry objective information that districts can use to great advantage” (p. 3).

Conflicting viewpoints contend that the incorporation of student test scores can be misleading due to many external variables that impact student learning (Locke, 2011, p. 58). Locke (2011) stated, “Standardized test scores can vary widely from year to year, and they offer no information to help improve students’ performance” (p. 58). Adams et al. (2015) further argued, “In addition, student performance is influenced by home supports, attendance, and school supports, and it reflects the work of prior and other current teachers as well as parents and tutors as much as any individual teacher” (p. 13).

### **Critiquing the intended outcome(s) of the Measures of Effective Teaching**

**(MET) Project.** In 2009, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation embarked on the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project to improve student outcomes by increasing access to effective teaching environments and practices (Kane & Staiger, 2010, p. 2). During the three-year study, a multitude of research partners contributed to the study, “including academic institutions (Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Stanford University, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Virginia, and University of Washington), nonprofit organizations (Educational Testing Service, RAND Corporation, the National Math and Science Initiative, and the New Teacher Center), and other educational consultants (Cambridge Education, Teachscape, Westat, and the Danielson Group)” (Kane & Staiger, 2010, p. 3). Concluding remarks from the Foundation’s work, spanning across six predominantly urban school districts, indicated “The best way to ensure that the evaluation system is providing valid and reliable feedback is to verify that, on average, those who shine in their evaluations are producing larger student achievement gains” (Kane & Staiger, 2010, p. 32).

A full evaluation of the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project was released by RAND in 2018 “The evaluation began in July 2010 and collected data annually for six school years, from 2010-2011 through 2015-2016” (Stecher et al., 2018, p. iii). The RAND/AIR team’s preliminary findings indicated, “That the sites enacted teacher effectiveness measures that combined systemic classroom observation, teachers’ contributions to student achievement growth, and other factors, and many educators and site leaders reported benefits from doing so” (Stecher et al., 2018, p. 487). However, “by the end of the 2014-2015 school year, student outcomes were not dramatically better than

outcomes in similar sites that did not participate in the IP [Intensive Partnerships for Effective Teaching] initiative” (Stecher et al., 2018, p. 488). Researchers collected student outcome data for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years for review, analysis, and contribution to report findings.

Researchers designed the multiyear MET project to assist school districts with the development of robust measures of teaching effectiveness. Jensen et al. (2019) provided the first external analysis of the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) study to examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of the research design (pp. 2-5). “Our purpose is to provide guidelines for designers of small-to-large-scale studies of teaching effectiveness, as well as to analysts who conduct effectiveness research using existing datasets” (Jensen et al., 2019, p. 3). The authors made five recommendations to address the weaknesses of the data: (1) Clear and coherent conceptual framing of teaching effectiveness, (2) Technically strong measures of teaching, (3) Minimize sampling problems, (4) Use of classroom videoing procedures, and (5) Cautious use and interpretation of value-added models (Jensen et al., 2019, pp. 5-11).

Teachers in the six sampled school districts volunteered to participate in the MET study and received compensation. “Teachers, not individual students, were assigned randomly to classes. MET data enable estimates of teaching effectiveness for groups of students, but not to compare teachers for any given student” (Jensen et al., 2019, p. 8). Analytical constraints were also a factor as the 2,741 teachers participating in the study selected the time and content focus for their recoded lessons (Jensen et al., 2019, p. 10). “We can learn a great deal from past efforts, like the MET study, about how to test specific conjectures regarding teaching effectiveness; to sample students, teachers, and

schools strategically; to develop measures thoughtfully; and to interpret our findings carefully” (Jensen et al., 2019, p. 12). As one of the only large-scale data sets on teaching effectiveness, scholars can use the findings from the MET study to strengthen future research on teaching effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

A comprehensive review of current research on teacher evaluation provides the context for systemic approaches designed to facilitate the ongoing refinement of effective teaching practices. Educators used an instructional lens to examine the impact of skilled evaluators on teacher quality. A brief historical overview of the reach of *Race to the Top* federal legislation detailed the role of clear standards of effective teaching on state and local teacher accountability measures. The push to increase global academic standing led to the creation and adoption of evaluation frameworks such as Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* (2011) and Robert Marzano’s *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction* (2007). Leveraging a common language for effective teaching provides shared working knowledge for implementing feedback models as a means to bridge evidence-based observations with high-quality feedback and continuous improvement.

The fiscal implications tied to teacher tenure, performance, and accountability purport the controversial perspectives surrounding teacher evaluation. Correlating student performance with teacher evaluation exposes conflicting viewpoints as to the use of multiple measures to gauge the quality of instruction and overall impact of the classroom teacher. On June 21, 2018, the RAND Corporation and American Institutes for Research (AIR) released findings indicating the shortcomings of the Measures of Effective

Teaching project. The future release of collected student outcome data for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years may provide additional research for consideration.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

#### Research Design Overview

This program evaluation focused on what extent the current Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument improves teacher quality. Throughout the stages of development, I used three types of evaluation, including effectiveness focus, learning-oriented evaluation, and attribution focus (Patton, 2008). Each of these types of evaluation served as a unique framework to evaluate the transformation of teacher effectiveness measures through a revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

I implemented an effectiveness focus (Patton, 2008, p. 301) for the evaluation of the existing classroom teacher observation instrument based on the Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011). The observation instrument consists of four Domains with 22 components. Figure 5 provides an overview of these components by domain.

DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION	
COMPONENTS	1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
	1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
	1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes
	1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
	1e: Designing Coherent Instruction
	1f: Designing Student Assessments
DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT	
COMPONENTS	2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
	2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning
	2c: Managing Classroom Procedures
	2d: Managing Student Behavior
	2e: Organizing Physical Space
DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION	
COMPONENTS	3a: Communicating with Students
	3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
	3c: Engaging Students in Learning
	3d: Using Assessment in Instruction
	3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES	
COMPONENTS	4a: Reflecting on Teaching
	4b: Maintaining Accurate Records
	4c: Communicating with Families
	4d: Participating in a Professional Community
	4e: Growing and Developing Professionally
	4f: Showing Professionalism

Figure 5. An overview of the 22 components by domain based on Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011)

A thorough review of the tool was necessary to determine if all 22 components reflected language representative of K-12 instructional practice, clear delineations between performance measures systematically progressing from unsatisfactory to highly effective, and fidelity of academic expectations aligned to state standards. This initial focus served as the foundational needs assessment to determine the current impact of evaluator use of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a tool to enhance teacher instructional practice and student achievement.

As defined by Patton (2008), a learning-oriented evaluation focuses the evaluation on program improvement as well as broadens the beneficiary to that of organizational improvement (p. 303). In this phase of evaluation, I analyzed district-wide processes and protocols to determine areas of strength and opportunities for growth regarding system-wide calibration and implementation of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Using the opportunities for growth as a road map for targeted improvement, this phase of the evaluation aimed to identify how school district administrators transform teacher effectiveness measures through revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Operating under the premise that the evaluation process provides a centralized structure to support every teacher's professional growth, my program evaluation sought to identify

the intensity of evaluation support provided to principals based on completed years of experience in their respective roles.

I implemented an attribution focus (Patton, 2008, p. 300) to determine the extent to which administrators' use of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument impacts performance as measured by student achievement on the State Standards Assessment Program. After my initial analysis of the delineation of the language within the performance ratings and components of the evaluation instrument, I reviewed existing processes in place surrounding the current administrator use of the evaluation instrument. The final phase of this evaluation focused on measuring the relationship between observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement on the State Standards Assessment Program in mathematics and reading. Effectiveness focus, learning-oriented evaluation, and attribution focus guided program development and growth succinctly and systematically.

In 2017, I transitioned to the position of Director of Teaching and Learning and identified two areas for concern pertaining to observation and evaluation processes. The first concern was a misalignment between the established language in the school district under study's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument and the sound educational principles and contemporary research grounded in Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011). My second area of disquietude was the discrepancy between the high percentage of teachers receiving effective and highly effective instructional practice scores when compared to student achievement data as determined by student performance on the State Standards Assessment Program. The lack of impact that evaluator use of the instrument

had on student achievement perpetuated my need to revise the instrument used for teacher evaluation and change the way teachers were observed and evaluated in the school district under study. The specific tools I used to evaluate the current classroom teacher evaluation system integrated quantitative and qualitative data collection for a mixed-methods approach.

During the revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, I collected qualitative data through focus group responses. The premise behind the focus group was to capture stakeholder perspectives midway through the first year of implementation of the revised tool as well as after the first, full year of implementation. Another source of data was a quantitative analysis of classroom teacher instructional practice ratings as compared to student achievement results on State Standards Assessments. In addition, I filtered the sample size to only compare overall instructional practice and student achievement scores for classroom teachers assigned to teach courses in which a state VAM is the determined student achievement measure. This sample size removed the potential subjectivity that may be associated with locally derived student achievement calculations and increased the reliability of the student achievement calculation based on the incorporation of a three-year state VAM aggregate score. I administered a digital Likert scale survey to all 50 public school principals in the district under study to capture evaluator perception of the impact of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on teacher instructional practice and student achievement results (as defined by proficiency on State Standards Assessments).

The goal of this study design was to explore the relationship between classroom teacher observation and evaluation results and the impact on student achievement as

demonstrated by student performance on State Standards Assessments in the following grades and content areas: English Language Arts: Grades 4-10, Mathematics: Grades 4-8, and Algebra 1: Grades 8 and 9 only. A theory of action for the evaluation system is necessary to address the disparity between inflated instructional performance ratings of effective and highly effective practice (as identified by evaluators) and a lack of student achievement (as determined by student proficiency on State Standards Assessments).

### **Participants**

I extended the invitation for participation in the revision of the current Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument to all principals, assistant principals, and instructional personnel at 50 elementary and secondary schools within the school district. Instructional personnel included the following K-12 personnel whose functions provide direct support in the learning process of students: classroom teachers, instructional support services (content area specialists, magnet facilitators, child find specialists, learning resource specialists, technology resource teachers, and career education facilitators), and student support services (student service managers, ESE specialists, social workers, educational diagnosticians, ESOL resource facilitators, speech language pathologists, work study, and certified athletic trainers). I sent an email to principals explaining the urgency of establishing a rubric that demonstrated clear and consistent indicators of performance. Via the email communication, I asked principals to serve as the conduit to communicate the opportunity for vested instructional personnel and administrators to contribute actively to the revision process. Principals were responsible for emailing the names, position/job classification, and email addresses for all individuals indicating a desire to participate. The metrics by instructional classification for all names submitted by

principals were 59 instructional personnel, five instructional support services personnel, six student support services personnel, and 28 administrators. All 98 of the administrator recommendations received an email from me to participate in Phase One of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument revision process. Of the 98 email recipients, 76 of them completed the Phase One task to analyze and select their preferred language for each of the 22 components.

I invited the 76 individuals who participated in Phase One to participate in Phase Two of the rubric revision process. Fifty-four out of the 76 individuals accepted my invitation to engage in dialogue to discuss and document the strengths and limitations of the component language receiving the most votes from Phase One. I collaborated with district administrators to select nine individuals from the 54 who participated in Phase Two to serve on the Revision Task Force. In reviewing the list of possible candidates for selection to the Rubric Revision Task Force, we selected instructional and administrative personnel to represent elementary, middle, and high school settings while factoring their content area of expertise. I presented the nine agreed-upon names from the district administrative team to the President of the teacher's collective bargaining union. The president reviewed the list, approved the names, and identified two additional names from the list to represent the teacher's union. The 11 members of the Revision Task Force included representation from the following stakeholder groups: three elementary classroom teachers (one prekindergarten/primary, one primary, and one intermediate), one elementary principal, two secondary classroom teachers (one middle school and one high school), two secondary assistant principals (one middle school and one high school), one instructional support services personnel (literacy content area specialist), and two

classroom teachers serving as the collective bargaining representatives from the teacher's collective bargaining union.

Engaging a broad group of stakeholders allowed me to incorporate input and insights from personnel directly impacted by the evaluation system. As recommended by Curtis and Wiener: "The most important resources in building and implementing an evaluation system are the teachers, principals, coaches, and data analysts in your system who will have to do the work or are currently doing it" (2012, p. 6). I sought informed consent by individuals serving on the Revision Task Force to participate in a focus group to share their perceptions of the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The focus group convened during two windows of time during the first implementation year – mid-year and after a full year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

Additional participants included 50 K-12 public school principals within the school district under study. Approaching principals through a virtual survey platform reduced the pressures of responding in a face-to-face setting. My strategic question sets within the Likert scale survey structure captured data about administrators' perceptions of fairness and accuracy of teacher evaluation procedures. Implementation of teacher evaluation processes fell within the day-to-day scope of responsibilities. While I documented my interpretation of findings influencing teacher performance and student achievement measures for this program evaluation, I shared the data with district administrators as contributing information sources for decision-making.

## **Data Gathering Techniques**

I used a mixed-methods approach to evaluate current teacher performance measures within the school district. The use of qualitative and quantitative data, as described below, provided the contributing metrics for my findings and interpretation. The synthesis of multiple sources of data “helps to enhance the validity of results, since they do not overly rely on any particular method of study” (James, Milenkiewicz & Bucknam, 2008, p. 81).

**Soliciting stakeholder participation in the revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.** As Director of Teaching and Learning, the Deputy Superintendent tasked me with the revision of the existing Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument to ensure clear and consistent indicators of performance. Guided by the conceptual framework of Charlotte Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching* (2011), I began the classroom teacher rubric revision process with an email outreach to provide principals, assistant principals, and instructional personnel with the opportunity to contribute to the revision of the rubric set for implementation the following school year. In the email communication, I asked principals to communicate this process to their assistant principals as well as all instructional personnel at their school sites. I directed principals to submit the following information to me, via email reply, to identify specifically the individuals indicating a desire to contribute to the revision process:

- Participant first and last name
- Grade/Content/Position
- School district email address

For record-keeping, I also directed principals to indicate if no one at their site had an interest serving in this capacity. My decision to send the request via email documented an equitable invitation for participation while promoting a non-threatening outreach for collaboration. Allowing principals to serve as the liaison for this communication leveraged existing relationships between administrators and instructional personnel at their school sites.

I combined all principal recommendations in an Excel spreadsheet organized with the headings: last name/first name, school site, grade/content, position (i.e., classroom teacher, instructional support services, student support services, and administrator), and school district email address. All submitted principal recommendations received an email from me, inviting them to participate in Phase One of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument revision process. The breakdown of Phase One participants were 59 classroom teachers, five content area specialists, six student service managers, and 28 principals and assistant principals.

**Phase One.** I designed Phase One of the rubric revision process to allow for independent analysis of multiple component variations, rooted in the Danielson Framework (2011). All 98 of the individuals, submitted as principal recommendations, received an email from me detailing the foundational work of Phase One. The email contained an attachment in which I directed participants to review individually two versions of component language for each of the 22 components within the *Framework for Teaching* (2011). The figure below illustrates the vantage point of the participants during the review of the comparative component rubric language. Figure 6 provides example component language from two other school districts utilizing Charlotte Danielson's

*Framework for Teaching* (2011) as the guiding research base for their evaluation

instrument.

<b>Domain 1: Planning and Preparation</b>			
<b>Component 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy</b>			
<i>Knowledge of Content and Structure of Discipline, Prerequisite Relationships, and Content-Related Pedagogy</i>			
<b>HIGHLY EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>PROGRESSING</b>	<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>
<p>Teacher's planning displays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-working understanding of how topics/concepts relate to one another and other disciplines</li> <li>-wide range of pedagogical approaches and anticipates student misconceptions</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher's planning displays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-awareness of how topics/concepts relate to one another</li> <li>-wide range of pedagogical approaches</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher's planning displays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-some awareness of prerequisite relationships among topics/concepts</li> <li>-limited range of pedagogical approaches</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher's planning displays:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-no awareness of prerequisite relationships among topics/concepts and content errors</li> <li>-no range of pedagogical approaches</li> </ul>

**Example 1**

<b>HIGHLY EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	<b>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT/ DEVELOPING</b>	<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>
<p>The teacher displays extensive knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and how these relate both to one another and to other disciplines.</p> <p>The teacher demonstrates understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics and concepts and understands the link to necessary cognitive structures that ensure student understanding.</p> <p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the discipline and the ability</p>	<p>The teacher displays solid knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and how these relate to one another.</p> <p>The teacher demonstrates accurate understanding of prerequisite relationships among topics.</p> <p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect familiarity with a wide range of effective pedagogical approaches in the subject.</p>	<p>The teacher is familiar with the important concepts in the discipline but displays a lack of awareness of how these concepts relate to one another.</p> <p>The teacher indicates some awareness of prerequisite learning, although such knowledge may be inaccurate or incomplete.</p> <p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect a limited range of pedagogical approaches to the discipline or to the students.</p>	<p>In planning and practice, the teacher makes content errors or does not correct errors made by students.</p> <p>The teacher displays little understanding of prerequisite knowledge important to student learning of the content.</p> <p>The teacher displays little or no understanding of the range of pedagogical approaches suitable to student learning of the content.</p>

Figure continues on following page.

**Example 2**

EXEMPLARY	ACCOMPLISHED	PROGRESSING	REQUIRES ACTION
<p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect extensive knowledge of the content, the structure of the discipline and instructional practices.</p> <p>The teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisites and misconceptions when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding.</p> <p>The teacher stays abreast of emerging research areas, new and innovative methods and incorporates them into lesson plans and instructional strategies.</p>	<p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect solid knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between important concepts, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.</p>	<p>The teacher's plans and practice reflect some awareness of the important concepts in the discipline, prerequisite relationships between them, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.</p>	<p>The teacher's plans and practice display little knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between different aspects of the content, or the instructional practices specific to that discipline.</p>

*Figure 6.* Example of component language comparison for one of the 22 components of a document provided to 98 Phase One participants for their review of the established rubric language by component.

After completing the comparative analysis for all 22 components, participants utilized a Google Form survey link to make their selection of the best example language that holistically captured the highlighted elements for each component. The example language receiving the higher frequency of selection by participants served as the beginning draft language for Phase Two of the revision process. The Google Form Analytics of 98 participants for phase one response results who indicated their example language preference (between example one and example two) for domains 1-4 are available for review in Appendix A.

**Phase One individual participant selections by component.** Phase One data collection using Google Form Analytics provided the following participant language preference selections by component (Appendix A). As seen in the data from Google

Form Analytics figures (Appendix A), Domain 1 responses clearly demonstrate a preference for the language used in Example 2 for these components. Domain 2 responses also show a preference for Example 2, although not completely. Domain 3 and Domain 4 responses to component preference demonstrate several mixed responses between the examples.

**Phase Two.** I designed Phase Two of the rubric revision process to scaffold from individual analyses to the implementation of collaborative thought partners. I emailed a graphic organizer to all 77 individuals who participated and contributed to Phase One of the revision process. Each of the four domains have components; these components each have identified elements identified from the evaluation rubric language selected by participants in Phase One. Figure 7 provides an overview of the domains, with the chosen example number from Phase One, and the elements associated with each component that are also listed on a graphic organizer provided for participant review which is available in Appendix B.

Domain		Example Chosen	Elements of Component for Strengths and/or Limitation Review
<b>DOMAIN 1: PLANNING AND PREPARATION</b>			
COMPONENTS	1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline</li> <li>• Knowledge of prerequisite relationships</li> <li>• Knowledge of content-related pedagogy</li> </ul>
	1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of child and adolescent behavior</li> <li>• Knowledge of the learning process and students' special needs</li> <li>• Knowledge of students', skills, knowledge, and language proficiency</li> <li>• Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage</li> </ul>
	1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value, sequence, and alignment</li> <li>• Clarity</li> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Suitability for diverse learners</li> </ul>

	1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources for classroom use</li> <li>Resources for students</li> <li>Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy</li> </ul>
	1e: Designing Coherent Instruction	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning activities</li> <li>Instructional materials and resources</li> <li>Instructional groups</li> <li>Lesson and unit structure</li> </ul>
	1f: Designing Student Assessments	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congruence with instructional outcomes</li> <li>Criteria and standards</li> <li>Design of formative assessments</li> <li>Use for planning</li> </ul>
<b>DOMAIN 2: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT</b>			
COMPONENTS	2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher interaction with students</li> <li>Student interactions with other students</li> </ul>
	2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of the content</li> <li>Expectations for learning and achievement</li> <li>Student pride in work</li> </ul>
	2c: Managing Classroom Procedures	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management of instructional groups</li> <li>Management of transitions</li> <li>Management of materials and supplies</li> <li>Performance of non-instructional duties</li> <li>Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals</li> </ul>
	2d: Managing Student Behavior	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations</li> <li>Monitoring of student behavior</li> <li>Response to student misbehavior</li> </ul>
	2e: Organizing Physical Space	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety and accessibility</li> <li>Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources</li> </ul>
<b>DOMAIN 3: INSTRUCTION</b>			
COMPONENTS	3a: Communicating with Students	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations for learning</li> <li>Directions and procedures</li> <li>Explanations of content</li> <li>Use of oral and written language</li> </ul>
	3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of questions</li> <li>Discussion techniques</li> <li>Student participation</li> </ul>
	3c: Engaging Students in Learning	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities and assignments</li> <li>Grouping of students</li> <li>Instructional materials and resources</li> <li>Structure and pacing</li> </ul>
	3d: Using Assessment in Instruction	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment criteria</li> <li>Monitoring of student learning</li> <li>Feedback to students</li> <li>Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress</li> </ul>
	3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson adjustment</li> <li>Response to students</li> <li>Persistence</li> </ul>

DOMAIN 4: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES			
COMPONENTS	4a: Reflecting on Teaching	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accuracy</li> <li>• Use in future teaching</li> </ul>
	4b: Maintaining Accurate Records	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student completion of assignments</li> <li>• Student progress in learning</li> <li>• Non-instructional records</li> </ul>
	4c: Communicating with Families	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about the instructional program</li> <li>• Information about individual students</li> <li>• Engagement of families in the instructional program</li> </ul>
	4d: Participating in a Professional Community	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships with colleagues</li> <li>• Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry</li> <li>• Service to the school</li> <li>• Participation in school and district projects</li> </ul>
	4e: Growing and Developing Professionally	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill</li> <li>• Receptivity to feedback from colleagues</li> <li>• Service to the profession</li> </ul>
	4f: Showing Professionalism	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity and ethical conduct</li> <li>• Service to students</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Decision making</li> <li>• Compliance with school and district regulation</li> </ul>

*Figure 7.* Phase One response results indicating example language preference for domains, components of the domains, and the associated elements of each component as listed on the graphic organizers used for participant reviews, individual and group (An example of a revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is available in Appendix C)

The graphic organizers allowed participants to document the strengths and limitations of the identified elements of the draft language of the 22 components as a preparatory step to engage in collaborative conversations with colleagues. To facilitate authentic dialogue during Phase Two, I provided two dates for participants to discuss and document their collective thoughts on posters that replicated their emailed graphic organizers structured plus/delta by component. These graphic organizers allow participants to document their individual thoughts as to the strengths and limitations of the draft language of each of the 22 components prior to attending the face-to-face collaborative conversations. The graphic organizers were replicated and enlarged in poster form during the collaborative conversations of Phase Two of the rubric revision process.

**Phase Three.** I transferred all comments to a Word document for use during Phase Three of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument revision process. Figure 8 illustrates an example of the final product after I transferred all comments to a Word document for use during Phase Three of the classroom teacher revision process.

### 1a. Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

#### Example 2

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
The teacher's plans and practice display little knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between different aspects of the content, or the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher's plans and practice reflect some awareness of the important concepts in the discipline, prerequisite relationships between them, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher's plans and practice reflect solid knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between important concepts, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher's plans and practice reflect extensive knowledge of the content, the structure of the discipline and instructional practices. The teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisites and misconceptions when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding. The teacher stays abreast of emerging research areas, <b>new and</b> innovative methods and incorporates them into lesson plans and instructional strategies.

What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component? <u>Elements</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Knowledge of content and structure of the discipline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Knowledge of prerequisite relationships</b></li> <li>- <b>Knowledge of content-related pedagogy</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
+	▲
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logical progression with clearly understood differences (3)</li> <li>• HE-Extensive knowledge (1)</li> <li>• Use of friendly language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid? Ambiguous (4)</li> <li>• Define discipline (2)</li> <li>• How do you observe pre-requisites in plans? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Needs to go to 4a (3)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>New and innovative does not necessarily mean better (5)</b></li> <li>• How does admin know teacher is staying abreast? (7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What does stay abreast look like? (6)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Extensive? Clarify how it's observed (5)</li> <li>• "Knowledge" is not visible (2)</li> <li>• Quantify "little, some, solid, extensive" (4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not measurable (1)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Figure 8. Sample of consolidated input and revisions during Phase Two of participant feedback

I created the Rubric Revision Task Force as the decision-making entity during the final phase, Phase Three, of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument revision process. I designed this task force to be representative of the various instructional stakeholder groups across the school district. During the selection process, I sought input from the Director of Elementary Education, the Director of Secondary Education, and the three Area Directors. Collectively, we selected individuals to represent various instructional levels (early childhood, primary, intermediate, middle school, and high school classroom teachers), content areas (literacy content area specialist, Pre-Algebra, English, and gifted), and job classifications (instructional and administrative). The members of the task force included: two representatives from the classroom teacher collective bargaining union, two secondary classroom teachers, three elementary classroom teachers, one content area specialist, one elementary principal, and two secondary assistant principals. The only directive I provided the Rubric Revision Task Force was to address only the consolidated input and revisions from Phase Two in order to serve as a representation of thoughts and perspectives of participants contributing to all phases of the revision process. I stepped into the role of facilitator and assigned the additional roles of timekeeper and recorder. In a roundtable format, the 11 members of the Rubric Revision Task Force discussed all 22 components. After nine hours of dialogue, the members of the Rubric Revision Task Force created the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Tool as a result of their authentic stakeholder collaboration (See Appendix C).

**Focus Group.** I sought informed consent from the 11 members of the Rubric Revision Task Force to voluntarily participate in a semi-structured focus group. My intention with the focus group was to capture all aspects of the revision journey resulting

in a genuinely reflective perspective of the implementation process. The focus group met twice, mid-year during the first year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument and at the beginning of the subsequent school year after a full year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument (Appendix C). During both sessions, the focus group discussed the same five questions for approximately 60 minutes. I read each question in its entirety and exhausted all participant contributions before moving on to the next question. I digitally recorded each focus group session to help ensure the accuracy of the information collected. During my transcription of the audio recording, I anonymized all responses to maintain confidentiality. My facilitator script for the focus group can be found in Appendix D.

**Capturing principal perspectives on teacher evaluation.** Regarding administrator perspective, I invited all 50 principals to participate in the data collection contributing to the impact of the new Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on teacher instructional practice and student achievement. At the end of the first full year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, I emailed a Likert scale survey to all 50 principals in the school district to reflect on the evaluation change implementation from the administrators' perspective. As part of the survey, respondents answered eight questions using a Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (see Appendix E). The goal of the survey was to capture principals' perceptions of the fairness and accuracy of teacher evaluation procedures.

Implementing evaluation reform requires bridging technical knowledge of state accountability statutes with relevant and consistent communication of observation and evaluation processes with district stakeholders. "The key to getting the most out of

teacher evaluation is figuring out how to implement it in a way that challenges, supports, and motivates teachers” (Donaldson, 2016, p. 76). Crucial to this end, is the transition of the role of the principal from site manager to instructional leader: “Not only are they [principals] responsible for conducting observations and conferences – both of which they need to do skillfully – but they also establish the school’s culture, tone, and expectations around evaluations” (Jiang & Spote, 2016, p. 3).

**Instructional practice and student achievement data.** Evaluators, site-based principals, and assistant principals must complete observations of instructional personnel, share results with observed employees, and finalize formal and informal observations within the school district’s digital evaluation platform to remain in compliance with state statutes. As a representative of the school district, monitoring of observation and evaluation data was part of my job responsibilities. I reviewed the observation data submitted by site-based evaluators and stored within the district’s online evaluation platform. I filtered the sample size to include the final evaluation ratings of classroom teachers serving as the teacher of record for courses that require the administering of State Standards Assessments in English Language Arts: Grades 4-10, Mathematics: Grades 4-8, and Algebra 1: Grades 8 and 9 only. I obtained permission from the school district to use the instructional practice and student achievement extant data in my program evaluation.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

I analyzed principal survey results, focus group transcriptions, and instructional practice and student achievement data to organize each data source in relation to my research questions. Additionally, I identified overarching trends and themes at the system

level based on Wagner et al. (2006) four arenas of change leadership framework – context, competencies, culture, and conditions. I utilized Microsoft Excel formulas to organize, analyze, and synthesize the Likert scale question responses from the digital survey to principals. Identifying the frequency of responses by scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) for each question provided insight data as to the principal’s perceptions of the fairness and accuracy of teacher evaluation procedures in the school district under study. Additional demographic questions identifying years of experience as a principal and school level (elementary, middle, or high school setting) provided additional variables for pattern analysis. I individually transcribed both focus group sessions and documented words and phrases used with higher levels of frequency for each of the five questions posed. I analyzed the documented words and phrases to examine patterns, frequency of word choice, and emerging themes from participant responses to each question. I utilized a spreadsheet to synthesize individual participant responses by question to assess stakeholder perspective of the school district’s implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument (See Appendix G).

Additionally, I compared instructional practice and student achievement data through a targeted sample size of classroom teachers earning a state value-added measure for three consecutive years through the administering of State Standards Assessments in English Language Arts: Grades 4-10, Mathematics: Grades 4-8, and Algebra 1: Grades 8 and 9 only. I isolated teachers with a state value-added measure as the computer-based scoring allows for the incorporation of sophisticated variables. These variables include the number of subject-relevant courses in which the student is enrolled, Students with

Disabilities (SWD) status, English Language Learner (ELL) status, gifted status, attendance, mobility (number of transitions), difference in modal age in grade (as an indicator of retention), class size, and homogeneity of entering test scores in the class. Interpreting the data from various stakeholder perspectives provided increased opportunities for application back to the research questions.

### **Ethical Considerations**

I prioritized ethical considerations when developing this program evaluation. I consulted the requirements outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Public Welfare, Part 46, Protection of Human Services to guide all aspects of research. This rule explicitly outlines protection and assurances for human subjects involved in research (Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, 2017).

My access and extraction of data pertaining to classroom teacher instructional practice and student achievement proficiency were extant data for which I obtained permission from the school district for use in this program evaluation. I provided each focus group participant for this program evaluation an informed consent form that provided transparency about the study overview, purpose, and usage of data collected throughout the study. I provided all instructional and site-based administrative personnel in the school district during the 2017-2018 school year the opportunity to participate in the classroom teacher rubric revision process. With regards to administrator perspective, I invited all 50 public school principals to participate in the Likert scale survey to share their perception of the impact of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on teacher quality and student achievement. In my email seeking voluntary participation, I

indicated that every principal had the option to decline participation with no negative consequences for electing the choice.

### **Limitations**

Limitations of my program evaluation included my biases about the value of observations as a vehicle to provide professional growth opportunities. Helping teachers excel in their classroom practice is an influential factor of student achievement. I believe that authentic use of classroom observation processes directly supports student achievement through an investment in continuous improvement and development of reflective practitioners.

Another limitation of the study was the limited sample size of the focus group. Eight out of the 11 Rubric Revision Task Force members participated in the focus group held midway through the first year of the implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The three individuals unable to attend were two elementary teachers and one middle school teacher. Seven out of 11 participated in the culminating focus group at the end of a full year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The four individuals unable to attend were two elementary teachers, one high school teacher, and one administrator. When I selected the 11 individuals for the Rubric Revision Task Force, I prioritized selecting individuals from various school sites in an attempt to maximize stakeholder perspectives. District administrative changes occurring in the timeframe between the two focus groups which resulted in two of the administrators on the focus group serving at the same school site.

Lastly, restructuring of the school district's staffing plan structure to include Area Directors resulted in a lag time of organized data reporting. The trend data of each

geographical region was not readily accessible. While student demographic and achievement data were available for each school site, the inability to introduce the geographic area as a variable for analysis was an additional limitation.

### **Conclusion**

I used a mixed-methods approach during data collection for my program evaluation. Stakeholder input contributed to determining the impact of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument and student achievement. I analyzed the data collected from classroom teachers, non-classroom instructional personnel, administrators, and student performance on State Standards Assessments to inform and improve current practices surrounding observation and evaluation in the district under study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Results

Implementing systemic change requires incremental planning with intentional opportunities to hypothesize the relationship between all the moving parts affecting teaching and learning. Fullan (2007b) stated, “The individual school may be the unit of change, but frequently change is the result of system initiatives that live or die based on the strategies and supports offered by the larger organization” (p. 93). The four arenas of change (Wagner et al., 2006) - context, culture, competencies, and conditions – created an analytical framework that provided an organizational, schematic approach to identify the current As-Is (refer to Appendix F) for an evaluation of teacher effectiveness measures in the school district under study.

### Findings

Context refers to the influential cultural, political, economic, and educational factors external to the school district. “Understanding context means knowing more about the worlds from which students come and those for which they must be prepared” (Wagner et al., 2006, p.104). The core competencies for student achievement, as well as the aspirations and needs of families served by the school district under study, are critical demands of teaching and learning. Acknowledging the critical role of the classroom teacher, I analyzed classroom teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by value-added measures from State Standards Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and end-of-course (EOC) subjects (Algebra 1 and Geometry) to determine the relationship between teaching and learning.

Culture embodies the pervasive and established mindsets, shared beliefs, and assumptions that shape behaviors and the quality of relationships within the system. Frequent shifts in the administrative staffing plan strained relational trust within the organization. Loyalty to previous staff, programming, and processes perpetuated a sense of loss, creating a blurred vision for the role of teacher evaluation. A diagnosis of evaluator perceptions of the observation and evaluation procedures aided in my refinement of the evaluation system to change the mindset of administrators. Shifting the existing mindset surrounding observations from a compliance mandate to teacher support and development through high quality, actionable feedback will create the ideal conditions for teaching and learning.

Structural, cultural, economic, and symbolic factors influence the conditions of student learning. These external factors are more tangible than the cultural arena, as they may include financial issues, department configurations, leadership issues, and human resource issues. My facilitation of a focus group allowed various stakeholders to contribute to the narrative surrounding the revision of the Classroom Teacher Observation Instrument to the present-day evaluation system in place. The transcription of individual participant responses revealed overarching trends in relation to structures needed to ensure consistent implementation of observation and evaluation processes.

Individuals serve in the capacity of change agents within the organization. Competencies are the repertoire of an individual's existing schema and skillset across technical, social, and leadership abilities. A needs-assessment of evaluator competencies provided vital insights into the current landscape and next steps pertaining to district

administrator-led professional development on the use of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a tool to provide high-quality feedback.

**Context.** Examining the context of the district under study provided the opportunity to gain insight and understanding of global, state, and community realities affecting the students, educators, and families served by the school district. Referred to as “skill demands” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 104), exploration of formal and informal expectations provided a greater understanding of federal and state accountability expectations, historical journey of performance evaluation in the district under study, social context of student learning, and economic components within the organization. Analyzing the current landscape through the lens of how these factors impede or enhance teaching and learning determined the degree of influence. As a district leader seeking to improve student achievement, understanding the relationship between observed instructional practice and the value-added score for classroom teachers administering the State Standards Assessment Program in ELA in Grades 4-10; Mathematics in Grades 4-8; and Algebra 1 in Grades 8 and 9 only provided the foundational knowledge to implement change.

In 2010, the United States Department of Education’s approval of the state’s application for *Race to the Top* grant funding set forth a redesign of teacher evaluation. The allocation of \$700 million dollars of federal stimulus dollars funded a new system to evaluate teacher performance, created programming for districts to use data to improve classroom instruction in tandem with school and district performance, and implemented rigorous academic standards and benchmarks for students (United States Department of Education, 2010). In 2011, the school district under study re-developed the performance

evaluation system to include multiple measures of effectiveness as contributors to a teacher's performance evaluation. Instructional practice, which accounts for 67% of the teacher's performance evaluation, is a measure derived from principal/administrator evaluation during formal and informal classroom observations. The remaining 33% of the performance evaluation stems from a State Board of Education ruling stating from the 2015-2016 school year and onward, the school district must capture an individual educator's contribution to student achievement and growth through established student growth standards for each performance level. The evaluation system should produce reliable measures to determine the impact of teacher quality by looking directly at objective evidence of student learning as measured by student performance on State Standards Assessments. Additionally, school districts had the authority to determine the appropriate methodology for calculating the student achievement component for teachers of subjects not assessed by State Standards Assessments.

In 1999, the State Department of Education introduced the A+ Plan for Education as a means to promote increased accountability at the school level by assigning letter grades based on specific student achievement measures (Citation withheld to protect the anonymity of the school district under study). The school grading system focused the school grading formula on the following student success measures: achievement, learning gains, graduation, acceleration success, and maintaining a focus on students who need the most support. The State Department of Education made substantial revisions during the 2014-2015 school year to implement statutory changes enacted by the 2014 Legislature and to allow for incorporation of the new State Standards Assessments (SSA).

The State Department of Education conducts surveys of school district student and staff information at scheduled survey times during the reporting year. During the Survey 5 reporting window, school district leaders submit end of year information and secondary career and technical education information to the State Department of Education. Table 2 compares the percentage breakdown of classroom teacher performance ratings to school letter grades for each school year from 2011 to 2019. The comparison of classroom teacher evaluation results is inclusive of instructional practice with student achievement calculations, and breakdown of school letter grades are linked to Survey 5 state reporting data for school grade calculations. During the 2011-2012 school year, the district under study reported the highest percentage of schools with an A and B school grade calculation (66.67%); however, this school year had the lowest percentage of teachers with an overall performance evaluation rating of effective or highly effective (85.07%). In comparison, the 2015-2016 school year had the highest percentage of schools with a D or F school grade calculation (32.08%); yet, this school year had one of the highest percentages of teachers with an overall performance evaluation rating of effective or highly effective (99.7%). Additionally, the 2017-2018 school year had the highest percentage of teachers receiving a needs improvement or unsatisfactory performance evaluation (11.80%); in contrast to the 50% of schools earning a C letter grade and 26.92% of schools earning a D or F school letter grade.

Table 2.

*Personnel Evaluation Data for Classroom Teachers with the Corresponding Breakdown of School Grades from 2011-2019*

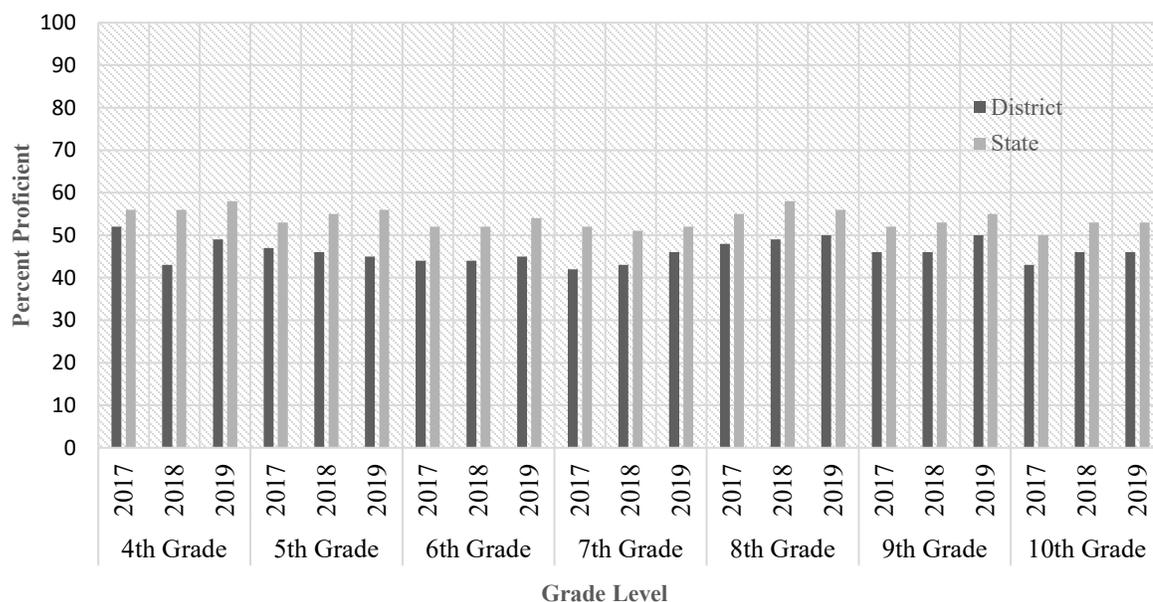
	Performance Evaluation						School Grades				
	Highly Effective	Effective	Needs Improvement/Progressing	3 Years-Developing	Unsatisfactory	Not Evaluated	A	B	C	D	F
2011-2012	9.89%	75.18%	0.38%	0.07%	0.00%	14.48%	14	18	16	0	0
2012-2013	20.40%	78.80%	0.20%	0.50%	0.00%	10.20%	7	12	15	14	0
2013-2014	12.70%	75.18%	0.54%	0.14%	0.00%	11.44%	6	7	16	17	4
2014-2015	21.60%	78.20%	0.10%	0.00%	0.10%	13.00%	8	9	23	11	0
2015-2016	20.40%	79.30%	0.20%	0.00%	0.00%	14.90%	3	6	27	14	3
2016-2017	35.20%	55.60%	9.20%	0.00%	0.00%	16.30%	5	12	29	5	2
2017-2018	30.40%	57.80%	11.60%	0.00%	0.20%	15.20%	3	9	26	11	3
2018-2019	34.90%	56.10%	8.40%	0.00%	0.01%	0.50%	4	15	30	2	0

Student performance data account for 33% of the multi-faceted teacher evaluation system in the district under study. The use of value-added models allows for a precise method of which to evaluate teachers on the performance of students they are responsible for teaching. For teachers of students taking State Standards Assessments, a covariate adjustment model established expected growth for each student by measuring the difference in student performance on a State Standards Assessment from one year to the next and then accounting for other factors that show the impact on the learning process. Prioritization of student achievement occurred through established measures designed to credit educators who improve student learning.

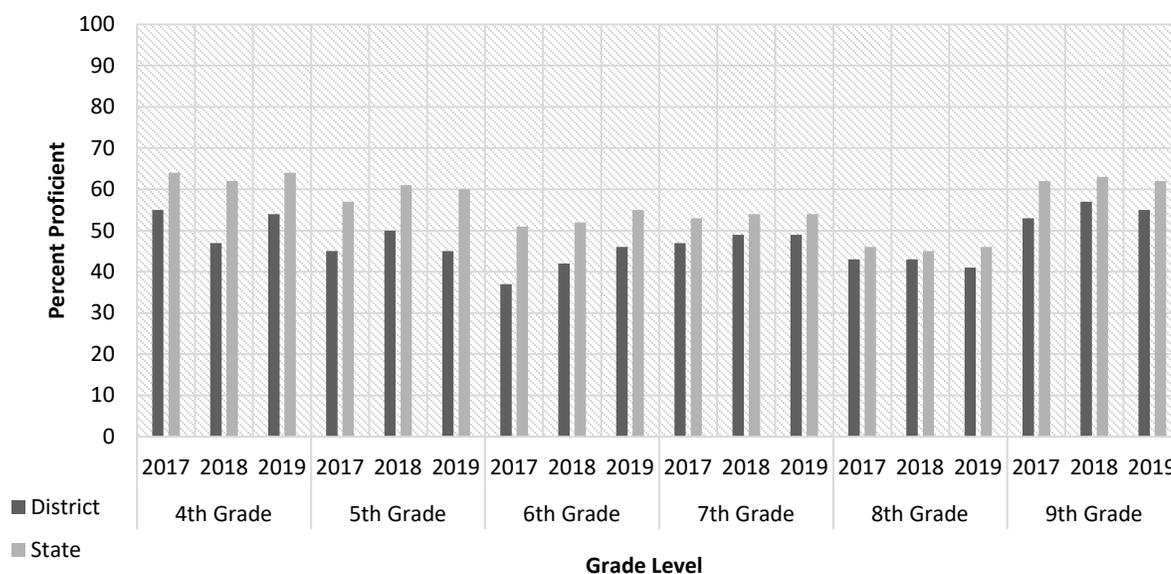
The following figures show three consecutive school years of comparative ELA and mathematics student proficiency data in the district under study and the state. The Department of Education in the state in which the school district under study lies, annually issued State Standards Assessment results. Students received a score of one through five on the State Standards Assessment with the State Department of Education considering a score of three or above proficient. For three consecutive school years, the English Language Arts results showed fewer than half of the students in third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades were reading at or above grade level. The scores for the 2018-2019 school year showed that exactly half of students in grades 8 and 9 were reading at or above grade level. During the 2018-2019 school year, an average of 46.88% of students in the school district under study scored at a three or above in third through 10<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts, as compared to the state average of 55.25%.

Student proficiency in Mathematics State Standards Assessments in grades three through 10 showed slightly higher levels of student proficiency in comparison to English Language Arts during the 2017-2019 school years. During the 2016-2017 school year, an average of 47.12% of students in the school district under study scored a three or above in third through 10<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics; the state average was 56.12%. The district average during the 2017-2018 school year was 48.75%, compared to the state average of 57.0%. The average percentage of students in the school district under study demonstrating achievement at or above proficiency on Mathematics State Standards Assessments during the 2018-2019 school year was 48.75%, which is approximately two percentage points higher than the demonstrated student proficiency in English Language Arts but considerably lower than the state average proficiency of 57.5%. The school

district under study did not meet or exceed the state averages in English Language Arts (Figure 9) and mathematics (Figure 10) in third through 10<sup>th</sup> grade during 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019 school years.



*Figure 9.* English Language Arts State Standards Assessment Program three-year comparison of state and district student performance as measured by the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency (satisfactory, above satisfactory or mastery)



*Figure 10.* Mathematics State Standards Assessment Program three-year comparison of state and district student performance as measured by the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency (satisfactory, above satisfactory or mastery)

Teacher evaluations are more likely to be a fair measure of teacher performance if they include objective measures of student growth in tandem with classroom observations (Ross & Walsh, 2019, p. 6). To determine the relationship between classroom observations and students' achievement outcomes, I compared instructional practice scores and student achievement scores from a sample of 388 teachers. I selected these teachers because they earned a state calculated value-added score for three consecutive years due to their assignment in the following grades and subjects: English Language Arts in grades 4-10; Mathematics in grades 4-8; and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9. The formula for the value-added score measures the average amount of learning growth of a teacher's students above or below the expected learning growth of similar students in the state.

The state's value-added scoring model controls for factors that may impact student learning growth, which is a more sophisticated scoring model than the local district-calculated measures for student achievement. These state's factors include: up to two prior test scores, disabilities, English Language Learner status, gifted status, attendance, number of times the student changed schools, number of years above or below the typical age of peers in the same grade, number of courses in which students enrolled in the subject during the year, class size, and similarity of prior test scores among students in the class (Gaitanis, 2019).

Table 3 shows the comparison of instructional practice (as determined by formal and informal classroom observations ratings) and student achievement scores (as derived from the state's value-added model calculation) for the 388 classroom teachers included in the sample size. When looking at instructional practice and student achievement scores

in isolation, 257 or 66.24% of the sample size received a rating of Highly Effective for their instructional practice score, while 112 or 28.87% of teachers earned a student achievement score of Highly Effective. The student achievement or value-added score reflects the average amount of learning growth of the teacher's students above or below the expected learning growth of students in the state, using the variables accounted for in the model. The closest alignment of performance ratings for instructional practice and student achievement is with the percentage of teachers scoring a performance rating of Effective. One hundred twenty-two teachers or 31.44% earned an instructional practice rating of effective in comparison to 38.14% or 148 teachers who earned a student achievement score of Effective. The second-largest percentage difference, the first being Highly Effective, was with the performance rating of Progressing. Nine or 2.32% of teachers earned a Progressing rating based strictly on evaluator ratings from formal and informal classroom observations and instructional practice, in comparison to 107 or 27.58% of teachers earning a Progressing rating based on their state-calculated impact on student achievement. While the Unsatisfactory performance rating comparison of instructional practice and student achievement only had a 5-point percentage discrepancy, zero out of the 388 teachers earned an Unsatisfactory rating when looking at instructional practice scores only in comparison to the 21 teachers earning an Unsatisfactory rating based solely on their student achievement score.

Table 3.

*Comparison of 2018-2019 Instructional Practice Scores*

Instructional Practice Score			Student Achievement Score		
Performance Rating	Number of Classroom Teachers	Percentage of Classroom Teachers	Performance Rating	Numbers of Classroom Teachers	Percentage of Classroom Teachers
Highly Effective	257	66.24%	Highly Effective	112	28.87%
Effective	122	31.44%	Effective	148	38.14%
Progressing	9	2.32%	Progressing	107	27.58%
Unsatisfactory	0	0.00%	Unsatisfactory	21	5.41%
	388	100%		388	100%

According to Gaitanis (2019), the state's VAM score classifications are stable and serve as reliable predictability measures of student achievement. At a state-organized conference for district leaders, state educational leaders shared the following data and conjectures pertaining to accountability:

- 77% of teachers with VAM scores classified as Highly Effective remained Highly Effective the subsequent year. And 99% of these teachers remained at least Effective.
- 85% of teachers with Effective VAM scores either remained Effective or improved to Highly Effective the following year.
- These percentages indicate that placing students in our most fragile schools with teachers whose VAM scores were at least Effective last year significantly increases these students' and the school's chance of success.
- By contrast, only 38% of teachers with VAM scores classified as Needs Improvement improved their scores to Effective or Highly Effective.
- Among teachers with VAM scores classified as Unsatisfactory, who had nowhere to go but up, fewer than 1/3 of them did.

In the initial findings of the MET study Kane and Staiger (2010) in the publication, *Learning about Teaching: Initial Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project*, discussed the critical relationship between instructional practice feedback and the promotion of student achievement.

The only way to be confident that the new feedback is pointing teachers in the right direction – toward improved student achievement – is to regularly confirm that those teachers who receive higher ratings actually achieve greater student achievement gains on average. (p. 5)

Additionally, Jensen et al. (2019) stated “VAM scores are compelling, especially for policy, because they aim to isolate classroom effects on student achievement” (p. 12). The research of Gaitanis (2019), Kane and Staiger (2010), and Jensen et al. (2019) suggest VAM scores can be a predictor of the teacher’s impact on student achievement outcomes. The best way to prevent students from falling further behind is to provide students with a teacher with a positive track record.

**Culture.** The narrative surrounding an appointed versus elected superintendent permeated the culture of the school district under study. “Culture refers to the invisible but powerful meanings and mindsets held individually and collectively throughout the system” (Wagner et al., 2006, p. 102). During the 2008 election, just over 62% of voters in the district under study indicated their desire to continue exercising their will to elect the position of superintendent. Two consecutive local elections resulted in changes at the superintendent position with one superintendent serving from 2012-2016, before losing his seat during the 2016 election to the first female superintendent in nearly a century. However, during the 2018 local election, more than 60% of voters selected yes on the

referendum of the appointed superintendent, in turn allowing the School Board to assume the sole responsibility of appointing the next superintendent of schools. At the time of this study, well over 50% of the state's counties currently elect their superintendent of schools. Each geographical county in the state in which the school district under study lies is also a school district.

The election of a new superintendent in 2016 resulted in immediate changes to the infrastructure and staffing plan of the district under study. The newly elected superintendent established and hired two deputy superintendent positions - one to oversee curriculum and instruction and the other to oversee operations and facilities. Additional movement at the district level included the shifting of internal and external personnel to executive directors and department directors. Established staff at school sites scrutinized new faces at the district level and classified them as either part of the existing fabric or outsiders of the system. A trickle-down effect occurred at the school level, with principal changes at 46% of schools. The conglomeration of new district administrators created a culture in which the development of relational trust fell secondary to maximizing the implementation of initiatives to impact student achievement positively.

The superintendent invoked significant administrative change during the 2018-2019 school year. The changes, once again, altered the district's organizational chart through the establishment of three Area Directors to lead the day-to-day operations of three distinct geographical regions in the school district. Each Area Director held the responsibility to guide, support, and streamline communications between the individual school sites and the district office. At the school level, principal changes occurred at 26% of school sites. Area Directors focused on their respective geographical regions to

identify existing cultures at play. The autonomy of the role allowed for each Area Director to craft a culture to assist their principals to effectively lead their staff while optimizing the conditions for student achievement. Shifts to the administrative landscape and infrastructure influenced the educational environment as classroom teachers remained the held-constant variable in times of transition and change.

A Balkanized culture became the byproduct of transitional change. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) used this term to identify a culture in which loyalties and identities were associated with individuals with whom they work most closely. Loyalties to administrative staff and programming no longer with the school district created a culture of reluctance and isolation. As the new superintendent set the newly formed team of leaders at the district level, the multitude of change impeded the fidelity of initiatives and processes at the site level. The needs-assessment results from each district-level department expedited vast change implementation processes.

As a leader of a district department, my directive from the Deputy Superintendent was to establish a reliable and credible evaluation system. The existing culture of the evaluation system perpetuated a culture driven by accountability policies and external mandates. “A successful teacher evaluation system must be supported by professional development that helps administrators and teachers re-conceptualize teacher evaluation as a process intended to promote and support continuous improvement as a vehicle to improve instructional practice” (Sartain, Stoelinga & Brown, 2011, p. 42). Constructing a reality of the evaluation system to shift stakeholder mindset from one of compliance towards an opportunity to stimulate professional practice has various implications of understanding.

As part of my program evaluation, I engaged in a district-wide survey to elicit principal perception of the fairness and accuracy of the newly revised classroom teacher evaluation procedures. As part of the survey, I asked respondents eight questions related to their perceived relationship between the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, instructional practice, and student achievement. The participants responded using a Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. I emailed the survey link to all site-based principals across elementary, middle, and high school settings. Of the potential respondents, 54% of the principals completed the survey. My analysis of the survey results shows that the overwhelming number of principals believe that the school district's current teacher evaluation model generates accurate measures of teacher effectiveness through processes designed to facilitate individual instructional feedback and continuous teacher reflection. The demographic breakdown of respondents, including years of experience as a principal, school level, and participant survey responses, are shown in Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Table 4.

*Survey Respondents' Years of Experience as a Principal at Time of Survey*

	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Responses</b>
1 year or less	11.1%	3
2-3 years	29.6%	8
4-10 years	44.4%	12
11 or more years	14.9%	4
	<b>100%</b>	<b>27</b>

Table 5.

*Survey Respondents' School Level of Oversight at the Time of Survey*

	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Elementary	51.9%	14
Middle	22.2%	6
High	25.9%	7
	<b>100%</b>	<b>27</b>

Table 6.

*Participant Survey Responses Quantified by Likert Scale Indicators*

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Total Respondents</b>
The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument generates an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness.	1 (3.7%)	23 (85.2%)	3 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
In my experience, the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is fair.	5 (18.5%)	20 (74.1%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
The school district's informal and formal observation procedures facilitate individual feedback and opportunities for growth.	11 (40.7%)	14 (51.9%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument for assessing teachers is well aligned with the school district's curriculum.	8 (29.6%)	17 (63.0%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
Language within the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument allows for clear delineation between effective and ineffective teachers.	5 (18.5%)	20 (74.1%)	2 (7.4%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
In my experience, classroom teacher evaluation aims to enhance teacher's reflection on their practice.	3 (11.1%)	19 (70.4%)	5 (18.5%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
The school district's observation and evaluation procedures help improve student achievement.	3 (11.1%)	18 (66.7%)	6 (22.2%)	0 (0.0%)	N=27
In my experience, administrators have comparable abilities to identify and rate observations with consistency.	3 (11.1%)	20 (74.1%)	3 (11.1%)	1 (3.7%)	N=27

The two demographic indicators of years of experience and school level were relevant variables for analyzing patterns related to perceptions of teacher evaluation procedures. Twenty-seven principals participated in the eight-question Likert scale survey resulting in 216 total response selections. My global analysis of the Likert scale selections revealed 26 or 12.04% of disagree and strongly disagree responses across all eight questions. In comparison, the 27 respondents selected agree or strongly agree 190 or 87.96% of the time. When reviewing the disagree and strongly disagree responses,

eight of the total survey respondents were responsible for all 27 of the responses. The years of experience for the eight survey respondents were as follows: one with 1 year or less of experience, five with 4-10 years of experience, and two with 11 or more years of experience. The school level for the eight survey respondents were four at the elementary level (28.7% of the elementary school principal survey respondents), three at the middle school level (50% of the middle school principal survey respondents), and one at the high school level (14.29% of the high school survey respondents). Analysis of demographic variables yielded comparative results to gauge the impact of previous expectations and current processes on observation and evaluation.

Holistically, the survey results indicated that over 92.6% of principals agreed or strongly agreed with half of the statements. The statements were:

- In my experience, the Classroom Teacher Evaluation instrument is fair.
- The school district's informal and formal observation procedures facilitate individual feedback and opportunities for growth,
- The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument for assessing teachers is well aligned with the school district's curriculum.
- Language within the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument allows for clear delineation between effective and ineffective teachers.

Between 81.5% – 88.9% of principals agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- In my experience, classroom teacher evaluation aims to enhance teacher's reflection on their practice. (81.55%)
- In my experience, administrators have comparable abilities to identify and rate

observations with consistency. (85.2)

- The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument generates an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness. (88.9%)

The statement receiving the lowest percentage of agree or strongly agree responses was:

The school district's observation and evaluation procedures help improve student achievement. 22.2% of the principals acknowledged disagreement with the statement.

**Conditions.** Increased awareness and oversight of processes surrounding observation and evaluation influenced the conditions of teaching and learning in the district under study. Wagner et al. (2006) define conditions as "the external architecture surrounding student learning, the tangible arrangements of time, space, and resources" (p. 101). As mentioned previously, the governor of the state in which the district under study lies mandated six clear expectations outlined in the state's *Race to the Top* Application for Initial Funding. In order for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to receive a portion of the approximately \$700 million in funds, acceptance of explicit assurance areas had to be supported by all parties.

Shortly after the election, the Superintendent reorganized the department known as Staff Development. Two newly created departments, Professional Development and Teaching and Learning, allowed for a tailored and more comprehensive oversight of responsibilities. Instead of a sole director tasked with overseeing the implementation of districtwide professional development and observation and evaluation processes, my succinct area of oversight entailed reviewing and monitoring current observation and evaluation processes in detail. Acceptance of state funds by the district under study shifted the teacher evaluation model from the State Performance Measurement System

(SPMS) to an instructional evaluation framework based on Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching (2011)*. The SPMS was "a performance assessment system of two instruments, one summative, which was used to screen teachers to identify problem areas and to compare teachers, the other formative, which was used to pinpoint behaviors for remediation" (Hazi, 1989, p.213). The Summative Observation Instrument measured 21 in-classroom behaviors organized under the main headings of "Effective Indicators" and "Ineffective Indicators." Evaluators utilized tally marks to identify the frequency of effective indicators such as "Begins instruction promptly," "Gives specific academic praise," as well as ineffective behaviors such as "Uses vague/scrambled discourse," "Uses loud-grating, high-pitched, monotone, inaudible talk," and "Frowns, deadpan or lethargic" (Hazi, 1989, p. 213).

The evaluation instrument based on Charlotte Danielson's instructional framework contained four domains, with 22 components such as "Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy," "Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport," and "Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness." Evaluators scripted evidence across the four domains – Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities while sorting evidence across performance measures to determine the effectiveness of teaching behaviors. From 2011 to 2017, all documents initially created by district administrators for the *Race to the Top* transition remained in place.

During the 2017-2018 school year, district administrators determined the existing language within the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument did not provide evaluators with a clear delineation to align observation-related evidence across the four performance measures (Unsatisfactory, Needs Improvement/Progressing, Effective, and Highly

Effective) for each of the 22 components. The rubric revision journey of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument included approximately 100 stakeholders in the school district under study. Significant revisions occurred during the three-phase process with the final Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument based on sound educational principles and the contemporary research of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011).

I facilitated two Rubric Revision Task Force focus groups to capture stakeholder perceptions of the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument during the 2018-2019 school year. I conducted the first focus group midway through the first year of implementation of the revised instrument, and the second focus group upon the conclusion of a full year of implementation. During both focus group sessions, I asked participants the same five questions listed below:

1. What was your motivating factor in participating in the revision task force?
2. What did you believe to be the most important part of the implementation process? Why do you feel that way?
3. What was not included in the implementation of the evaluation system that should have been?
4. How did the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system influence teacher quality? What evidence supports your response?
5. Inter-rater reliability ensures that all observers are on the same page in their ability to identify and rate observations with consistency. Do you feel that the current evaluation system is consistent among various administrators within your building? Explain.

Eight participants attended the first focus group session held midway through the first implementation year of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The participant attendance breakdown included three classroom teachers (one elementary, one middle, and one high school); one elementary dean; three site-based administrators (one middle school principal, one high school assistant principal, one high school principal); and one district administrator. Seven participants attended the second focus group, held after the conclusion of a full year of implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The participant attendance breakdown included three classroom teachers (one elementary and two secondary); one elementary dean; two site-based administrators (one secondary assistant principal and one secondary principal); and one district administrator.

As described in the methodology section, I utilized an application on my electronic device to audio record both 60-minute focus group sessions. Upon the conclusion of each focus group, I transcribed the session transferring every spoken word while distinguishing between speakers. Lastly, I lifted specific participant responses and organized the response phrases on an Excel spreadsheet. Organizing the spreadsheet vertically by the question and horizontally by focus group participant resulted in the emergence of themes across both focus group sessions (See Appendix G).

I asked focus group participants to share their motivation for participating in the Rubric Revision Task Force. All participants who responded to this question indicated a desire to be an active participant in the evaluation process. The elementary teacher and district administrator had experience in other school districts and embraced the revision journey as an opportunity to broaden their understanding of the current observation and

evaluation process. The high school teacher and high school principal offered a historical perspective to their motivations as both individuals served on the evaluation committee when the school district under study transitioned from SPMS to the evaluation system associated with *Race to the Top*. The high school principal stated, “I was part of it the first time, so I wanted to see what it was going to look like this time.” All focus group participants shared they currently served as leaders on their campus or aspired to be viewed as leaders on their campus. The middle school teacher articulated, “I like being a part of something bigger than myself so that I can help other people if they have questions as well.”

For the second question, I asked participants to identify and expand upon what they believed to be the most important part of the rubric revision process. Intentional opportunities to engage in dialogue with diverse perspectives was an emerging theme. The dean stated, “I feel that having every stakeholder involved like teachers, union representation, administrators, coaches really helped view every part of the process and make sure that everybody had a voice.” The semi-structured design of the focus group allowed me to include unplanned yet complementary question sets. When I asked the group if I missed or did not account for any stakeholder groups in the revision process, the elementary teacher replied, “No. In fact, I would say I was really pleased with the fact that when we met in that group it didn't matter what role you walked in with, we all were able to voice our concerns in an equal way.” Additionally, the high school teacher said, “What also was so good about the process is that when you heard some of the naysayers, you could say no, no, no this is what happened, and you could immediately nip that in the bud.”

The third question I posed to the focus group was what was not included in the implementation process that should have been. A theme that emerged in response to this question was centralized messaging of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument was a missed step in the change implementation. My decision to solicit stakeholder participation in the revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument via email communication to principals was an area of discussion brought up by the elementary and middle school teachers. The middle school teacher stated, “The only negative, the only one that I've heard is some people didn't get the memo.” The elementary teacher responded, “Last year, I had one principal who just came to me and said I think you should do this and another principal who sent it out to the whole campus.”

Site-based administrators also supported the desire for centralized messaging as a means to promote consistency. Consistent and clearly communicated observation and evaluation expectations from district leaders ensure that evaluators and observed personnel understand the foundation in which educator quality is defined in the district under study. The high school assistant principal pondered aloud:

I wonder if there is not value in having some parts of the information on a video. When administrators and teachers are sitting together in the same room, at the same time hearing the description of the district’s explanation and vision for that rubric. We spent a lot of time making the language as objective as we could and hearing it one-way from the district versus hearing it 57 ways is impactful.

In response to the fourth question, focus group participants did not believe that the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system improved teacher quality. The

middle and high school teachers shared that their increased knowledge of the rubric personally influenced their quality of teaching. However, both participants agreed it did not have a large-scale impact based on personal experience at their school sites. The high school teacher shared the idea of developing teacher leaders on a campus to help bridge understanding of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument in relation to the application in daily instructional practice. In response to that idea, the middle school teacher outlined:

What I see is I am the lead math teacher, and there are always some monthly meetings where I do not have enough to fill the time without being redundant or feeling like I am wasting time. I would almost see pulling out the rubric as a department. What does this look like in a math classroom?

I designed the final focus group question to gauge inter-rater reliability. Inter-rater reliability assesses the ability of multiple observers to generate identical performance ratings when observing the same instructional context. In response to the question: Do you feel the current evaluation system is consistent among various administrators within your building?, the dean simply responded, “No.” The elementary teacher shared, “I think it is important because different administrators have different backgrounds, so they have different things they’re focused on when they come in.” The high school principal stated, “I think it is dependent on experience, to be honest.” The classroom teachers agreed with the high school principal’s statement, further elaborating it is challenging to see consistency when senior leaders in the district under study shift site-based administrators frequently. The district administrator echoed, “It takes time to build that relationship piece and to find what works well with your administrative team.”

The State Department of Education of the state in which the district under study lies, reviews, and approves each school district's evaluation system. Upon my review of the current approved instructional evaluation system, I noticed concerns regarding the fidelity of implementation in compliance with state statutes by the district under study. The assurances outlined in section 1012.34, provided my department with the guidance to analyze, revise, and establish processes pertaining to sound educational principals of the evaluation system framework, training programs for employees and evaluators, data inclusion and reporting, evaluation procedures for all instructional employees, a plan for use of evaluation results in professional development planning, notifications of unsatisfactory performance to stakeholders, and district self-monitoring of proper use of evaluation criteria and procedures. With the support of district leaders, the Teaching and Learning Department assumed the responsibility of creating structures to guarantee the abovementioned assurances and ensure consistent implementation of observation and evaluation processes. Investment in the Teaching and Learning Department by school district leaders created a heightened sense of prioritization and adherence to expectations surrounding observation and evaluation processes. My revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument prioritized authentic implementation of the instructional personnel evaluation system through cross-referencing the fidelity of the framework and contemporary research in effective educational practices.

Financial incentives were in place to reward teachers, administrators, schools, and districts based on student achievement, as measured by student performance on standardized achievement tests and performance evaluations. The Best and Brightest Scholarship Program, renamed the Best and Brightest Award Program in 2019, allocated

financial awards based on a combination of performance evaluation ratings, teacher percentile scores from high school ACT/SAT score reporting, and school grade calculations. Under both iterations of Best and Brightest, a classroom teacher qualified for merit pay, or additional compensation, based on his or her performance evaluation from the preceding school year. In the school district under study, an evaluator can proliferate positive and negative dynamics surrounding the role of observation and evaluation on a teacher's salary. The requirements and award amounts for earning Best and Brightest during the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years are shown in Figure 11.

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
<b>2018-2019</b>	Effective classroom teacher as demonstrated during the 2017-2018 school year.	Up to \$800
	Highly Effective classroom teacher as demonstrated during the 2017-2018 school year.	\$1,200
	Classroom teacher new to the teaching profession during the 2018-2019 school year and having earned in high school at least 80% national percentile score from the SAT or ACT.	\$6,000
	Highly effective classroom teacher as demonstrated during the 2017-2018 school year and having earned in high school at least 80% national percentile score from the SAT or ACT.	\$6,000 + \$1,200
<b>2019-2020</b>	Effective classroom teacher as demonstrated during the 2018-2019 school year and teach in a school for two consecutive years, including the current year, which has improved an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior three years.	Up to \$1,000
	Highly Effective classroom teacher as demonstrated during the 2018-2019 school year and teach in a school for two consecutive years, including the current year, which has improved an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior three years.	Up to \$2,500
	Classroom teacher new to the teaching profession during the 2019-2020 school year deemed to be a content expert, based on the criteria established by the State Department of Education, in mathematics, science, computer science, reading, or civics.	Up to \$4,000

*Figure 11.* Comparison of 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 iterations of Best and Brightest Award Program eligibility requirements; removal of the bonus program's ties to ACT and SAT scores are a critical difference of compensation funds aimed at recruitment, retention, and recognition

The connection between financial incentives and overall performance ratings created a divisive mentality in which evaluators viewed the system as a barrier to mitigate teacher shortages. “These shortages have been emerging as teacher education enrollments have taken a deep dive, while demand for teachers has begun to climb, largely due to district efforts to return to pre-recession staffing levels” (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016, p. 2). Senior leaders’ expectation for administrators to fill all instructional positions served as the dark cloud over evaluators as they aimed to engage in objective conversations about instructional practice. Mitigating teacher supply and demand while improving the quality of classroom instruction is a position many of our administrators face. The conundrum facing our principals is as follows: A principal can give teachers the benefit of the doubt when evaluating instructional practice, which keeps a teacher content with his or her job. On the other hand, the principal can provide honest ratings and feedback at the risk of the teacher choosing to leave the profession resulting in a vacancy for the principal to fill.

The cost of accurately rating employees proved to be too high for evaluators creating instances in which inflated observation ratings served as the solution to retaining and maintaining staff. Evaluators sought to alleviate the tension associated with teacher evaluation by manipulating the instructional practice-contributing variable. Phrases like “dusting” and “bumping” became commonly accepted language to describe evaluator inflation of instructional practice ratings during classroom observations. Evaluators justified their rationale for the inflated ratings as a means to seek balance between the perceived unfair ratings associated with state and local student achievement calculations. According to Hall (2019):

When teacher performance concerns rear their ugly heads (and they will), we must embrace the responsibility of addressing them directly and attentively. The work, the effort, the emotion, the toil, the stress of dealing with the issues – those are temporary. The outcomes are permanent for students, for our schools, for our communities. (p. 17)

Evaluator use of the teacher evaluation system negatively shaped the demographics of instructional practice in ways that do not serve the best interest of students.

**Competencies.** Based upon the context, culture, and conditions described, a lack of competency around best practices related to teacher observation and evaluation existed. “In this context of school transformation, we define competencies as the repertoire of skills and knowledge that influences student learning” (Wagner et al., 2016, p. 99). In the district under study, administrators did not have explicit training and evaluator credentialing since the school district transitioned under the federal government’s *Race to the Top* program. This eight-year lapse created tremendous gaps in the technical skills and development of leadership best practices of teacher observation and evaluation.

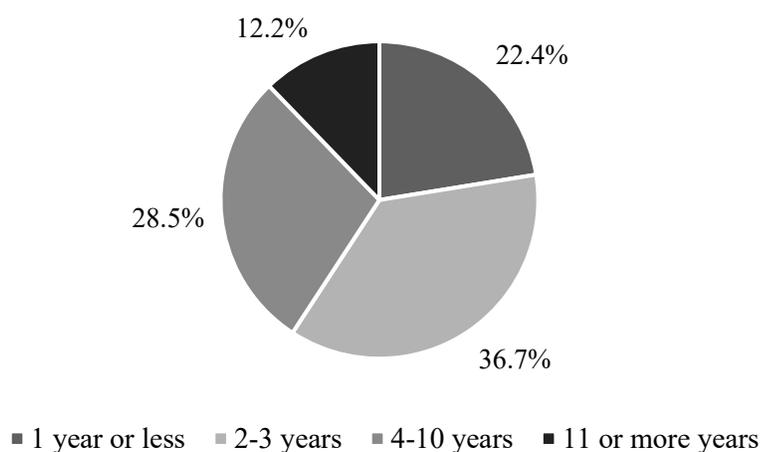
District leaders prioritized the development of these competencies during the first year of the new administration. During the latter half of the 2017-2018 school year, at the directive of the Deputy Superintendent, I designed and facilitated calibration opportunities at the monthly principal and assistant principal meetings. I structured the learning experiences with opportunities for administrators to view filmed classroom instruction while scripting their evidence. Upon the conclusion of the video, I dedicated time to the independent sorting of evidence to determine performance ratings for all

components within Domain 2 – The Classroom Environment, and Domain 3 – Instruction. I asked each administrator to input his or her ratings into a digital survey in order to display the scope of results for reflective dialogue. These ongoing learning experiences revealed a lack of inter-rater agreement, as well as flaws in the existing evaluation tool as the language within the performance measures did not efficiently progress from unsatisfactory behaviors to highly effective student-led or individualized instruction. The necessity to align the evaluation system framework to the Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) became my primary responsibility during the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year, as the Deputy Superintendent set the implementation date of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument for the 2018-2019 school year.

While the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is the primary measure for high-stakes observation ratings, it more importantly, contains the language in which the district defines effective instruction in classroom settings across the district. The various programs implemented at school sites in the district under study perpetuated a focus on the fidelity of programming without first grounding instructional practice within the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Evaluators must apply the language of the existing Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument with certainty and automaticity for the immersion of additional programming within the culture of the school. Without this knowledge, stakeholders lose relevancy as professional development becomes associated with a program instead of the art of good teaching.

The limited experience of novice principals, also serving in the role of evaluators, created a steep learning curve as additional responsibilities of staffing the school, balancing the budget, and interpreting district and state directives competed with the

necessary investment of time in classrooms. The completion of tasks became insurmountable, at times, creating a stakeholder culture driven upon compliance as opposed to inherent, continuous improvement. At sites where teacher observations fell secondary to other managerial tasks, the results served as unreliable sources for use during data-based decision-making opportunities. The relationship between teaching and learning became severed, as administrators were unable to utilize the inaccurate instructional practice data as a variable to deduce student learning needs. The breakdown of years of experience as a principal is shown in Figure 12.



*Figure 12.* Years of experience serving as a principal for all principals in the district under study during the 2018-2019 school year

Charlotte Danielson originally developed the *Framework for Teaching* (2011) as a tool to promote coaching conversations between an administrator and a teacher.

Professional learning in the context of an evaluation process “means using observation and evaluation processes that promote active engagement: self-assessment, reflection on practice, and professional conversation” (Danielson, 2016b, p. 21). The professional development necessary to leverage the tool in coaching conversations between teachers and administrators is a critical misstep in the journey to adopting an observation

instrument rooted in the premise of the framework in the district under study. The evolution of Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, as part of the instructional evaluation system, resulted in an inconsistent understanding of how to utilize the instrument as the vehicle to provide high-quality feedback. "Even a great system can be implemented poorly or gradually succumb to 'grade inflation.' Benchmarking against student achievement gains is the best way to know when the evaluation system is getting closer to the truth – or regressing" (Kane & Staiger, 2010, p. 5). When teachers received inflated instructional practice ratings from their evaluators, the culture of professional inquiry became tainted. Professional conversations tailored to the responsibility of continuous improvement are limited when a teacher's instructional practice is rated as effective or highly effective – the highest performance measures on the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

### **Interpretation**

The results of my quantitative analysis of classroom teacher instructional practice ratings as compared to student achievement results on State Standards Assessments for classroom teachers assigned to teach courses in which state VAM is the determined student achievement measure showed discrepancies in the percentage of scores for highly effective, progressing, and unsatisfactory performance measures. After the 2018-2019 school year, 388 classroom teachers received a three-year aggregate state VAM calculation. Utilizing the 388 teachers as the total sample size, the percentage breakdown by performance ratings was as follows: Highly Effective: 66.24% based on instructional practice only as compared to 28.87% based only on student achievement; Progressing: 2.32% based on instructional practice only as compared to 27.58% based only on student

achievement; and Unsatisfactory: 0% based on instructional practice only and 5.41% based only on student achievement. The Effective performance ratings, when considering instructional practice and student achievement in isolation, was 31.44% and 38.14%, respectively.

The weighting connected to instructional practice (67%) and student achievement (33%) produced an overall summative rating that is not reflective of the percentages of instructional practice and student achievement in isolation. There is a limited relationship between the instructional practice measure as determined by formal and informal observations conducted by site-based administrators, the student achievement measure as determined by the state value-added measure, and the overall summative evaluation score. The lens through which district leaders view less than effective teachers, based on the measures of teacher effectiveness, are not related conceptually in the district under study. Looking at instructional practice in isolation, 2.32% of the 388 teachers were Progressing, and 0.00% were Unsatisfactory. Viewing student achievement in isolation, 27.58% of teachers were Progressing, and 5.41% were Unsatisfactory. In comparison, determining less than effective teachers based only on the overall Summative Evaluation score indicated that 5.93% of teachers are Progressing, and 0.00% of teachers are Unsatisfactory. The teacher effectiveness measures for the 388 teachers in the sample size are shown in Table 7.

Table 7.

*Summative Evaluation Data for the 388 Teachers Who Received a Three-Year Aggregate State VAM Calculation*

	<b>Instructional Practice (67%)</b>	<b>Student Achievement (33%)</b>	<b>Summative Evaluation (100%)</b>
Highly Effective	257 (66.24%)	112 (28.87%)	180 (46.39%)
Effective	122 (31.44%)	148 (38.14%)	185 (47.68%)
Progressing	9 (2.32%)	107 (27.58%)	23 (5.93%)
Unsatisfactory	0 (0.00%)	21 (5.41%)	0 (0.00%)
N=388	388 (100%)	388 (100%)	388 (100%)

The data from my administrator Likert scale survey indicated that 88.9% of principals surveyed agreed and strongly agreed that the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument generates an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness; however, 22.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, *The school district's observation and evaluation procedures help improve student achievement*. Of the six principals who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, *The school district's observation and evaluation procedures help improve student achievement*; three out of six agreed with *The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument generates an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness*. These data show that the majority of principals do not associate the use of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a means to influence student achievement. The Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is the agreed-upon language in which the school district under study defines effective instruction. The user of the instrument must be able to leverage the tool as a mechanism to determine the quality of instruction occurring in a classroom setting while dually

utilizing the tool to advance the conditions for student growth. Principals are unable to view the relationship between instructional practice and student achievement through a cause and effect lens of teaching and learning, which limits the overall impact of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

Another conflicting perspective gleaned from the principal survey involved the statement, *The school district's informal and formal observation procedures facilitate individual feedback and opportunities for growth.* The results indicated that 40.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, and 51.9% agreed with this statement.

I was surprised to find that the highest percentage of strongly agree with selections compared to the 18.5% of principals who disagreed with the statement, *In my experience, classroom teacher evaluation aims to enhance teacher's reflection on their practice.*

District leaders designed the informal and formal observation procedures to provide time for fruitful and productive discussions between observed personnel and evaluators. By observing instructional practice, administrators can identify areas of strength and opportunities for continued growth. For 92.6% of principals to acknowledge that the existing informal and formal observations facilitate individual feedback and opportunities for growth contradicts the 18.5% of principals who disagree that classroom teacher evaluation aims to enhance teacher's reflection on their practice.

During a mandatory administrative training session just before the start of the 2018-2019 school year, I provided administrators with a pre-observation conference and a post-observation conference discussion guide (see Appendix H and Appendix I). This guide provided evaluators with a structure to promote reflective conversations. At the time of this study, I had not designed and implemented professional development focused

on the practical application of the guides, which was missing in the journey to bridge the theoretical framework to practice.

My analysis of both focus group transcriptions resulted in the most compelling data from my study as it encapsulated both administrator and instructional personnel perspectives. Although representing different realities, the responses from individuals in the group were in alignment. A desire for consistency was the emerging theme regarding the conditions surrounding the revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument to the current implementation. While reflecting on the revision journey, focus group participants identified the three-phase rollout of the revision process as a positive opportunity in which district leaders allowed diverse stakeholders to have the opportunity to have a voice in the process. An identified barrier of the implementation process was my decision to allow principals to serve as the liaison for the initial invitation to participate in the rubric revision process. Participants in the focus group shared their recollection of how their principals communicated the invitation, and it varied from a principal email to all instructional personnel at the school site, to the principal directly soliciting individuals based on existing relationships, to some sites where principals did not share the invitation via any mechanism.

Another trend that emerged from the discussion was the desire for district initiated, targeted learning experiences with the intended outcome of facilitating centralized messaging for administrators and instructional personnel. In response to the question: *What was not included in the implementation of the evaluation system that should have been?* participants stated: “Consistency pushing out the new rubric at the start of the school year”; “A mandated face-to-face class allowing for questions to be

asked”; “A district-initiated video explaining the process”; and, “Tools to guide administrators on various aspects of the observation process.” While the members of the focus group complimented the heightened role of site-based stakeholders during the rubric revision process, they desired a top-down approach to implementation with the district controlling the initial implementation narrative of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

The significance of my findings from principals was surprising. The administrators serving on the focus group did not explicitly respond to the question: *How did the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system influence teacher quality?* However, they did indicate a need for planned opportunities to speak with their peers about relevant instructional practices. The lack of response from focus group participants is contradictory to the results of the Likert scale survey where 92.6% of principals surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with *Language within the school district’s Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument allows for clear delineation between effective and ineffective teachers*. I believe these conflicting results indicate the need to compartmentalize and analyze the perception of subgroups of evaluators, such as assistant principals and principals. The learned mindset associated with the practices of the previous evaluation instrument may have impacted the current perspective of evaluators interacting with the evaluation system before and after *Race to the Top*.

### **Judgments**

After analyzing instructional practice data, student achievement value-added measures, focus group transcriptions, and the results from the principal Likert scale survey, I was able to gather information to answer my primary and secondary research

questions. Intentional review of trend data pertaining to instructional practice and student achievement was not an established way of work in the district under study. While student performance lags behind the state average across ELA (grades 4-10) and mathematics (grades 4-8), the percentage of teachers rated Effective or Highly Effective fell with the range of 85.07% - 99.8%, dating back to the district's *Race to the Top* evaluation system transition in 2011. In comparison, my analysis of five consecutive school years of ELA and mathematics student performance data on State Standards Assessments shows considerably lower achievement levels. From 2014-2019, the percentage of students achieving satisfactory, above, and mastery levels of success in ELA fell in the range of 44.3% - 46.6%. During the same date range, the percentage of students achieving satisfactory, above, and mastery levels of success in mathematics ranged from 44.2%-47.4%. The theory of action for our evaluation system that will establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality requires the establishment of clear expectations surrounding observation and evaluation processes with built-in structures to hold evaluators accountable for producing reliable instructional practice measures to determine the degree to which a teacher impacts student achievement.

The data revealed a weak corresponding relationship between observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by state value-added measures based on standards assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) in Grades 4-10, Mathematics in Grades 4-8, and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9. The inflation of instructional practice scores was not apparent in the global perspective of a summative

evaluation. The 67% weighting assigned to instructional practice has perpetuated a false indication of teacher quality. Classroom teachers place a premium on the administrator's judgment of instructional practice creating a perception that student achievement (33%) is a trivial variable of performance evaluation.

Relevance influences the mindset in which we approach any given task. An intrinsic understanding of "why" has the potential to impact one's attitude and effort. When district leaders view classroom observations as the vehicle to champion for student access to high-quality education, the mindset surrounding evaluation will shift from one of compliance towards an opportunity to stimulate professional practice. District department leaders must be aligned collectively in their understanding of effective teaching behaviors as defined strictly by the components and language within the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Switching the narrative from program implementation to developing content and pedagogical skillsets will transcend the transition of people and physical curriculum resources. Site-based administrators will develop their understanding of instructional practice when district administrators model the cohesive and constant connection of initiatives with instructional best practices, as defined within the 22 components of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.

When determining what structures need to be in place to ensure consistent implementation of observation and evaluation processes, the results indicated the need for streamlined and centralized messaging directly from district administrators to site-based administrators and instructional personnel. With my department, Teaching and Learning, owning the processes involved in instructional observations and student achievement, we must oversee the fidelity of the evaluation system. The development of ongoing training

programs will ensure that individuals with evaluation responsibilities understand the proper use of evaluation criteria and procedures who must then in turn facilitate the same level of awareness for their instructional personnel. As a result of my data analysis from the focus group held midway through the first implementation year of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, I put the following methods of informing classroom teachers about observation and evaluation processes in place:

- The Teaching and Learning Department documented all processes associated with instructional evaluation in an Instructional Evaluation Handbook. This resource is available for all employees to access on the internal document management platform.
- Instructional evaluation instruments, pre-observation questions, post-observation reflection tools, deliberate practice organizers, observation appeal forms, and additional required observation documents are always available to all employees on the internal document management platform (SharePoint).
- The Teaching and Learning Department provided an overview of criteria, data sources, methodologies, and processes in a virtual course for employee completion before engaging in formal or informal observation processes. We also enrolled evaluators in the course for awareness of the communicated content.
- Instructional employees acknowledge their aligned evaluation instrument (i.e., classroom teacher, school counselor, library media specialist) digitally via the Human Resources platform before an evaluator conducts any observations.

The varied years of experience, combined with existing schema, for evaluators in the school district under study revealed the need for differentiated professional development. Opportunities to practice scripting may be beneficial for administrators with strong training roots in the state's previous Performance Management System or novice administrators. Transitioning from the format of using a checklist for a classroom teacher's observation can prove to be challenging when learning the new behavior of chronological scripting to capture evidence within the context of the classroom setting. Once the evaluator captures evidence in the classroom setting, the next learning experience should be the development of evaluator knowledge and skills through application of the evidence against the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The final piece an evaluator needs to support instructional practice is the development of his or her ability to support a classroom teacher's growth with targeted feedback and follow-up. Determining where each evaluator falls on the continuum of learning as mentioned above will provide the Teaching and Learning Department with a tailored trajectory to develop existing evaluator skillsets.

### **Recommendations**

My study was conducted as a mixed-methods approach to gather data to determine what theory of action for the evaluation system will establish reliable measures to gauge teacher quality in the district under study. It is my opinion that my findings support the need for grounding all district expectations and initiatives within the scope of the 22 defined effective teaching behaviors of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Because the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is limited to evaluator use during high-stakes observations, evaluators and instructional personnel have

developed a negative mindset involving all processes surrounding observation and evaluation. Some administrators view the number of formal and informal observations as a compliance-driven task, which ultimately impacts the fidelity of defined expectations. The looming fear that an evaluator's honest feedback about a teacher's instructional practice may drive a teacher to leave the profession places adults at the forefront of decision-making, instead of students.

District leaders must prioritize the intentional review of instructional practice and student achievement data as an accountability mechanism for principals to ensure that all of their students have access to a high-quality education. Educational stakeholders can use the results of my study to influence school district leaders to prioritize the investment of time in the already established language of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Connecting district-led initiative development, program implementation, and professional development to best practices of effective teaching behavior in the instrument is a way to maintain an ongoing dialogue to accelerate the vision for high-quality teaching and student achievement. Creating multiple opportunities for stakeholders to interact with the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument authenticates the credibility of the tool.

After reviewing the instructional practice data, student achievement value-added measures, focus group transcriptions, and the results from the principal Likert scale survey, I identified one area to be addressed. New administrators need to participate in a district-facilitated evaluator credentialing in order to gauge their readiness to observe instructional personnel effectively. As the Teaching and Learning Department seeks to transform the existing expectations surrounding observation and evaluation,

administrators new to the role or school district must participate in a coached observation experience in which district leaders evaluate the new administrator's skill set in relation to the following components:

- Ability to interact with students in the classroom as a source of evidence collection,
- Script and align evidence within Domain 2 (The Classroom Environment) and Domain 3 (Instruction) of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument,
- Utilize the preponderance of evidence to rate according to the performance measures for each component, and
- Summarize observational data to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

This organizational change would involve observing the new administrator for two 20-minute classroom observations to replicate the structure of two informal observations. Additionally, observations in live classrooms provide the authentic classroom settings for district leaders to determine the administrator's area(s) of strength, opportunities for growth, and next steps for professional development (See Appendix I). This structure leverages the current expertise of district leaders and involves no additional incurred financial costs to implement.

The investment of time at school sites, by district leaders, observing new administrators in classrooms models the expectation for administrators to invest time in classrooms. Additionally, this coached observation experience provides district leaders with a foundational needs-assessment for new administrators (Appendix J). Grounding the administrator's observation behaviors in a component-based evaluation framework

provides the expected blueprint for administrators to engage in conversations of reflective practice with their teachers. When top-down structures compliment site-based expectations, the cohesion triggers the momentum and driving force to promote student achievement.

### **Conclusion**

The school district under study must seek to improve the context, culture, conditions, and competencies to establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality as determined by instructional practice and student achievement. Funded by local taxes, the school district has a responsibility to the community to provide access to high-quality educational opportunities that advance student achievement. The prioritization of consistent processes surrounding observation and evaluation, including the expectation for stakeholders to engage in reflective conversations, has the potential to impact significantly teaching and learning in the district under study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### To-Be Framework

As a change leader in the school district under study, systemic thinking is required to reinvent the teacher evaluation model. A dynamic vision for the future to which I aspire created a greater understanding of the need for fundamental change (Wagner et al., 2006, pp. 119-120). The theory of action for our evaluation system that will establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality requires specificity and clarity for the role of evaluators. Site-based evaluators and district leaders must have a mutual understanding of the expectations surrounding observation and evaluation processes. According to Grissom and Youngs (2015):

The use of standardized observations, if they reliably and validly measure aspects of teachers' interactions that impact student learning, is a direct and effective mechanism for improving teaching and learning and can also illuminate links between certain input to teachers (e.g., professional development experiences) with desired outcomes (e.g., student learning). (p. 23)

Cultivating effective teachers by providing feedback on instructional practice, has the potential to impact both teacher quality and student achievement. The responsibility to elevate student achievement as a credible source to measure educational delivery services requires the shared vision of teacher effectiveness as a function of student learning.

#### **Envisioning the Success To-Be**

Identifying the To-Be picture of success (see Appendix K) within each of the four arenas of change – context, culture, conditions, and competencies – materialized the transformation distance from a compliance-driven mindset towards a landscape where all

school district stakeholders assume the collective responsibility to impact student learning positively. Understanding the limitations to control directly for non-school factors such as individual characteristics and family experiences, research shows that high value-added teachers also influence graduation, post-secondary success, and earning (Opper, 2012, p. 1). Engagement and investment in public education created an inherent social responsibility to see student achievement through to impact.

**Context.** Evaluator understanding of the relationship between observed instructional practice and student growth or student achievement will provide the foundational knowledge to inform decision-making in meaningful capacities for change. My analysis of instructional practice data in relation to the value-added score for classroom teachers administering State Standards Assessment Programs in ELA: Grades 4-10; Mathematics: Grades 4-8; and Algebra 1: Grades 8 and 9 only perpetuated the inability of site-based evaluators to assess instructional practice accurately. Known as the Widget Effect, the national failure of evaluation systems to provide accurate and credible information pertaining to an individual teacher's instructional effectiveness leaves student access to high-quality education up to chance (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern & Keeling, 2009, p. 32). As central office staff seeks to reverse the Widget Effect, deducing teacher effectiveness as the outcome of instructional practice as a contributing variable to student achievement will authenticate the credibility of the evaluation system.

The work by Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009) outlined a systematic approach to creating a context for improving teacher effectiveness and maximizing student achievement. District and site-based leaders must utilize accurate and credible information about instructional quality to differentiate the provided support

structure for teachers serving our students. An essential component of teacher effectiveness is grounded in instructional delivery and facilitation: “Teachers should be evaluated based on their ability to fulfill their core responsibility as professionals – delivering instruction that helps students learn and succeed” (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern & Keeling, 2009, p. 34). With instructional practice accounting for 67% of the teachers’ overall evaluation in the district under study, administrators must be held accountable for prioritizing the differentiation of teacher effectiveness. Looking at the 388 teachers who received a state value-added score for three consecutive years, 97.68% received the highest performance ratings (Effective and Highly Effective) when looking at instructional practice in isolation. When looking at the same sample size of teachers, 67.01% of teachers impacted on average (Effective) or above average (Highly Effective) expected learning growth of similar students in the state, while controlling for student, classroom, and school characteristics. Fair and consistent assessments of teacher performance must be an intrinsic priority for evaluators. Fidelity of evaluation system processes at the site level will result in an improved evaluation system designed to empower the school district under study.

**Culture.** Constructing a reality of the evaluation system to shift the stakeholder mindset from one of compliance towards an opportunity to promote continuous growth of professional practice requires a culture of trust. Trusting relationships will emerge over time when central office leaders earn the confidence of educational stakeholders through decision-making processes centered on actions of benevolence, competence, and integrity. As researchers Bryk and Schneider (2003) explained,

Distinct role relationships characterize the social exchanges of schooling, teachers with students, teachers with other teachers, teachers with parents, and all groups with the school principal. Each party in the relationship maintains an understanding of his or her role's obligations and holds some expectations about the obligations of the other parties. For a school community to work well, it must achieve agreement in each role relationship in terms of the understandings held about these personal obligations and expectations of others. (p. 41)

The establishment of shared beliefs about instructional practice and student achievement will leverage our collective responsibility to prioritize the students we serve.

The collective efficacy of principals driven by a desire to capitalize on the school district's current teacher evaluation model as a structure to facilitate individual instructional feedback and continuous teacher reflection will influence student learning outcomes positively. Collective efficacy, as defined by Albert Bandura (1997), is "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (p. 477). When educators operate through the lens of collective efficacy, a shared language that prioritizes the narrative of student learning emerges, replacing the fixed mindset of instructional compliance (Donohoo, Hattie & Eells, 2018, p. 42).

**Conditions.** Increased oversight of processes surrounding observation and evaluation will result in authentic evaluator use of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The elaborately detailed instrument will become the central tool for principals, guiding their work, evaluating effective instructional practice. While programs and initiatives will vary among sites, all administrator conversations pertaining to

effective classroom instruction will be grounded in the domains and components of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. With the instrument serving as the consistent measure of high-level instructional practice, formal and informal observation data will provide a reliable teacher effectiveness measure.

Established teacher observation processes and procedures, coupled with substantial investments of time observing classroom instruction, will offer explicit guidance around exactly how principals should conduct observations. The process of documenting teacher and student actions within the classroom setting, scripting, serves as the mechanism to gather accurate data for the teacher's observation. Quantifying the evidence via the rubric assists in identifying the current performance measure for varying levels of teaching behaviors. Clarity of this process will precede competence in the art of building a detailed base of evidence to drive teaching and learning. "Relationships, climate, and culture are important, but they are a means to an end, not the end itself. The goal is higher levels of student learning that prepare students for future pursuits" (Hall, 2019, p. 15).

**Competencies.** A credible instructional evaluation system requires a research-based framework for effective teaching practices, a shared understanding of the framework, and skilled evaluators to furnish accurate assessments of teachers via the use of the framework. Inter-rater agreement will ensure that all evaluators are consistent in their ability to rate instructional practice. While the ultimate goal is to achieve inter-rater agreement among all evaluators, it is critical to establish inter-rater agreement for evaluators at the same school location. Teachers must have confidence in school leaders to be able to fairly, accurately, and consistently assess instructional practice and provide

conjectures when multiple school leaders engage in observations of the same teacher who is conducting the same lesson. Central office staff will meet with all school leaders to assess the degree of consistency exhibited when examining instructional performance.

Evaluator professional development will bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing application opportunities to leverage the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a tool to promote coaching and reflection. According to DuFour and Marzano:

If student learning is linked so directly to the quality of instruction they receive on a day-to-day basis, it would seem to follow that the best way to improve student achievement is to focus on developing the knowledge and skills of individual teachers.” (pp. 65-66)

While classroom teachers are vital to the success of the student they teach, the principal is responsible for creating the conditions of equitable access to a high-quality education.

“Feedback should be motivated by the desire to help teachers acquire, assimilate, or adapt their skills so they can continue to learn and grow” (Superville, 2019, p. 11). Principals must demonstrate knowledge of the defining characteristics of instructional practice and utilize the range of existing performance measures to provide meaningful feedback to teachers.

## **Conclusion**

An effective principal engages closely with teaching and learning as an instructional leader. Managing the daily operations of the school site must be done in tandem with the strategic collection and use of data from teacher observations. With the social responsibility to provide equitable access to a high-quality education, effectiveness

measures grounded in evidence-based instructional practice should provide critical information to teachers and administrators with the next steps to maximize student achievement gains. Making meaningful use of teacher effectiveness data goes beyond teacher accountability. Teacher effectiveness measures serve as the catalyst to utilize instructional practice as the driving force behind educator improvement.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Strategies and Actions

The evolution of this study from the program evaluation of current teacher evaluation processes to the change model focusing on opportunities to ensure all students have access to high-quality teaching and learning will require strategic transformation. District leaders must address content, culture, conditions, and competencies to move the system towards an evaluation model with reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality. The work of Wagner et al. (2006) informs the strategies and actions of the mobilization of adaptive change represented by the As-Is analysis of the current landscape in comparison to the To-Be picture of success (Appendices F and K).

### Strategies and Actions

I based the strategies required for organizational change on best practices in organizational theory, professional development, leadership, and communication strategies. Using Kotter's (2012) Eight-Stage Change Framework, I developed a plan of action to identify strategies and actions needed to achieve a successful organizational change (see Appendix L). District leaders will utilize this roadmap to prioritize leadership as a driving force behind the process of change. The first fundamental shift will be to establish a sense of urgency to revise a flawed Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. Creating the guiding coalition for the revision of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument will be the second strategy to promote collaboration for the desired outcome to clearly define and establish a common language for instructional practice. The third stage will be developing a vision and strategy for observation and evaluation processes. The Rubric Revision Task Force will serve as the community of change agents

representing various instructional classifications and administrators within the district under study.

To support the change vision surrounding the new teacher evaluation process, the fourth stage will entail centralized messaging from district leadership. Aligning systems to the vision will occur in stage five through the empowerment of employees for broad-based action through targeted learning experiences. With the understanding that significant change takes time, generating short-term wins through the foundational understanding that clarity precedes competence will serve as the critical sixth stage. During the seventh stage, district leaders will maintain a heightened sense of urgency and deter behaviors leading to complacency. Consolidating gains and producing more change will occur through differentiated evaluator training with opportunities for district leaders to analyze each evaluator's ability to cultivate instructional practice and impact student achievement. Lastly, anchoring new evaluation approaches in a culture of collective efficacy will support the changes to impact teacher and student success.

**Establish a sense of urgency to revise a flawed evaluation tool.** The first step in creating significant change in an organization is establishing a sense of urgency. "A good rule of thumb in a major change effort is: Never underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency and that help maintain the status quo" (Kotter, 2012, p. 44). A reliable system of teacher evaluation must ensure that both teachers and site-based administrators are in alignment with what constitutes effective instructional practice within each component and across all levels of performance. District and site-based leaders will move beyond the rote action of conducting evaluations for compliance towards intrinsically owning the process of observation and evaluation as an opportunity

to target the needs of individual teachers. The first critical step for leaders will be to determine if the language in the existing Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument reflects the sound educational principles of Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011). District leaders will conduct a comparative analysis of the existing Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument in relation to the 22 components and levels of teaching performance in Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011).

Changing the narrative surrounding evaluation will require honest stakeholder discussions to determine the reliability of existing instructional practice data in relation to student achievement data on local or State Standards Assessments. These discussions must move beyond global dialogue focused on the way we have always done things, particularly if the way we have always done things prioritizes decision-making based on adult preferences instead of student needs. The accountability of district leaders to serve the community will be the guiding force of momentum for change. Stakeholders will be responsible for referencing concrete evidence that students are mastering rigorous learning goals that will prepare them for life beyond the K-12 educational arena.

**Create the guiding coalition for transformation of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument.** Teachers are the critical factor in increased student learning, which necessitates the inclusion of their perspective during change implementation. Teachers must have a significant role in the transformation of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument in addition to serving as part of the centralized messaging during implementation. In order to give teachers and administrators a voice, the district leader tasked with teacher evaluation oversight will utilize the school district email platform to invite all vested instructional and administrative personnel to participate in the rubric

revision process. The district leader must identify the need to establish an evaluation instrument that defines clear and consistent indicators for the improvement of teaching as the intended outcome of the rubric revision process.

The rubric revision process will entail three phases. The district leader will design Phase One of the process to allow for independent analysis of multiple component variations, rooted in the Danielson Framework (2011). The independent analysis will occur by providing all individuals who indicated a desire to participate in the rubric revision process the opportunity to review individually two versions of component language for each of the 22 components within the existing Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument. The district leader will email each participant a graphic organizer. The district leader will structure the graphic organizer by component to drive comparison between the current district component language and component language from two other school districts utilizing Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* (2011) as the guiding research base for their evaluation instrument. After completing the individual, comparative analysis for all 22 components, the individuals who indicate the desire to participate will utilize a digital survey to select the language they believe best captures important instructional concepts for an agreed-upon instructional framework for excellence. The component language receiving the higher frequency of selection will serve as the beginning draft language for Phase Two of the revision process.

The district leader will design Phase Two of the revision process to scaffold from individual analysis and reflection to collaborative discussions. In preparation for the collaborative face-to-face portion of the revision process, the district leader will email a graphic organizer to all individuals who participated and contributed to Phase One of the

revision process. Participants who did not contribute to Phase One will be recognized for their initial stake but will not receive further directions to participate in the revision process. The organization of the Phase Two graphic organizer will allow participants to document the strengths and limitations of the draft language as determined by the component language receiving the most participant votes during Phase One. Planned by district leaders as an intentional, collaborative structure to facilitate authentic dialogue, participants will select one of two scheduled dates to discuss and document their collective thoughts on posters that will replicate their previously emailed graphic organizers structured plus/delta by component (see Appendix B). During this second phase, participants will rotate to all 22 of the component posters in small groups to discuss and document the strengths and limitations of the draft component language. After the conclusion of both face-to-face collaborative sessions, the district leader will transfer all participant components to a Word document for use during Phase Three of the classroom teacher revision process.

The Rubric Revision Task Force will serve as the decision-making entity during the final phase, Phase Three, of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument revision process. The district leader will select individuals with varied educational experience levels and perspectives to serve on the Rubric Revision Task Force. The individuals will serve as diverse contributors to create what Kotter refers to as a strong guiding coalition. Kotter emphasizes the importance of such a coalition: “A strong guiding coalition is always needed – one with the right composition, level of trust, and shared objective” (Kotter, 2012, p. 54). The key stakeholders will include any staff member whose function includes the provision of direct instructional services to students. The following

classifications will provide guidance to ensure the inclusion of diverse areas of expertise: pre-kindergarten/primary levels, elementary intermediate grade levels, varied secondary content areas and grade levels, instructional coaches and content area specialists, novice educators, veteran educators, assistant principals, principals, and representation from the classroom teacher collective bargaining union. Integrating family and community involvement in the Rubric Revision Task Force will promote student-learning outcomes while leveraging the role of families and the community as a productive partner in the success of the organization. In practice, family and community stakeholders may include parents, leaders of local business associations, and the Public Education Foundation.

**Develop a vision and strategy for equitable representation.** The Rubric Revision Task Force will include no more than 12 individuals to represent the broad base of key stakeholders. According to the EMT Group and United States Department of Justice (1991):

In any setting, a group larger than 15 members will find it difficult to function as a committee-of-the-whole. With a large group there is not enough time for all members to participate meaningfully; and the tendency is for the group to succumb to paralysis, confusion, or boredom. On the other hand, a task force of only four or five members is usually too small to accomplish much work, or to accommodate a diversity of viewpoints. Task forces between ten and fifteen people seem to be an optimal number. (p. 5)

District leaders will collaborate on the selection of individuals for the Rubric Revision Task Force. In order for district leaders to consider an individual for a position on the task force, the individual must have actively participated in the previous two phases of the

revision process. During Phase Three, the selected members of the Rubric Revision Task Force will serve as agents to represent the collective perspectives captured throughout the revision journey.

A shared vision for the work of the Rubric Revision Task Force sets the tone for a purpose-driven team. According to Kotter, “Effective visions are always focused enough to guide employees – to convey which actions are important and which are out of bounds” (Kotter, 2012, p. 78). The most important norm of the Rubric Revision Task Force is to address only the documented feedback from Phase Two. The task force members’ use of this specific norm honors the representation of thoughts and perspectives of participants contributing to all phases of the revision process. In a roundtable format, the members of the Rubric Revision Task Force will discuss all documented strengths and limitations captured for each of the 22 components. The members of the Rubric Revision Task Force will create the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a result of their authentic stakeholder collaboration.

**Communicating the change vision through centralized messaging.** The revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument will serve as the framework in which to structure conversations about professional learning. As the agreed-upon evaluation framework for how the school district defines quality teaching, a reliable teacher evaluation system is central to improving the quality of teaching. For the teacher evaluation system to be truly effective, district leaders will engage in a top-down approach to the centralized messaging of instructional performance expectations that lead to student achievement.

The district leader tasked with oversight of teacher evaluation processes will leverage the discussions of the Rubric Revision Task Force to clearly outline and document all expectations pertaining to observation and evaluation. An instructional personnel evaluation handbook will provide all stakeholders with the criteria, methodologies, and procedures associated with the evaluation process. As an additional layer of awareness, all employees will be auto enrolled in a virtual evaluation orientation course. This orientation course will acclimate the employee with the evaluation process before an observation occurs. Lastly, all evaluating administrators will be responsible for conducting an evaluation overview for all instructional employees. This overview will include the evaluation process, position-appropriate instructional rubrics, guidance on how to access district resources pertaining to evaluation, and site-based procedures. “When the same message comes at people from six different directions, it stands a better chance of being heard and remembered on both intellectual and emotional levels” (Kotter, 2012, p. 95). Multiple repetitions of observation and evaluation processes from site and district administrators will support consistent messaging and increased opportunities for stakeholder retention of established procedures.

A strong structure of shared governance between teachers’ unions and district administrators “adds tremendous value to school districts seeking to improve and sustain high levels of student achievement” (Rubinstein, 2014, p.28). District leaders will engage in a standing, monthly dialogue with the President of the Teacher Collective Bargaining Union to stay in tune with structural concerns or issues pertaining to the evaluation system. As a representative stakeholder group of the guiding coalition, this union-district partnership is essential. Through it, stakeholders will prioritize the ongoing evaluation

experiences of teachers to ensure consistent interactions with the school district's established evaluation procedures. "Even more fundamentally, two-way discussions are an essential method of helping people answer all the questions that occur in the transformational effort" (Kotter, 2012, p. 102). It is a crucial prerequisite for school district and union leaders to engage in a collaborative labor-management relationship for successful policy reform.

**Empower employees for broad-based action through targeted learning experiences.** District leaders will design and implement learning experiences to provide classroom teachers with the foundational understanding of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument and accompanying processes of observation and evaluation. Providing classroom teachers with training arms the pivotal instructional variable with the knowledge and skills to engage effectively with the transformation of the revised rubric. District leaders will facilitate the learning experience and address topics such as:

- The internal document management platform in which instructional employees can locate documents pertaining to the observation process. These documents may include the pre-conference observation questions, the position-appropriate instructional rubric, the post-conference observation form, the appeal process documentation, and the instructional personnel evaluation handbook.
- The classification structure in which district leaders determine the minimum number of required formal and informal observations.
- Delineation of the different structures associated with the formal and informal observation processes.

- Guidance based on frequently asked questions and misconceptions surrounding observation and evaluation in the school district.

Evaluators play a vital role in the success of the evaluation system. Evaluator assessment of professional practice produces the evaluation data to inform decisions for strategic planning at both school and district level vantage points. Before site-based and district administrators conduct observations and evaluations, the district leader tasked with oversight of classroom teacher evaluation system will require evaluator participation in an overview professional development session detailing proper implementation of established evaluation criteria and procedures. “New experiences are needed to erase corrosive beliefs, and some of that can be done with efficient training” (Kotter, 2012, p. 113). The learning outcome for the session will be for evaluators to understand how consistent use of the current performance evaluation system promotes teacher growth and student achievement.

**Generating short term wins by understanding that clarity precedes competence.** Transforming teacher evaluation processes to ensure all students have access to high-quality teaching and learning requires a strategic change implementation plan. District leaders will translate the monitoring of evaluator compliance with stated expectations into diagnostic data to determine pending implementation of the change plan, strategies, and goals. Clearly articulated observation and evaluation expectations during evaluator professional development sessions, instructional evaluation due process rights as documented in the collective bargaining agreement, and the detailed outline of processes in the instructional evaluation handbook will serve as the ongoing diagnostic measures to identify factors restraining and reinforcing the desired change. Use of the

data will provide district leaders with the ability to determine the evaluator behaviors in need of clarification as well as the evaluator behaviors reinforcing evaluator competence.

The district leader with oversight of the instructional evaluation system will monitor the observation completion status of each school site in the district. The expectation for evaluators will be:

- Employees hired after January 1 of the preceding school year, new to the school district, reemployed with the district after a break in service, or changing from another personnel classification to an instructional position (i.e., non-instructional to instructional or administrative to instructional) must have observation ratings in all 22 components before the end of the first semester.
- Employees with one or more years of creditable teaching experience must have either a formal or an informal observation completed by the end of the first semester.

At the foundational level, the district leader tasked with oversight of the instructional evaluation system will review the completion status reports in relation to established deadlines to complete formal and informal observations. “Targeting short-term wins during a transformation effort does increase the pressures on people” (Kotter, 2012, p. 131). Validating and confirming administrator adherence to established observation expectations is a short-term procedural win as it ensures the consistent district-wide application of evaluation procedures.

**Consolidate gains and produce more change through differentiated evaluator learning experiences.** Inter-rater agreement is the degree to which two or more evaluators using the same performance levels give the same rating to an identical observable situation. District leaders will promote inter-rater agreement through small group calibration opportunities with assistant principals and principals. The small group calibration will replicate the procedure for informal observations in the school district. Groups of three to five administrators will collectively observe two 20-minute teaching blocks, individually scripting (collecting and recording) high-quality evidence. Upon the conclusion of both observations, administrators will independently sort evidence and rate components in Domain 2: The Classroom Environment, and Domain 3: Instruction. A district leader will lead a roundtable discussion to share and discuss component-level ratings and rationale for the rating based on evidence collection. Each administrator will identify areas of strength, opportunities for growth, and next steps for continuous evaluator improvement during the culminating reflection of each calibration experience. Additionally, as a result of the small group calibration experience, district leaders will be able to authentically monitor the progress of individual evaluator skillsets while identifying potential pockets of resistance impeding the transformation.

Kotter emphasized that change requires time and care: “Until changed practices attain a new equilibrium and have been driven into the culture, they can be very fragile” (2012). The collective responsibility for district leaders to invest in the instructional performance evaluation system as a tool for improving student achievement through increasing the effectiveness of teaching quality will be imperative. All district-level departments will acknowledge that classroom observations rooted in evidence and

consistency will support the vision for student learning. Kotter emphasized the tentative and fragile nature of the change process: “Until changed practices attain a new equilibrium and have been driven into the culture, they can be very fragile” (2012, p. 139). To achieve increased credibility of the evaluation system at the district-level, leaders must conduct an assessment of current department programming, structures, and systems to determine the ability of the school district to provide students with access to a high-quality education.

**Anchor new approaches in a culture of collective efficacy.** Collective efficacy is the shared beliefs and values that school district personnel can have a positive impact on student achievement. Kotter stated that, “Shared values are important concerns and goals shared by most of the people in a group that tend to shape group behaviors and that often persist over time even when group membership changes” (2012, p. 156). When efficacy is present in a school or district’s culture, educators seek out opportunities to deduce contributing factors to student success or failure, even if they, themselves, are the variable. The evaluation system will promote teacher engagement through cycles of continuous improvement, producing the powerful cumulative effect of student achievement gains. In addition, Donohoo, Hattie, and Eells stated that “collective efficacy influences student achievement directly through productive patterns of teaching behavior” (2018, p. 42). The emergence of a shared vision will focus equally on variables of instructional practice and student achievement.

Articulating the correlation between instructional practice as defined by observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by state

value-added measures standards assessments in English Language Arts in grades 4-10; Mathematics in grades 4-8; and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9 will develop the sustainable means to ensure leadership development and succession. Precise and isolated analysis of a teacher's instructional practice score in comparison to the student achievement score will provide detailed data for principals to facilitate data-informed conversations to improve teaching and learning within their schools. Principals can use these data as potential leverage points to identify teachers who can assume a leadership role at the school site through their ability to share best practices with their colleagues. The leadership role may come in the form of mentoring novice or struggling educators or opening up their classrooms for other teachers to observe instructional practice proven to have a positive impact on student learning. Stakeholder use of performance data to inform and improve teaching and learning will ensure that every child learns from the most effective teachers.

### **Comprehensive Plan to Assess the Effectiveness of Strategies and Actions**

District administrators' implementation of the actions and strategies recommended in this section were anticipated to improve the reliability of teacher effectiveness measures. The study would use improved student achievement levels as demonstrated by student performance on State Standards Assessments in the following grades and content areas: English Language Arts: Grades 4-10, Mathematics: Grades 4-8, and Algebra 1: Grades 8 and 9 only. Another expected result was that classroom teachers would earn instructional practice performance ratings reflective of their impact on student achievement as determined by their state-value added score. District leaders would be able to determine the validity of recommendations presented in this section by comparing

the performance rating percentages from the instructional practice measure as determined by formal and informal observations conducted by site-based administrators, the student achievement measure as determined by the state value-added measure, and the overall summative evaluation score. The recommendations would be demonstrated effective as a method to advance teacher instructional practice and student achievement by the school district under study's maintenance of an A or B district grade as assigned by the State Department of Education.

The district leaders would prioritize the intentional review of instructional practice and student achievement data as an accountability mechanism for principals to ensure that all of their students have access to a high-quality education. Principals would receive direct and job-embedded professional development from district leaders that supported the school district's strategic plan as well as the corresponding school improvement plan at the site-level. The strategic plan is a result of the collective contribution of stakeholders in the schools and community. The district strategic plan would establish the standard language for communicating change throughout the organizational culture. According to the ECRA Group (2015), a disciplined strategic plan "Provides a path which allows the community to work together to accomplish the goals objectives, and activities that constitute the strategic plan" (p.5). Principals and their leadership teams would create school improvement plans aligned with the school district's strategic plan, creating coherence across the school district.

### **Conclusion**

Successful transformation of an evaluation model with reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality as determined by instructional practice and student

achievement can be a reality. Kotter's (2012) key to creating and sustaining a successful, twenty-first century organization requires the development and emergence of an adaptive leader with the ability to develop skills through lifelong learning. Kotter (2012) articulated:

And those people at the top of enterprises today who encourage others to leap into the future, who help them overcome natural fears, and thus expand the leadership capacities in their organizations – these people provide a profoundly important service for the entire human community. (p. 194)

Success will be strongly dependent on the ability of the organizational leaders to develop structures, systems, practices, and policies for the rapidly changing environment.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Implications and Policy Recommendations

The goals of this program evaluation were to describe the school district's implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Tool, understand stakeholder perceptions of the implementation of the system, and to determine how to support every teacher's professional growth. In 2011, the school district under study overhauled the teacher evaluation system to meet adequately the expectations defined in the state's *Race to the Top* application for initial funding. One of the six strategies outlined in the state's application was the emergence of human capital practices to improve individual teacher effectiveness. The State Department of Education heightened the systematic relationship between teaching and learning by including student performance as a variable in teacher performance evaluation. Further supported in the state's administrative mandates, signed into law July 7, 2011, SB 736 amended statute to quantify at least 50% of a teacher's performance evaluation must be based upon data and indicators of student learning growth assessed annually by State Standards Assessments or by local school district assessments.

As of 2019, student learning results were identified by the State Legislature in statute as a primary purpose of public education (2019). Personnel evaluation procedures and criteria continued to support effective instruction and student learning growth. According to 2019 State Statute, Title XLVIII, Chapter 1012.34, the evaluation criteria was required to include:

- (1) Performance of students: At least one-third of a performance evaluation must be based upon data and indicators of student performance, as determined by

each school district. This portion of the evaluation must include growth or achievement data of the teacher's students or, for a school administrator, the students attending the school for at least three years. If less than three years of data are available, the calculation must take into account data for which are available. The instructional assignment may determine the proportion of growth or achievement data.

- (2) Instructional practice: For instructional personnel, at least one-third of the performance evaluation must be based upon instructional practice. (State Statute, 2019)

The school district under study factored multiple measures into the summative evaluation of teacher performance to determine effectiveness: (1) Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice, and (2) Value-added measures/student achievement data. Principal/administrator evaluation of instructional practice occurred during formal and informal classroom observations and accounted for 67% of the teacher's performance evaluation rating. Value-added measures or student achievement data served as the final 33% and measured the impact of the classroom teacher on student learning growth. The 67% weighting tied to a teacher's instructional practice score placed tremendous accountability on site-based administrators. Operating under the oversight of state and district mandates while providing their teachers with formative, ongoing feedback to improve continually their practice resulted in a compliance-driven process of accountability. An evaluation system that provides teachers with the opportunity to reflect on practice and make shifts in their instructional practice required multiple data sources to support contributing factors to a teacher's effectiveness.

## Policy Statement

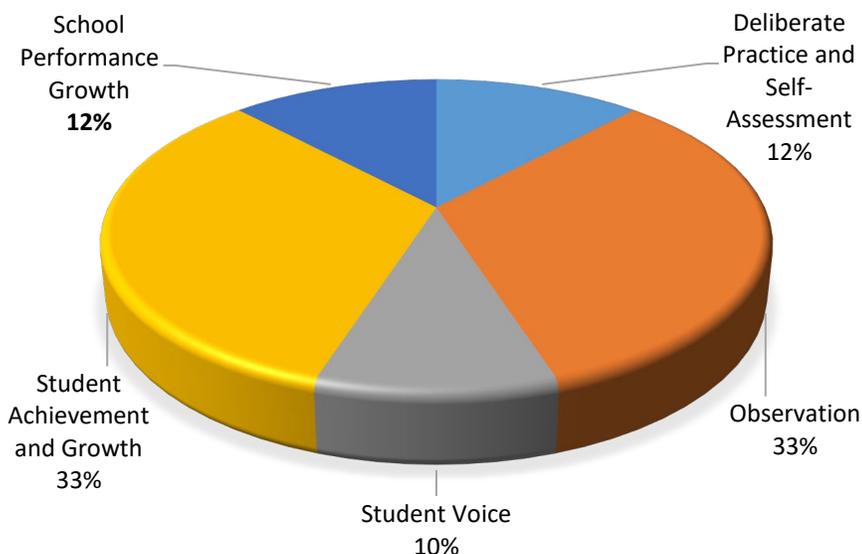
Based upon my analysis of the current context, conditions, culture, and competencies in the district under study, I recommend a policy that requires district leaders to assess multiple areas of a teacher's performance by leveraging the existing instructional framework as the tool to support every educator's professional growth. District leaders will use the evaluation system to provide a comprehensive assessment of a teacher's effectiveness through the inclusion of the following factors:

- A. Deliberate Practice and Self-Assessment (12%) – A model designed for teachers to grow their practice and expertise intentionally through a series of planned action steps, checkpoints for reflection, and collaboration through a system of support.
  - a. Pre-Assessment – The teacher and administrator will develop and identify components or content knowledge for development collaboratively.
  - b. S.M.A.R.T. goals – The teacher will identify up to five specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely goals to influence positively instructional practice and student learning outcomes.
  - c. Develop an action plan – The teacher will develop a comprehensive plan to include action steps, resources, additional support required, and a timeline for completion.
  - d. Track progress – The teacher will reflect, and record insights related to their professional learning and the impact on student learning.
- B. Observation (33%) – Evaluators will observe a teacher's instructional practice, collect evidence, align evidence to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument to

arrive at a performance measure for each component, and identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth.

- C. Student Voice (10%) – Students will contribute to the overall evaluation of the teacher by sharing their perception of a teacher’s classroom environment and instruction.
- D. Student Achievement and Growth (33%) – District leaders will calculate student achievement and growth as determined by student performance on local or State Standards Assessments.
- E. School Performance Growth (12%) – District leaders will determine school performance growth according to the collective measure of academic growth by the state-determined school improvement rating that is applied to all teachers within each school.

Figure 13 displays the multiple measures of policy advocacy with corresponding percentage weights. My recommended policy advocacy system is designed to look at multiple factors contributing to a teacher’s effectiveness by assessing multiple dimensions of teaching.



*Figure 13. Multiple Measures of the Policy Advocacy: the policy advocacy affords teachers and administrators, the opportunity to reflect and advance teaching and learning based on a variety of data, including deliberate practice and self-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth*

To best understand the rationale to include multiple measures towards a teacher's effectiveness rating, Adams et al. (2015) recommend that "Teachers should be evaluated both on their success in their own classroom and their contributions to the success of their peers and the school as a whole" (p. 5). In constructing measurable variables for inclusion in a teacher's performance evaluation, I recommend a multi-dimensional method for capturing a teacher's performance based on a variety of data sources, including deliberate practice and self-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth.

### **Analysis of Needs**

Through this analysis of needs, I concluded the need to derive teacher accountability through measures focused on the shared commitment to students and the community served. District leaders will establish reliable measures to gauge teacher quality through various perspectives and indicators of student achievement through my

theory of action for the evaluation system. With comprehensive change, there are implications for additional considerations related to the proposed changes including educational, economic, social, political, legal, and ethical arenas.

**Educational analysis.** In analyzing the educational elements of this policy recommendation, district leaders should utilize multiple measures of teacher effectiveness to provide educators with a robust and comprehensive view of their performance. My recommendation to include deliberate practice and pre-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth has the potential to provide critical depth to the assessment of teacher effectiveness and improve student performance. Instructional personnel perceive the current teacher evaluation system as high stakes, impersonal, and compliance-driven with little ownership for teachers in the design of the process. In order to develop a process that embraces the collective efficacy to improve teaching and learning, the process needs to shift to one in which all stakeholder groups intrinsically embrace the ongoing desire to improve professional practice through the collective responsibility to provide all students with access to a high-quality education. Wagner et al. articulated:

Organizations that engage in ongoing dialogue around goals, priorities, and professional standards for individual and group performance intentionally foster the skills and norms that require everyone in the system to work more collaboratively and to be more accountable to one another. (p. 16)

The strength of this multiple-measure performance evaluation system is increased validity, increased reliability, and decreased subjectivity. The current performance evaluation system in the school district under study is composed of two measures –

instructional practice (67%) and student achievement or growth (33%). My policy recommendation to increase the performance component from two measures to five measures leads to more accurate data inputs contributing to the teacher's effectiveness rating. District leaders will expand the sources of data to include multiple perspectives leading to increased reliability and additional opportunities to corroborate evidenced-based data sources. My recommendation to integrate the input from varied data sources and stakeholder perspectives will build objectivity in the evaluation system, as evaluators will no longer carry the majority of the weight associated as the sole reviewer of a teacher's instructional practice. District leaders' use of multiple measures would produce a realistic picture of the teacher's performance while allowing evaluators to see multiple dimensions of a teacher's performance.

**Economic analysis.** Salaries account for approximately 70% of the half-billion-dollar annual budget for the school district under study. A teacher's evaluation rating influences salary through structures aligned with performance pay. In the district under study, performance-based compensation is an annual bonus through which a teacher qualifies for financial incentives if he/she earns a summative evaluation rating of Effective or Highly Effective. The current weighting of 67% tied to instructional practice results in a heightened role for site-based administrators. As administrators conduct the formal and informal classroom observations, they hold the responsibility for contributing the majority of the evaluation data influencing a teacher's likelihood of earning performance pay.

Within the evaluation system in the district under study, there is a discrepancy in the instructional practice score of teachers (as determined by formal and informal

observation ratings) and student achievement (as determined by state value-added measures or local assessments). This disconnect has a financial cost as the school district is awarding performance pay to teachers who may have had little to no impact on student achievement as determined by their value-added evaluation score. It is highly problematic when teacher evaluation results indicate over 90% of teachers as Effective or Highly Effective, yet student performance on State Standards Assessments show students trailing behind the state average in English Language Arts in grades 4-10; Mathematics in grades 4-8; and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9. According to the United States Department of Education, *Teacher Compensation* web page (n.d.) retrieved March 21, 2020:

Every decision around compensation—and around education expenditures as a whole—should be focused on improving student achievement. Compensation investments too often are based on factors unrelated to student achievement. States and districts should re-examine compensation structures to better support and drive effective teaching. (para. 1)

The substantial weight of instructional practice can result in a false representation of teacher quality.

**Social analysis.** The perceived high stakes of the formal and informal observation in the teacher evaluation system perpetuates a culture of compliance. Building professional expertise is not a product of automaticity; it requires deliberate practice and reflection. Through my policy, I recommend the intentional art of deliberate practice as a structure to improve teacher performance and student learning outcomes. Deliberate practice is a systematic structure for educators to grow their expertise through a series of planned activities, reflection, and collaboration. The powerful cumulative effect of

deliberate practice on teacher behavior and student learning capitalizes on the expectation that all teachers can increase their expertise from year to year, which produces gains in student achievement from year to year.

Bambrick-Santoyo and Lemov (2012) have stated, “Observation and feedback are only fully effective when leaders systematically track which teachers have been observed, what feedback they have received, and whether that feedback has improved their practice” (p. 62). The positional power of the administrator as an evaluator has influenced the negative perception surrounding teacher evaluation. The anxiety of high stakes formal and informal observations has diminished the value of the feedback model to promote professional growth. My policy recommendation for district leaders to include deliberate practice and a pre-assessment as part of the evaluation system supports the development of reflective practitioners. When district leaders embrace opportunities for teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators to work collaboratively as part of a system of support, students become the benefactor of improved teaching and learning.

**Political analysis.** The collective bargaining agreement between the school district and the teachers’ union leaders detail teacher evaluation policies and procedures. The collective bargaining language states altering contributing factors of the instructional performance evaluation system will require the approval of the teachers’ union president. With discussions across the school district focused on effective instruction as defined by the language within the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, the role of instructional coaches is a point of contention between the school district and teacher union leaders in the district under study. As coaches fall into the classification of instructional personnel, the teachers’ union representatives are hesitant to utilize the

common language of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument during coaching cycles. The shared concern by union representatives is that if coaches reference the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, they are stepping into the role of an evaluator. The instructional personnel collective bargaining agreement in the school district under study states site-based and district administrators are the only individuals who can be assigned evaluator responsibilities. Teachers' union representatives believe the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is only for evaluative purposes and does not have a place in collegial relationships between a coach and classroom teacher.

The reciprocal relationship between coaching, evaluation, and reflection is prevalent in the structures of the policy recommendation. School district leaders and union leaders must seek to encourage continuous improvement instead of isolation and competition. The District leaders, union leaders, and all other stakeholders have a collective responsibility for student achievement in that they must embrace the delivery of feedback in evaluative and non-evaluative settings. Feedback is meaningful in the value it provides to learning and coordination of purpose: "Acquiring meaning, of course, is an individual act, but its real value for student learning is when shared meaning is achieved across a group of people working in concert" (Fullan, 2007b, p. 37). School leaders can realize the value of coaching when they properly situate this form of professional development within the feedback cycle of evaluation.

**Legal analysis.** Leaders at the State Department of Education have legislated an authorizing statute for district evaluation systems requiring school districts to establish procedures for evaluating the performance of instructional personnel in order to increase student academic performance by improving the quality of services in public schools.

The rule sets forth the requirements for the annual evaluation of instructional personnel by establishing criteria and implementing procedures for the school district systems; delineating the responsibilities of the school district and Department of Education; setting forth submission, review, and approval criteria; and prescribing reporting and monitoring requirements. Additionally, the evaluation criteria must include:

- (1) For instructional personnel, at least one-third of a performance evaluation must be based upon data and indicators of student performance, as determined by each school district. This portion of the evaluation must include growth or achievement data of the teacher's students or, for a school administrator, the students attending the school over the course of at least three years. If less than three years of data are available, the calculation must take into account data for which are available. The instructional assignment may determine the proportion of growth or achievement data.
- (2) For instructional personnel, at least one-third of the performance evaluation must be based upon instructional practice. Evaluation criteria used when annually observing classroom teachers must include indicators based upon each of the State Educator Accomplished Practices adopted by the State Board of Education. For instructional personnel who are not classroom teachers, evaluation criteria must be based upon indicators of the State Educator Accomplished Practices and may include specific job expectations related to student support. (Stat. §1008.22, 2018)

The State Department of Education leaders conduct an annual review of school district evaluation systems. Additionally, all substantial revisions to an approved system

must be reviewed and approved by the district school board before being used to evaluate instructional personnel. The State Department of Education leaders require school districts to outline evaluation procedures and methodologies in the Instructional Evaluation System Template. The template requires a detailed written narrative of the evaluation system overview, evaluation system requirements, evaluation procedures, and evaluation criteria. In my policy recommendation, I included measures aligned to the statutory requirement to allocate one-third of the performance evaluation to instructional practice and one-third of the performance evaluation to student growth and achievement. The additional measures of deliberate practice and self-assessment, student voice, and school performance growth are considered substantive revisions. They are subject to review and approval by the State Department of Education prior to implementation.

**Moral and ethical analysis.** District leaders will establish shared beliefs pertaining to instructional practice and student achievement that will leverage our collective responsibility to prioritize the students we serve. The potential for resistance is a factor which district leaders must take into account during change implementation. As articulated by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linskey (2009), “What people resist is not change per se, but loss. When change involves real or potential loss, people hold on to what they have and resist the change” (p. 23). The drive to remain focused on the outcome to improve student learning is essential, especially when faced with moral and ethical challenges.

Educators aim to provide opportunities to combine the acquisition of new knowledge to the application of individual frameworks of thought and diverse perspectives. All instructional learning opportunities must be purposeful with a valued

end contributing to the molding of the individual as a lifelong learner. “What we should hope to help our students achieve is a conception of their lives that is reasonable and satisfactory to them and rests on assumption that can be defended” (Strike, 2007, p. 30). This conception must be rooted in the notion of a well-examined life and the positive impact of the individual on the society in which they seek to be an active stakeholder. The teachers serve as the most critical factor in improving student-learning outcomes, and therefore, must reap the benefits of reflective opportunities to focus on building and expanding their professional repertoire. The shared vision of effective instruction is the powerful lever to providing students, families, and the community with a reliable performance metric to gauge high-quality instruction.

### **Implications for Staff and Community Relationships**

To ensure all students were provided with access to a high-quality education, the school district under study needed to develop a consistent evaluation of practice. The policy I recommend is the establishment of reliable measures to gauge teacher effectiveness. The use of multiple measures increases the validity of observations through a more comprehensive and accurate assessment to inform teaching and learning. Instructional personnel would benefit if district leaders in the school district under study adopted a multi-dimensional method for capturing a teacher’s performance based on a variety of data sources, including deliberate practice and self-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth. This recommendation will foster collaborative communities of practice where teachers engage in honest conversations about instructional practice. Danielson (2016a) said:

Therefore, part of the mission of every school must be to create a place for learning, for teachers as well as students, in which teachers are continually engaged in learning new skills and acquiring new insights that can enhance their practice. (p. 20)

The supportive environment of collegiality will strengthen instructional practice and increase student achievement.

The power of an effective teacher has transformative implications for community relationships as exceptional teachers have a direct influence on enhancing student learning. Effective teachers permeate the instructional culture of the school district, creating a lasting impact on students and their lifelong educational and career aspirations. Chetty, Freidman, and Rockoff (2011) analyzed an urban district's data from grades 3-8 for 2.5 million children. Their findings focus on the long-term impact of teachers based on their value-added measurement. Students assigned to teachers producing a high value-added score are more likely to attend college, attend higher-ranked colleges, earn higher salaries, live in higher socioeconomic neighborhoods, and save more towards their retirement. The authors concluded that value-added ratings are one of the most reliable indicators for evaluating teachers. The prodigious impact an effective teacher has on a child's life extends beyond schooling to the public sector.

Other stakeholder relationships that I will consider and will be impacted by the recommended policy include the business community. The school district under study has grown its Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming with students earning just under 2,000 industry certifications during the 2018-2019 school year. The growing number of certifications complements the booming economy as several large companies

selected the county in which the district under study lies to open massive distribution facilities. The interconnected network of business and education provides a seamless transition to educational and career goals. Heyward (2019) stated:

CTE challenges the nation that education must happen within the school walls by pushing the boundaries between school and community. These programs collaborate with employers, universities, trade unions, city agencies, and others to design learning experiences that result in industry-recognized skills. They also leverage community assets and resources to launch and sustain learning experiences. (p.4)

Preparing students for both college and career requires business and community partnerships to focus dually on engaging students, teachers, and the community. The support of the local business community is a critical component for rigorous instruction, student achievement, and economic and community development.

### **Conclusion**

District and site-based administrators focused only on measures of instructional practice and student achievement, which resulted in lagging academic performance by students on State Standards Assessments. Through my policy recommendation, I support the inclusion of multiple measures of data, including deliberate practice and self-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth, providing a multidimensional view of teacher effectiveness. Assessing multiple areas of a teacher's performance affords the opportunity for teachers and administrators to make instructional shifts based on clear standards of effective

practice, assessment of strengths and opportunities for growth from diverse stakeholder perspectives, and support for continuous improvement.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Conclusion

The problem in my study was the discrepancy between the intended role of teacher evaluations as a measure to determine the impact of teacher quality on student achievement and student achievement as measured by student performance on State Standards Assessments. Throughout my research, my main objective in this study was to identify successes and shortcomings related to classroom teacher evaluations and strengthen the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student access to high-quality education. Because of years of stagnant student achievement and struggling schools receiving state support for school improvement, district leaders reevaluated the impact of evaluators' use of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on instructional practice and student achievement in the district under study. District leaders will use the theory of action for the evaluation system to establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality. Additionally, district leaders will monitor the consistent application of processes surrounding observation and evaluation, including the expectation for stakeholders to engage in reflective evaluative and non-evaluative conversations focused on the degree to which a teacher impacts student achievement.

### Discussion

The school district under study was a mid-sized, public school district serving approximately 43,000 pre-kindergarten through twelfth-grade students. "Teaching and learning are at the core of educational practices, and as a significant body of research demonstrates, teacher quality is the most important school-level factor affecting student achievement" (Looney, 2011, p. 440). The purpose of this study was to determine the

impact of evaluators' use of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument on teachers' instructional practice and student achievement in the district under study. My invitation for authentic stakeholder input before, during, and after the revision journey of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument promoted the collective responsibility to improve student-learning outcomes through an evaluation system based on trust and collaboration. Observing the current relationship between instructional practice and student achievement measures of teacher effectiveness presented me with the opportunity to examine the implications of the following research questions for any school district seeking to assess the effectiveness of teacher observation and evaluation processes:

- What is the relationship between observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by state value-added measures based on standards assessments in English Language Arts in grades 4-10, Mathematics in grades 4-8, and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9?
- How can school district leaders refine the evaluation system to shift the mindset of administrators regarding evaluation from one of compliance to a mindset of opportunity to stimulate professional practice?
- What structures need to be in place to ensure consistent implementation of observation and evaluation processes?
- What professional development do district leaders need to provide to evaluators in order to develop the competencies necessary to utilize the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a tool to provide authentic feedback during high-stakes observations?

Through my program evaluation, I considered the impact of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument as a reliable tool for administrators to measure instructional practice. The centrality of the teacher evaluation process as a critical strategy for improving student-learning outcomes requires the use of a common language for continuous improvement. My examination of current practices related to teacher evaluation served as the needs-assessment to refine the existing system.

This process has addressed my purpose by providing data from classroom teachers, non-classroom instructional personnel, administrators, and student performance on State Standards Assessments to inform and improve current practices surrounding observation and evaluation in the district under study. My research revealed the district leaders in the school district under study must seek to improve the context, culture, conditions, and competencies to establish reliable effectiveness measures to gauge teacher quality as determined by instructional practice and student achievement. The data revealed a weak corresponding relationship between observed teacher instructional practice (as derived from evidence-based scripting applied to the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument) and student achievement as measured by state value-added measures based on standards assessments in English Language Arts in grades 4-10; Mathematics in grades 4-10; and Algebra 1 in grades 8 and 9. The inflation of instructional practice scores was not apparent in the overall performance evaluation rating generated on the summative evaluation. Classroom teachers place a premium on the administrator's judgment of instructional practice as it accounts for 67% of the summative evaluation. The imbalance of weights assigned to instructional practice and

student achievement created the perception that student achievement (33%) is a trivial variable in performance evaluation.

In my organizational change plan, I addressed the issue of establishing expectations surrounding observation and evaluation between site-based evaluators and district leaders. Transforming the current landscape of teacher evaluation from a compliance-driven mindset towards a system in which school district stakeholders assume the collective social responsibility to gauge teacher effectiveness as a function of student learning requires specificity and clarity for the role of evaluators. Establishing the inviolable expectations to reinvent the teacher evaluation model must first begin with centralized top-down messaging by district leaders. The credibility of the evaluation system relies heavily on district-facilitated evaluator credentialing as a primary comprehensive needs assessment. Through district-facilitated credentialing, leaders will gauge evaluator readiness to observe effectively by documenting teacher and student actions within the classroom setting to detail the relationship between teacher behaviors and student learning outcomes. Evidence-based assessments of instructional practice will serve as the catalyst to increase the probability of increased student achievement.

Through my recommended policy change, I advocate for a multi-dimensional evaluation system for capturing a teacher's performance based on a variety of measures. The data sources, measures, include deliberate practice and self-assessment, observation, student voice, student achievement and growth, and school performance growth. While the school district leaders currently implement an evaluation, system based on two measures, instructional practice and student achievement, lagging student achievement as

measured by student performance on State Standards Assessments indicate the urgency for prompt reform.

### **Leadership Lessons**

Through my study, I learned the importance of prioritizing educational decisions based on the needs of students, not the comfort of adults. “As instructional leaders, we know the quality of instruction occurring in our classrooms is the defining characteristic of our influence – and is the determining factor of our students’ success” (Hall, 2019, p.7). The principal’s trepidations about providing honest feedback must not supersede the responsibility of providing all students with access to high-quality teaching and learning environments. The investment of time administrators spent in observing and providing feedback to teachers is a powerful catalyst for building trusting relationships with faculty. When evaluators conduct observations grounded in the outcome of providing authentic and meaningful feedback, conversations of resolve show commitment to growing teacher instructional practice, thereby improving the quality of instruction received by students.

As a result of this program evaluation and the research studied, I was also reminded of the importance of incorporating diverse stakeholder perspectives before, during, and after systematic change implementation. The honest reflections from the nine individuals involved in the focus group provided the most compelling data to improve observation and evaluation processes. While representing different realms of experience, the responses from instructional and administrative personnel indicated a desire for consistency. The significance of the findings during the first implementation year of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument contributed to the development of

ongoing structures to ensure that district leaders provided administrators with clear expectations to develop their evaluator competency.

Throughout this study, I have grown as a leader and an independent researcher. The knowledge that I have acquired from analyzing instructional practice data, student achievement value-added measures, focus group transcriptions, and the results from the principal Likert scale survey have further perpetuated my desire to elevate the critical role of non-evaluative and evaluative classroom observations. Classroom observations are the vehicle to structure reflective conversations between an observer and a classroom teacher. Intentional dialogue with teachers about instructional practice – components in which they are Effective, opportunities for growth, and next steps for continuous improvement – affect classroom instruction and student achievement. Additionally, I recognized, as the district leader tasked with oversight of instructional observations and evaluations, I must engage in ongoing assessments of the procedures and expectations to ensure the effectiveness of the evaluation system. The information I gathered during this program evaluation has allowed and will continue to allow me to make the necessary adjustments to the current evaluation system to strengthen the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student access to high-quality education.

## **Conclusion**

Educational reforms dating back to the landmark report *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (1983) elevated the role of clear standards of effective teaching on state and local accountability measures. Teacher evaluation has emerged as the formal construct in which to gauge teacher quality. Evaluating teachers through honest, evidence-based practices provides the assurance that instructional practice is a

critical factor to ensure every child has the opportunity to learn from an effective teacher. In order to establish a valid evaluation system, the relationship between observation ratings and student learning as measured by performance on State Standards Assessments should produce reliable measures to identify the effect of the teacher on student learning. In their call to action at the State Organization of Instructional Leaders conference, Jason Gaitanis (2019) emphasized the purpose of evaluation as a means of growth, improved teaching and improved learning:

Our goal is not, and must not be, evaluation for evaluation's sake. Our goal must be evaluation for the purpose of growth – for providing educators with honest and actionable information that supports their continued professional learning for the purpose of improved teaching and improved learning for all students. (Dassler & Gaitanis, 2014, slide 3)

Clarity and competence operate as symbiotic cogs of interlocking values for change for a performance evaluation system designed to maximize teaching and learning.

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## APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Phase One Response Results Indicating Example  
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## APPENDIX A

**Phase One Response Results Indicating Example  
Language Preference for Domains 1-4 Google Form Analytics**

## 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	20
● Example 2	57



## 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	24
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## 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	25
● Example 2	52



### 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	27
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### 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	32
● Example 2	45



### 1f: Designing Student Assessments

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	20
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## 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

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● Example 1	38
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## 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	44
● Example 2	33



## 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	51
● Example 2	26



## . 2d: Managing Student Behavior

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	38
● Example 2	39



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## . 2e: Organizing Physical Space

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	27
● Example 2	50



### 3a: Communicating With Students

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● Example 1	34
● Example 2	43



### 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

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● Example 1	41
● Example 2	36



### 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

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● Example 1	24
● Example 2	53



#### 4a: Reflecting on Teaching

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	33
● Example 2	44



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#### 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	27
● Example 2	50



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#### 4c: Communicating with Families

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	40
● Example 2	37



#### 4d: Participating in a Professional Community

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	43
● Example 2	34



#### 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	25
● Example 2	52



#### 4f: Showing Professionalism

[More Details](#)

● Example 1	29
● Example 2	48



**APPENDIX B**

**Graphic Organizers for Component Review**

**1a. Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher’s plans and practice display little knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between different aspects of the content, or the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect some awareness of the important concepts in the discipline, prerequisite relationships between them, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect solid knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between important concepts, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.	The teacher’s plans and practice reflect extensive knowledge of the content, the structure of the discipline and instructional practices. The teacher actively builds on knowledge of prerequisites and misconceptions when describing instruction or seeking causes for student misunderstanding. The teacher stays abreast of emerging research areas, new and innovative methods and incorporates them into lesson plans and instructional strategies.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge of content and structure of the discipline</li> <li>- Knowledge of prerequisite relationships</li> <li>- Knowledge of content-related pedagogy</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: 2em; margin-top: 20px;">+</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em;">△</p>

**1b. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher demonstrates little or no knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and does not seek such understanding when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.	The teacher indicates the importance of understanding students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and attains this knowledge for the class as a whole when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.	The teacher actively seeks knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and attains this knowledge for groups of students when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.	The teacher actively seeks knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs from a variety of sources, and attains this knowledge of individual students when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Knowledge of child and adolescent behavior
- Knowledge of the learning process and students' special needs
- Knowledge of students', skills, knowledge and language proficiency
  - Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage

+

△

+	△

**1c. Setting Instructional Outcomes**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
Instructional outcomes reflected in the lesson design are unsuitable for students, represent trivial or low-level learning, or are stated only as activities. They do not permit viable methods of assessment. The teacher develops general student achievement goals for the class OR does not develop a goal at all.	Instructional outcomes reflected in the lesson design are of moderate rigor and are suitable for some students, but consist of a combination of activities and goals, some of which permit viable methods of assessment. Outcomes reflect more than one type of learning but plans and practice do not reflect coordination or integration. The teacher develops measurable student achievement goals for the class.	Instructional outcomes reflected in the lesson design are stated as goals reflecting high-level learning and curriculum standards. Outcomes are suitable for most students in the class, represent different types of learning, and can be assessed. The outcomes reflect opportunities for coordination. The teacher develops measurable student achievement goals for the class that are aligned to content standards and evident in both plans and practice.	Instructional outcomes reflected in lesson design are stated as goals that can be assessed, reflecting rigorous learning and curriculum standards. They represent different types of content, offer opportunities for both coordination and integration, and take account of the needs of individual students. The teacher develops ambitious and measurable student achievement goals for the class that are aligned to the content standards and evident in both plans and practice.

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Value, sequence and alignment
  - Clarity
  - Balance
- Suitability for diverse learners

+

△

+	△

**1d. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher demonstrates little or no familiarity with resources and/or technology to enhance own knowledge, to use in designing instruction or provide for students in order to enhance learning.	The teacher demonstrates some familiarity with resources and technology available through the school or district to enhance own knowledge, to use in designing instruction or to provide for students in order to enhance learning.	The teacher's plans reflect awareness of the resources and technology available through the school or district to enhance own knowledge, to use designing instruction or provide for students in order to enhance learning.	The teacher's plans and practice incorporate resources and technology (as available) in and beyond the school or district in professional organizations, on the Internet, and in the community to enhance own knowledge, to use in designing instruction and to provide for students in order to enhance learning.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resources for classroom use</li> <li>- Resources for students</li> <li>- Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy</li> </ul>	
<b>+</b>	<b>Δ</b>

**1e. Designing Coherent Instruction**

**Example 2**

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
<p>The series of learning experiences is poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes and does not represent a coherent structure. The experiences are suitable for only some students. The teacher does not plan lessons/units by identifying the content standards that his or her students will master in each unit OR does not articulate well-designed essential questions for each unit.</p>	<p>The series of learning experiences demonstrates partial alignment with instructional outcomes; some experiences are likely to engage students in significant learning. The lesson/unit has a recognizable structure and reflects partial knowledge of students and resources. Based on the annual student achievement goal, the teacher plans lessons/units using 2 of the 4 practices: 1) identifying the content standards students will master; 2) articulating well-designed essential questions 3) employing backward design; and 4) allocating an instructionally appropriate amount of time.</p>	<p>The teacher coordinates knowledge of content, students, and resources to design a series of learning experiences aligned to instructional outcomes and suitable for groups of students. The lesson/unit has a clear structure and is likely to engage students in significant learning. Based on the annual student achievement goal, the teacher plans lessons/units using 3 of the 4 practices: 1) identifying the content standards that students will master; 2) articulating well-designed essential questions; 3) employing backward design; and 4) allocating an instructionally appropriate amount of time.</p>	<p>The teacher coordinates knowledge of content, students, and resources to design a series of learning experiences aligned to instructional outcomes, differentiated (where appropriate) for all students, and likely to engage them in significant learning. The lesson/unit structure is clear and allows for different pathways according to student needs. Based on the annual student achievement goal, the teacher plans lessons/units using 4 practices: 1) identifying the content standards students will master; 2) articulating well-designed essential questions; 3) employing backward design; and 4) allocating an instructionally appropriate amount of time.</p>

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Learning activities
- Instructional materials and resources
- Instructional groups
- Lesson and unit structure

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**1f. Designing Student Assessments**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>Assessment procedures are not congruent with instructional outcomes; the proposed approach contains no criteria or standards. Teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit, nor any plans to use assessment results in designing future instruction.</p>	<p>Assessment criteria and standards have been developed but are unclear. Approach to the use of formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for the class as a whole.</p>	<p>The teacher's plan for student assessment is aligned with the instructional outcomes; assessment methodologies may have been adapted for groups of students. Assessment criteria and standards are clear. The teacher has a well-developed strategy for using formative assessment within the lesson and has designed particular approaches to be used. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for groups of students.</p>	<p>The teacher's plan for student assessment is fully aligned with the instructional outcomes, with clear criteria and standards that show evidence of student contribution to their development. Assessment methodologies have been adapted for individual students, as needed. The approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student as well as teacher use of the assessment information. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan future instruction for individual students.</p>

<p align="center"><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p align="center"><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Congruence with instructional outcomes                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Criteria and standards</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Design of formative assessments                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use for planning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>+</p>	<p>△</p>

**2a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
Classroom interactions between the teacher and students and/or among students are negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students' cultural backgrounds and are characterized by sarcasm, put-downs, or conflict.	Classroom interactions, between the teacher and students and among students, are generally appropriate and free from conflict, but may be characterized by occasional behaviors and/or language that compromise the promotion of learning.	Classroom interactions between the teacher and students and among students are polite and respectful, reflecting general warmth and caring, and are appropriate to the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.	Classroom interactions among the teacher and individual students are respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and caring and sensitivity to students' cultures and levels of development. Students themselves ensure high levels of civility among members of the class.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher interaction with students</li> <li>- Student interaction with other students</li> </ul>	
+	△

**2b. Establishing a Culture for Learning**

**Example 1**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>The classroom culture is characterized by a lack of teacher or student commitment to learning, and/or little or no investment of student energy in the task at hand. Hard work and the precise use of language are not expected or valued. Medium to low expectations for student achievement are the norm, with high expectations for learning reserved for only one or two students.</p>	<p>The classroom culture is characterized by little commitment to learning by the teacher or students. The teacher appears to be only “going through the motions,” and students indicate that they are interested in the completion of a task rather than the quality of the work. The teacher conveys that student success is the result of natural ability rather than hard work and refers only in passing to the precise use of language. High expectations for learning are reserved for those students thought to have a natural aptitude for the subject.</p>	<p>The classroom culture is a place where learning is valued by all; high expectations for both learning and hard work are the norm for most students. Students understand their role as learners and consistently expend effort to learn. Classroom interactions support learning, hard work, and the precise use of language.</p>	<p>The classroom culture is a cognitively busy place, characterized by a shared belief in the importance of learning. The teacher conveys high expectations for learning for all students and insists on hard work; students assume responsibility for high quality by initiating improvements, making revisions, adding detail, and/or assisting peers in their precise use of language.</p>

<p align="center"><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p align="center"><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of the content</li> <li>- Expectations for learning and achievement</li> <li>- Student pride in work</li> </ul>	
<p>+</p>	<p>△</p>

**2c. Managing Classroom Procedures**

**Example 1**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>Much instructional time is lost due to inefficient classroom routines and procedures. There is little or no evidence of the teacher’s managing instructional groups and transitions and/or handling of materials and supplies effectively. There is little evidence that students know or follow established routines.</p>	<p>Some instructional time is lost due to partially effective classroom routines and procedures. The teacher’s management of instructional groups and transitions, or handling of materials and supplies, or both, is inconsistent, leading to some disruption of learning. With regular guidance and prompting, students follow established routines.</p>	<p>There is little loss of instructional time due to effective classroom routines and procedures. The teacher’s management of instructional groups and transitions, or handling of materials and supplies, or both, is consistently successful. With minimal guidance and prompting, students follow established classroom routines.</p>	<p>Instructional time is maximized due to efficient and seamless classroom routines and procedures. Students take initiative in the management of instructional groups and transitions, and/or the handling of materials and supplies. Routines are well understood and may be initiated by students.</p>

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Management of instructional groups</li> <li>- Management of transitions</li> <li>- Management of materials and supplies</li> <li>- Performance of non-instructional duties</li> <li>- Supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals</li> </ul>	
<p>+</p>	<p>△</p>

**2d. Managing Student Behavior**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>There is no evidence that standards of conduct have been established and little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior. Response to student misbehavior is repressive or disrespectful of student dignity. The teacher does not reinforce positive behavior. The teacher does not address off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has significant negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>	<p>It appears that the teacher has made an effort to establish standards of conduct for students and tries to monitor student behavior and respond to student misbehavior, but these efforts are not always successful. The teacher reinforces positive behavior. The teacher addresses some off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has some negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>	<p>Standards of conduct appear to be clear to students, and the teacher monitors student behavior against those standards. The teacher's response to student misbehavior is appropriate and respectful to students. The teacher strategically reinforces positive behavior. The teacher addresses most off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has little negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>	<p>Standards of conduct are clear, with evidence of student participation in setting them. The teacher's monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive, and responses to student misbehavior are sensitive to individual student needs. Students actively monitor the standards of behavior. The teacher strategically reinforces positive behavior AND there is significant evidence that students reinforce positive classroom culture. The teacher addresses almost all off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task behavior has no negative impact on student learning.</p>

<p><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expectations</li> <li>- Monitoring of student behavior</li> <li>- Response to student misbehavior</li> </ul>	
<p><b>+</b></p>	<p><b>△</b></p>

**2e. Organizing Physical Space**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The physical environment is unsafe, or many students don't have access to learning. Alignment between the physical arrangement and the lesson activities is poor.	The classroom is safe, and essential learning is accessible to most students. The teacher may attempt to modify the physical arrangement to suit learning activities with partial success.	The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students; the teacher ensures that the physical arrangement supports the learning activities. The teacher makes effective use of physical resources.	The classroom is safe, and the physical environment ensures the learning of all students, including those with special needs. Students contribute to the use or adaptation of the physical environment to advance learning. The teacher uses technology skillfully, as appropriate to the lesson.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safety and accessibility</li> <li>- Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources</li> </ul>	
+	△

**3a. Communicating with Students**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>The purpose and relevancy of the lesson’s instructional outcome of the lesson are unclear to students and the directions and procedures are confusing. The teacher's explanation of the content contains major errors. The teacher's spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax. Vocabulary is inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly, leaving students confused.</p>	<p>The teacher's attempt to explain the purpose and relevancy of the lesson’s instructional outcomes has only limited success, and/or directions and procedures must be clarified after initial student confusion. The teacher's explanation of the content may contain minor errors; some portions are clear; other portions are difficult to follow. The teacher's explanation may consist of a monologue, with no invitation to the students for intellectual engagement. The teacher's spoken language is correct; however, vocabulary is limited or not fully appropriate to the students' ages and/or backgrounds.</p>	<p>The purpose and relevancy of the lesson’s instructional outcomes are clearly communicated to students, including where it is situated within broader learning; directions and procedures are explained clearly. The teacher's explanation of content is well scaffolded, clear and accurate, and connects with students' knowledge and experience. During the explanation of content, the teacher invites student intellectual engagement. The teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct. Vocabulary is appropriate to the students' ages and interests.</p>	<p>The teacher links the purpose and relevancy of the lesson’s instructional outcome of the lesson to students' interests; the directions and procedures are clear and anticipate possible student misunderstanding. The teacher's explanation of content is thorough and clear, developing conceptual understanding through artful scaffolding and connecting with students' interests. The students contribute to extending the content, and in explaining concepts to their classmates. The teacher's spoken and written language is expressive, and the teacher finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies.</p>

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Expectations for learning
- Directions and procedures
- Explanations of content
- Use of oral and written language

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**3b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques**

**Example 1**

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
<p>The teacher's questions are of low cognitive challenge, with single correct responses, and are asked in rapid succession. Interaction between the teacher and students is predominantly recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers; the teacher accepts all contributions without asking students to explain their reasoning. Only a few students participate in the discussion.</p>	<p>The teacher's questions lead students through a single path of inquiry, with answers seemingly determined in advance. Alternatively, the teacher attempts to ask some questions designed to engage students in thinking, but only a few students are involved. The teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, to encourage them to respond to one another, and to explain their thinking, with uneven results.</p>	<p>While the teacher may use some low-level questions, he poses questions designed to promote student thinking and understanding. The teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, providing adequate time for students to respond and stepping aside when doing so is appropriate. The teacher challenges students to justify their thinking and successfully engages most students in the discussion, employing a range of strategies to ensure that most students are heard.</p>	<p>The teacher uses a variety or series of questions or prompts to challenge students cognitively, advance high-level thinking and discourse, and promote metacognition. Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, challenge one another's thinking, and make unsolicited contributions. Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.</p>

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Quality of questions
- Discussion techniques
- Student participation

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△

+	△

**3c. Engaging Students in Learning**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>The learning tasks and activities, materials, resources, instructional groups and/or technology are poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes or require only rote responses. The pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed. Few students are intellectually engaged or interested.</p>	<p>The learning tasks or prompts are partially aligned with the instructional outcomes but require only minimal thinking by students, allowing most students to be passive or merely compliant. Learning activities are not sufficiently challenging and lack the rigor to promote intellectual engagement. The pacing of the lesson may not provide students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>	<p>The learning tasks and activities are aligned with the instructional outcomes and are designed to challenge student thinking, resulting in active intellectual engagement by most students with important and challenging content, and with teacher scaffolding to support that engagement. The pacing of the lesson is appropriate, providing most students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>	<p>Virtually all students are intellectually engaged in challenging content, through well-designed learning tasks, and suitable scaffolding by the teacher, and fully aligned with the instructional outcomes. There is evidence of some student initiation of inquiry, and student contributions to the exploration of important content. The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to intellectually engage with and reflect upon their learning and to consolidate their understanding. Students may have some choice in how they complete tasks and may serve as resources for one another.</p>

<p><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activities and assignments</li> <li>- Grouping of students</li> <li>- Instructional materials and resources</li> <li>- Structure and pacing</li> </ul>	
<p>+</p>	<p>△</p>

**3d. Using Assessment in Instruction**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
Assessment is not used in instruction, either through monitoring of progress by the teacher or students, or through feedback to students; students are unaware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is occasionally used in instruction, through some monitoring of progress of learning by teacher and/or students. Feedback to students is uneven, and students are aware of only some of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is regularly used in instruction, through self-assessment by students, monitoring of progress of learning by the teacher and/or students, and high-quality feedback to students. Students are fully aware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work. Formative assessments provide students with multiple ways to demonstrate mastery and are woven into the lesson in a seamless fashion.	Assessment is fully integrated in a sophisticated manner in instruction through student involvement in establishing the assessment criteria, self-assessment by students, monitoring of progress by both students and teachers, and high-quality feedback to students from a variety of sources. Formative assessments provide students with multiple ways and multiple opportunities during the unit to demonstrate mastery and are woven into the lesson in a seamless fashion.

**What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?**

**Elements**

- Assessment criteria
- Monitoring of student learning
- Feedback to students
- Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress

+

△

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**3e. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness**

**Example 2**

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
The teacher adheres to the instruction plan, even when a change would improve the lesson or address students' needs. The teacher brushes aside student questions. The teacher does not accept responsibility for students' performance. The teacher does not re-teach.	The teacher attempts to modify the lesson when needed and to respond to student questions with moderate success however alternate instructional strategies are limited and minimally successful. The teacher accepts responsibility for student performance. In response to student progress data, the teacher re-teaches, as appropriate.	The teacher promotes the successful learning of all students, making adjustments as needed to instruction plans and accommodating student questions, needs, and interests. In response to student progress data, the teacher 1) re-teaches, as appropriate, and 2) modifies long-term plans, as appropriate.	The teacher seizes an opportunity to enhance learning, building on a spontaneous event or student interests. The teacher ensures the success of all students, using an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies. In response to student progress data, the teacher 1) re-teaches, as appropriate, 2) modifies long-term plans, as appropriate, and 3) modifies practice, as appropriate.

<p align="center"><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p align="center"><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lesson adjustment</li> <li>- Response to students</li> <li>- Persistence</li> </ul>	
+	△

**4a. Reflecting on Teaching**

**Example 2**

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
The teacher does not accurately assess the effectiveness of the lesson and has no ideas about how the lesson could be improved.	The teacher provides a partially accurate and objective description of the lesson but does not cite specific evidence. The teacher makes only general suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher provides an accurate and objective description of the lesson, citing specific evidence. The teacher makes some specific suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher's reflection on the lesson is thoughtful and accurate, citing specific evidence. The teacher draws on an extensive repertoire to suggest alternative strategies and predicts the likely success of each.

<p align="center"><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p align="center"><b><u>Elements</u></b>                      - Accuracy                      - Use in future teaching</p>	
<p align="center">+</p>	<p align="center">Δ</p>

**4b. Maintaining Accurate Records**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are either nonexistent or in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.	The teacher's system for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records is rudimentary and only partially effective.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are accurate, efficient, and effective.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are accurate, efficient, and effective. Students contribute to the maintenance of these systems.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<b><u>Elements</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student completion of assignments</li> <li>- Student progress in learning</li> <li>- Non-instructional records</li> </ul>	
<b>+</b>	<b>Δ</b>

**4c. Communicating with Families**

**Example 1**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher provides little information about the instructional program to families; the teacher's communication about students' progress is minimal. The teacher does not respond, or responds insensitively, to parental concerns.	The teacher makes sporadic attempts to communicate with families about the instructional program and about the progress of individual students but does not attempt to engage families in the instructional program. Moreover, the communication that does take place may not be culturally sensitive to those families.	The teacher provides frequent and appropriate information to families about the instructional program and conveys information about individual student progress in a culturally sensitive manner. The teacher makes some attempts to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher communicates frequently with families in a culturally sensitive manner, with students contributing to the communication. The teacher responds to family concerns with professional and cultural sensitivity. The teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information about the instructional program</li> <li>- Information about individual students</li> <li>- Engagement of families in the instructional program</li> </ul>	
+	△

**4d. Participating in a Professional Community**

**Example 1**

Unsatisfactory	Progressing	Effective	Highly Effective
The teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving. The teacher avoids participation in a professional culture of inquiry, resisting opportunities to become involved. The teacher avoids becoming involved in school events or school and district projects.	The teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires. The teacher participates in the school's culture of professional inquiry when invited to do so. The teacher participates in school events and school and district projects when specifically asked.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation; the teacher actively participates in a culture of professional inquiry. The teacher volunteers to participate in school events and in school and district projects, making a substantial contribution.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation, with the teacher taking initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty. The teacher takes a leadership role in promoting a culture of professional inquiry. The teacher volunteers to participate in school events and district projects, making a substantial contribution and assuming a leadership role in at least one aspect of school or district life.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationships with colleagues</li> <li>- Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service to the school</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Participation in school and district projects</li> </ul>	
+	△

**4e. Growing and Developing Professionally**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
The teacher does not participate in professional development activities and makes no effort to share knowledge with colleagues. The teacher is resistant to feedback from supervisors or colleagues.	The teacher participates in professional development activities that are convenient or are required and makes some contributions to the profession. The teacher accepts, feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development based on an individual assessment of needs and actively shares expertise with others. The teacher welcomes feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher actively pursues professional development opportunities and initiates activities to contribute to the profession. In addition, the teacher seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues.

<b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Receptivity to feedback from colleagues</li> <li>- Service to the profession</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>+</b></p>	<p><b>△</b></p>

**4f. Showing Professionalism**

**Example 2**

<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
<p>The teacher inconsistently adheres to standards for professional conduct and overall performance requirements, including attendance and punctuality. The teacher fails to comply with school and district regulations and timelines. The teacher has difficulty demonstrating respect, responsibility, honesty and integrity; requires frequent support supervision; resists feedback from colleagues and administrators and does not work cooperatively with school staff.</p>	<p>The teacher strives to adhere to standards for professional conduct and overall performance requirements, including attendance and punctuality. The teacher complies minimally with school and district regulations. The teacher strives to develop behaviors that model the values of respect, responsibility, honesty and integrity. However, he or she requires some support supervision. He or she responds appropriately to and acts upon feedback. He or she works cooperatively with school staff most of the time.</p>	<p>The teacher consistently adheres to and models standards for professional conduct and overall performance requirements, including attendance and punctuality. The teacher complies fully and voluntarily with school and district regulations. Performs with minimum of supervision. The teacher helps members of school community understand and adhere to these professional obligations, responds well to and acts upon feedback, and works cooperatively with school staff.</p>	<p>The teacher consistently adheres to standards for professional conduct and overall performance, including attendance and punctuality. The teacher complies fully and voluntarily with school and district regulations. The teacher helps members of school community understand and adhere to these professional obligations. He or she actively seeks, responds well to and acts upon feedback. Stakeholders are aware that the teacher models the values of respect, honesty and integrity. The teacher works cooperatively with school staff and actively encourages colleagues to do so.</p>

<p><b><u>What are the strengths and/or limitations of the following elements within this component?</u></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Elements</u></b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrity and ethical conduct</li> <li>- Service to students                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advocacy</li> <li>- Decision making</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Compliance with school and district regulations</li> </ul>	
<p>+</p>	<p>△</p>

APPENDIX C

Revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument

					<i>Performance Rating</i>							
					Unsatisfactory (1 point)	Progressing (2 points)	Effective (3 points)	Highly Effective (4 points)				
<b>Domain 1: Planning and Preparation (Domain weight 20%)</b>												
<b>1a. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy</b>	The teacher's plans and practice display little knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between various aspects of the content, or the instructional practices specific to that discipline.				The teacher's plans and practice reflect some awareness of the important concepts in the discipline, prerequisite relationships between them, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.				The teacher's plans and practice reflect solid knowledge of the content, prerequisite relationships between important concepts, and the instructional practices specific to that discipline.			
<b>Elements include:</b> Knowledge of content and the structure of the discipline Knowledge of prerequisite relationships Knowledge of content-related pedagogy					<b>Evidence:</b>							
<b>1b. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students</b>	The teacher demonstrates little or no knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and does not seek such understanding when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.				The teacher indicates an understanding of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and uses this knowledge for the class as a whole when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.				The teacher actively seeks knowledge of students' backgrounds, cultures, skills, learning levels/styles, language proficiencies, interests, and special needs, and uses this knowledge for groups of students when planning instructional activities and selecting resources and strategies.			
<b>Elements include:</b> Knowledge of child and adolescent behavior Knowledge of the learning process and students' special needs Knowledge of students' skills, knowledge and language proficiency Knowledge of students' interests and cultural heritage					<b>Evidence:</b>							

<b>Performance Rating</b>				
	<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>
<b>1c. Setting Instructional Outcomes</b>	The teacher develops general student achievement goals for the class OR does not develop a goal at all. Instructional outcomes, in both plans and practice, reflected in the lesson design are unsuitable for students, represent trivial or low-level learning, or are stated only as activities. They do not permit viable methods of assessment.	The teacher develops measurable student achievement goals for the class in both plans and practice. Instructional outcomes reflected in the lesson design are of moderate rigor and are suitable for some students, but consist of a combination of activities and goals, some of which permit viable methods of assessment.	The teacher develops measurable student achievement goals for the class that are aligned to content standards and evident in both plans and practice. Instructional outcomes reflected in the lesson design are stated as goals reflecting rigorous learning and curriculum standards. Outcomes are suitable for most students in the class, represent different types of learning, and can be assessed.	The teacher develops ambitious and measurable student achievement goals for the class that are aligned to the content standards and evident in both plans and practice. Instructional outcomes reflected in lesson design are stated as goals that can be assessed, reflecting rigorous learning and curriculum standards. Outcomes represent different types of learning, offer opportunities for both coordination and integration, and take account of the needs of individual students.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Elements include:</b> Value, sequence, and alignment Clarity and balance Suitability for diverse learners		<b>Evidence:</b>		
<b>1d. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources and/or Technology</b>	The teacher demonstrates little or no awareness of resources and/or technology to enhance the lesson for student learning.	The teacher demonstrates some familiarity with resources and/or technology (as available) through the school or district to enhance the lesson for student learning.	The teacher demonstrates usage of resources and/or technology (as available) through the school or district to enhance the lesson for student learning.	The teacher demonstrates usage of resources and/or technology (as available) through the school or district to enhance the lesson for student learning. Students have the opportunity to extend their learning.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Elements include:</b> Resources for classroom use Resources for students Resources to extend content knowledge and pedagogy		<b>Evidence:</b>		

					<b>Performance Rating</b>											
					<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>								
<b>1e. Designing Coherent Instruction</b>	The series of learning activities and assignments is poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes and does not represent a coherent structure. The experiences are unsuitable for students. The teacher does not plan lessons/units by identifying the content standards that his or her students will master in each unit OR does not articulate well-designed essential questions for each unit.				The series of learning activities and assignments demonstrates partial alignment with instructional outcomes; some experiences are likely to engage students in significant learning. The lesson/unit has a recognizable structure and reflects partial knowledge of students and resources.				The teacher uses knowledge of content, students, and resources to design a series of learning activities and assignments aligned to instructional outcomes with differentiation for groups. The lesson/unit has a clear structure which allows for significant learning.				The teacher uses knowledge of content, students, and resources to design a series of learning activities and assignments aligned to instructional outcomes, with some differentiation for individual students. The lesson/unit structure is clear and may allow for different pathways according to student needs.			
	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Elements include:</b> Learning activities Instructional materials and resources Instructional groups Lesson and unit structure					<b>Evidence:</b>											
<b>1f. Designing Student Assessments</b>	Assessment procedures are not congruent with instructional outcomes; the proposed approach contains no criteria. The teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit, nor any plans to use assessment results in designing future instruction.				Assessment criteria have been developed but are unclear. Approach to the use of formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for the class as a whole.				The teacher's plan for student assessment is aligned with the instructional outcomes; assessment methodologies may have been adapted for groups of students. Assessment criteria is clear. The teacher has a well-developed strategy for using formative assessment within the lesson and has designed particular approaches to be used. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan for future instruction for groups of students.				The teacher's plan for student assessment is aligned with the instructional outcome(s). Assessment methodologies have been adapted for individual students, as needed. The approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student, as well as, teacher use of the assessment information. The teacher intends to use assessment results to plan future instruction for individual students.			
	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Elements include:</b> Congruence with instructional outcomes Criteria and standards Design of formative assessments Use for planning					<b>Evidence:</b>											

					<b>Performance Rating</b>					
					<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>		
<b>Domain 2: The Classroom Environment (Domain weight 30%)</b>										
<b>2a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>	Classroom interactions between the teacher and students and/or among students are negative, inappropriate, or insensitive to students' cultural backgrounds and are characterized by put-downs or conflict.				Classroom interactions between the teacher and students, and among students, are generally developmentally appropriate and free from conflict; but may be characterized by frequent behaviors and/or language that compromise learning.		Classroom interactions between the teacher and students, and among students, are respectful. These interactions reflect general warmth and care and are appropriate to the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.		Classroom interactions among the teacher and individual students are respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and care. These interactions show sensitivity to students' cultures and levels of development. Students monitor one another's treatment of peers.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Teacher interaction with students Student interactions with other students					<b>Evidence:</b>					
<b>2b. Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	The classroom environment conveys a negative culture for learning, characterized by low teacher commitment to the learning goals of the lesson, low expectations for student achievement, and no evidence that students believe they can succeed if they work hard.				The teacher's attempt to create a culture for learning is partially successful, with some commitment to the learning goals and modest expectations for student achievement.		The classroom culture is characterized by high expectations for most students and the belief that students can succeed when they work hard. There is a genuine commitment to the subject by the teacher and students.		Teacher and student enthusiasm for the subject create a culture of learning, in which students demonstrate through active participation, the value of the content and working hard. Students hold themselves to high standards of performance.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Importance of the content Expectations for learning and achievement					<b>Evidence:</b>					
<b>2c. Managing Classroom Procedures</b>	There is little or no evidence of the teacher managing instructional groups, transitions, and/or handling of materials/supplies effectively. There are little evidence students know or follow established routines.				The teacher's management of instructional groups, transitions, and/or handling of materials/supplies, are inconsistent, leading to some disruption of learning. With regular guidance and prompting, students follow established routines.		Efficient classroom routines and procedures have been established. The teacher's management of instructional groups, transitions, and/or handling of materials/supplies, are consistently successful. With minimal guidance and prompting, students follow established classroom routines.		Instructional time is maximized due to seamless classroom routines and procedures. Students take initiative in the management of instructional groups, transitions, and/or the handling of materials/supplies. Routines are well understood and may be initiated by students.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Management of instructional groups Management of transitions Management of materials and supplies Performance of non-instructional duties					<b>Evidence:</b>					

					<b>Performance Rating</b>															
					<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>												
<b>2d. Managing Student Behavior</b>					<p>There is no evidence that standards of conduct have been established for students. There is little or no teacher monitoring of student behavior. Response to student misbehavior is repressive or disrespectful of student dignity. The teacher does not reinforce positive behavior. The teacher does not address off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has a significant negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>				<p>The teacher has made an effort to establish standards of conduct for students. He or she tries to monitor student behavior and respond to student misbehavior although efforts may not always be successful. The teacher reinforces positive behavior. The teacher addresses some off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has some negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>				<p>Standards of conduct appear to be clear to students. The teacher monitors student behavior against those standards. The teacher's response to student misbehavior is appropriate and respectful to students. The teacher strategically reinforces positive behavior. The teacher addresses most off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently. Inappropriate and off-task student behavior has little negative impact on the learning of students in the class.</p>				<p>Standards of conduct are clear. The teacher and students' monitoring of behavior is preventive. Responses to misbehavior are respectful and sensitive to individual needs. The teacher and students reinforce positive behavior. The teacher addresses almost all off-task, inappropriate, or challenging behavior efficiently and strategically. Inappropriate and off-task behavior has no impact on the learning of other students.</p>			
					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>			
						<b>Evidence:</b>														
<b>Elements include:</b> Expectations Monitoring of student behavior Response to student misbehavior																				
<b>2e. Organizing Physical Space</b>					<p>The physical environment is unsafe, or many students don't have access to learning. Alignment between the physical arrangement and lesson activities is poor.</p>				<p>The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to most students. The teacher may attempt to modify the physical arrangement to suit learning activities with partial success.</p>				<p>The classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students. The teacher ensures the physical arrangement supports the learning activities. The teacher makes effective use of physical resources.</p>				<p>The classroom is safe, and the physical environment is conducive to the learning of all students. Students contribute (when appropriate) to the use or adaptation of the physical environment to advance learning. The teacher uses physical resources skillfully, as appropriate to the lesson.</p>			
					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>			
						<b>Evidence:</b>														
<b>Elements include:</b> Safety and accessibility Arrangement of furniture and use of physical resources																				

					<b>Performance Rating</b>											
					<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>								
<b>Domain 3: Instruction (Domain weight 40%)</b>																
<b>3a. Communicating with Students</b>	The purpose and relevance of the lesson's instructional outcomes are unclear to students. The directions and procedures are confusing. The teacher's explanation of the content contains major errors. The teacher's spoken or written language contains errors of grammar or syntax. Vocabulary is inappropriate, vague, or used incorrectly.				The purpose and relevance of the lesson's instructional outcomes are partially clear, and/or directions and procedures must be clarified after much student confusion. The teacher's explanation of the content may contain minor errors and/or no invitation to the students for intellectual engagement. The teacher's spoken language is correct; however, vocabulary is limited or not fully appropriate to the students' ages and/or experiences.				The purpose and relevance of the lesson's instructional outcomes are clearly communicated to students, including where they are situated within broader learning. Directions and procedures are explained clearly. The teacher's explanation of content is well scaffolded, clear, accurate, and connects with students' knowledge and experience. During the explanation of content, the teacher invites student intellectual engagement. The teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct. Vocabulary is appropriate to the students' ages and experiences.				The purpose and relevance of the lesson's instructional outcome(s) links students' experiences and broader learning. The directions and procedures are clear and anticipate possible student misunderstanding. The teacher's explanation of content develops conceptual understanding through scaffolding. The students contribute and explain concepts to their classmates. The teacher's spoken and written language is expressive, and he/she finds opportunities to extend students' vocabularies.			
	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Elements include:</b> Expectations for learning Directions and procedures Explanations of content Use of oral and written language					<b>Evidence:</b>											

					<b>Performance Rating</b>															
					<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>												
<b>3b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>					<p>The teacher's questions are of low cognitive challenge, with single correct responses, and are asked in rapid succession. Interaction between the teacher and students is predominantly recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers; the teacher accepts all contributions without asking students to explain their reasoning. Only a few students participate in the discussion.</p>				<p>The teacher's questions lead students through a single path of inquiry, with answers seemingly determined in advance. Alternatively, the teacher attempts to ask some questions designed to engage students in thinking, but only a few students are involved. The teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, encourage them to respond to one another, and explain their thinking, with uneven results.</p>				<p>The teacher poses questions designed to promote student thinking and understanding. The teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, providing adequate time for students to respond and stepping aside when doing so is appropriate. The teacher encourages students to justify their thinking, successfully engages most students in the discussion, and employs a range of strategies to ensure most students are participating.</p>				<p>The teacher uses a variety or series of questions or prompts to challenge students cognitively, advance high-level thinking and discourse, and promote metacognition. Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, challenge one another's thinking, and make contributions without prompting. Students themselves ensure all perspectives are recognized in the discussion.</p>			
					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>			
					<b>Evidence:</b>															
<b>3c. Engaging Students in Learning</b>					<p>The learning activities and assignments, materials, resources, instructional groups and/or technology are poorly aligned with the instructional outcomes or require only rote responses. The pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed. Few students are intellectually engaged or interested.</p>				<p>The learning activities and assignments are partially aligned with the instructional outcomes but require only minimal thinking by students, allowing most students to be passive or merely compliant. Learning activities are not sufficiently challenging and lack the rigor to promote intellectual engagement. The pacing of the lesson may not provide students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>				<p>The learning activities and assignments are designed and aligned with instructional outcomes to challenge student thinking, resulting in active intellectual engagement by most students with rigorous content, and with teacher scaffolding to support that engagement. The pacing of the lesson is appropriate, providing most students the time needed to be intellectually engaged.</p>				<p>Well-designed learning activities and assignments, aligned to instructional outcomes with suitable scaffolding by the teacher, intellectually engage and challenge nearly all students in rigorous content. The pacing of the lesson provides students the time needed to intellectually engage and reflect upon their learning. Students may have some choice in how they complete tasks and serve as resources for one another.</p>			
					<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>			
					<b>Evidence:</b>															
					<b>Elements include:</b> Quality of questions Discussion techniques Student participation															
					<b>Elements include:</b> Activities and assignments Grouping of students Instructional materials and resources Structure and pacing															

<b>Performance Rating</b>					
	<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>	
<b>3d. Using Assessment in Instruction</b>	Assessment is rarely used in instruction, either through progress monitoring by the teacher or students, or through feedback to students. Students are unaware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is occasionally used in instruction, through some progress monitoring of learning by teacher and/or students. Feedback to students is inconsistent and non-specific. Students are aware of only some of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work.	Assessment is regularly used in instruction through self-assessment by some students, progress monitoring of learning by the teacher, and consistent/specific feedback to students. Students are aware of the assessment criteria used to evaluate their work. Formative assessments provide students with multiple ways to demonstrate mastery.	Assessment is fully integrated into instruction through student involvement with establishing the assessment criteria, self-assessment by most students, and progress monitoring by students and teacher. Students make use of feedback in their learning. Formative assessments provide students with multiple ways and opportunities during the unit to demonstrate mastery.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Assessment criteria Monitoring of student learning Feedback to students Student self-assessment and monitoring of progress		<b>Evidence:</b>			
<b>3e. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness</b>	The teacher adheres to the instruction plan, even when a change would improve the lesson or address students' needs. The teacher brushes aside student questions. The teacher does not re-teach.	The teacher attempts to modify the lesson when needed and respond to student questions with moderate success; however, alternate instructional strategies are limited and minimally successful. The teacher accepts responsibility for student performance. In response to student progress data, the teacher re-teaches as appropriate.	The teacher promotes the successful learning of students by adjusting instructional plans as needed and accommodating student questions and needs. In response to student progress data, the teacher re-teaches and modifies practice as appropriate.	The teacher seizes an opportunity to enhance learning by building on spontaneous events or student experiences. The teacher seeks to ensure the success of all students using a variety of instructional strategies. In response to student progress data, the teacher re-teaches and modifies practice as appropriate.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Lesson adjustment Response to students Persistence		<b>Evidence:</b>			

<b>Performance Rating</b>					
<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>		<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>		<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>
<b>Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities (Domain weight 10%)</b>					
<b>4a. Reflecting on Teaching</b>	The teacher does not accurately assess the effectiveness of the lesson and has no concept about how the lesson could be improved.	The teacher provides a partially accurate and objective description of the lesson but does not reference specific evidence. The teacher makes only general suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher provides an accurate and objective description of the lesson, referencing specific evidence. The teacher makes some specific suggestions as to how the lesson might be improved.	The teacher's reflection on the lesson is thoughtful and accurate, referencing specific evidence. The teacher references many specific examples from the lesson, weighing the relative strengths of each.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Accuracy Use in future teaching		<b>Evidence:</b>			
<b>4b. Maintaining Accurate Records</b>	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are either nonexistent or in disarray, resulting in errors and confusion.	The teacher's system for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are rudimentary and partially efficient.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are accurate, efficient, and timely.	The teacher's systems for maintaining both instructional and non-instructional records are accurate, efficient, and timely. Students contribute to the maintenance of these systems.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Student completion of assignments Student progress in learning Non-instructional records		<b>Evidence:</b>			
<b>4c. Communicating with Families</b>	The teacher provides little to no information about the instructional program to families. The teacher's communication about students' progress is minimal. The teacher does not respond to parental concerns.	The teacher makes sporadic attempts to communicate with families about the instructional program and progress of individual students but does not attempt to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher provides appropriate information to families about the instructional program and conveys information about individual student progress. The teacher makes attempts to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher communicates student progress frequently with families. Students also contribute to the communication. The teacher responds to family concerns with professionalism. The teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are varied and responsive.	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Elements include:</b> Information about the instructional program Information about individual students Engagement of families in instructional program		<b>Evidence:</b>			

<b>Performance Rating</b>				
	<b>Unsatisfactory (1 point)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points)</b>	<b>Effective (3 points)</b>	<b>Highly Effective (4 points)</b>
<b>4d. Participating in a Professional Community</b>	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving. The teacher avoids participation in a professional culture of inquiry, resisting opportunities to become involved.	The teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires. The teacher participates in the school's culture of professional inquiry when invited to do so.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation; the teacher actively participates in a culture of professional inquiry.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation, with the teacher taking initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty. The teacher volunteers and makes a substantial contribution in school events and/or district events and projects, while assuming a leadership role in at least one aspect of school and/or district life.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Elements include:</b> Relationships with colleagues Involvement in a culture of professional inquiry Service to the school Participation in school and district projects		<b>Evidence:</b>		
<b>4e. Growing and Developing Professionally</b>	The teacher does not participate in professional development activities and makes no effort to share knowledge with colleagues. The teacher is resistant to feedback from supervisors or colleagues.	The teacher participates in professional development activities that are convenient or are required and makes some contributions to the profession. The teacher accepts feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development based on an individual assessment of needs and shares expertise with others as appropriate. The teacher welcomes feedback from supervisors and colleagues.	The teacher actively pursues professional development opportunities based on an individual assessment of needs and shares expertise with others as appropriate. In addition, the teacher seeks feedback from supervisors and colleagues.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Elements include:</b> Enhancement of content knowledge and pedagogical skill Receptivity to feedback from colleagues Service to the profession		<b>Evidence:</b>		
<b>4f. Showing Professionalism</b>	The teacher inconsistently adheres to <a href="#">Principles for Professional Conduct (Rule 6A-10.081)</a> .	The teacher strives to adhere to <a href="#">Principles for Professional Conduct (Rule 6A-10.081)</a> .	The teacher consistently adheres to <a href="#">Principles for Professional Conduct (Rule 6A-10.081)</a> .	The teacher consistently adheres to and models <a href="#">Principles for Professional Conduct (Rule 6A-10.081)</a> .
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Elements include:</b> Integrity and ethical conduct Service to students and advocacy Decision making Compliance with school and district regulations		<b>Evidence:</b>		

## APPENDIX D

### Focus Group Questions for Revision Task Force

Introduction: Welcome. Thank you for your time to share with me your perceptions of the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument during the 2018-2019 school year. The goals of the study are to describe the school district's implementation of the revised Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument, understand stakeholder perceptions of the implementation of the system, and to support every teacher's professional growth. This focus group will provide validation and detail of the school district's implementation effort. The effort will reflect on all phases of the revision process from selection of the working language for each component to making adaptations to the evaluation system to improve it.

1. What was your motivating factor in participating in the Revision Task Force?
2. What did you believe to be the most important part of the implementation process? Why?
3. What was not included in the implementation of the evaluation system that should have been?
4. How did the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system influence teacher quality? What evidence supports your response?
5. Inter-rater agreement ensures that all observers are on the same page in their ability to identify and rate observations with consistency. Do you feel that the current evaluation system is consistent among various administrators within your building? Explain.

Closing question: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Closing statement: Please remember your responses are confidential and will not be reported as a response tied to your name.

Thank you for your participation.

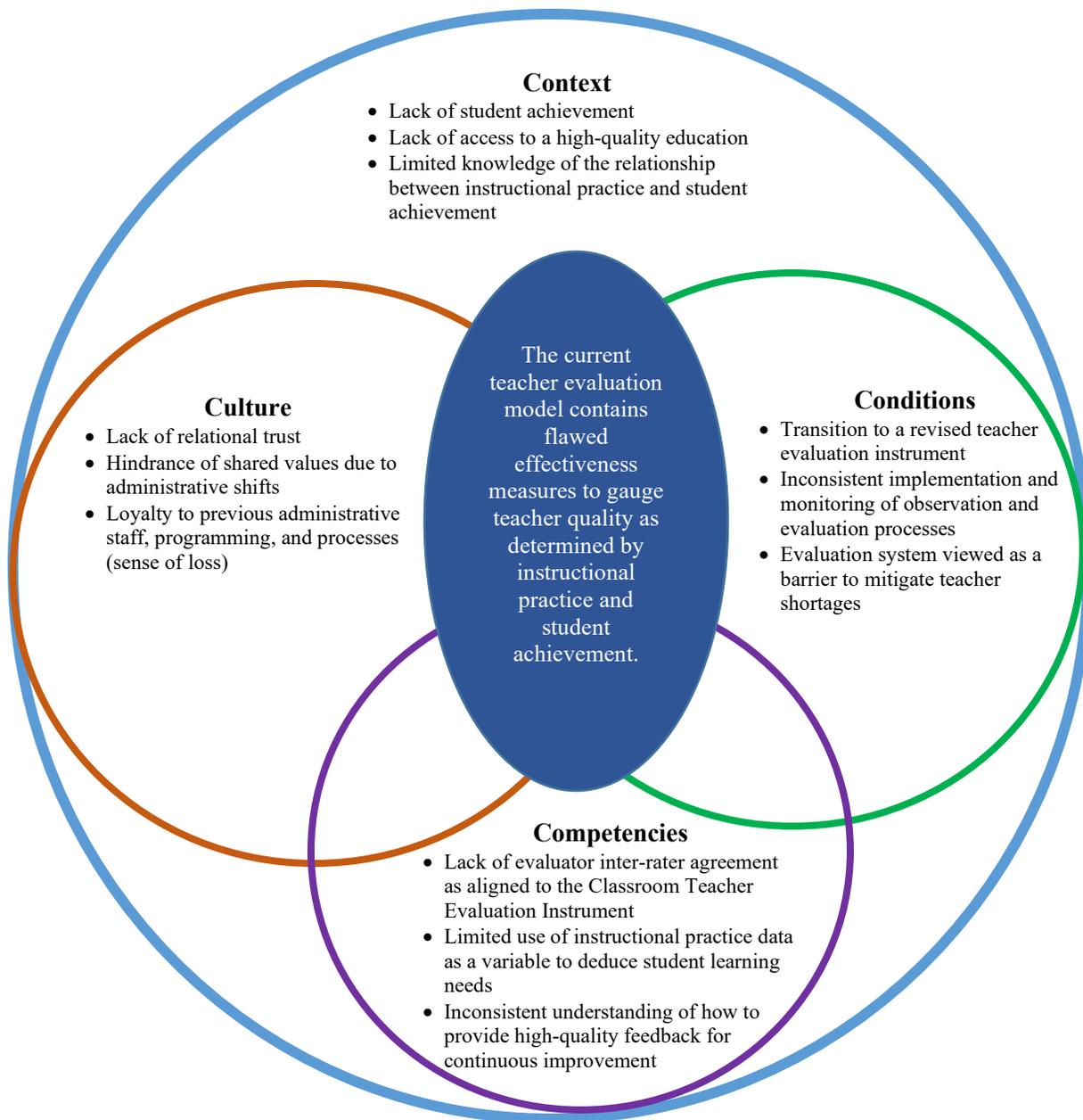
## APPENDIX E

### Likert Scale Survey - Principal's Perceptions of Fairness and Accuracy of Teacher Evaluation Procedures

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument generates an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness.				
In my experience, the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument is fair.				
The school district's informal and formal observation procedures facilitate individual feedback and opportunities for growth.				
The school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument for assessing teachers is well aligned with the school district's curriculum.				
Language within the school district's Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument allows for clear delineation between effective and ineffective teachers.				
In my experience, classroom teacher evaluation aims to enhance teacher's reflection on their practice.				
The school district's observation and evaluation procedures help improve student achievement.				
In my experience, administrators have comparable abilities to identify and rate observations with consistency.				

## APPENDIX F

### AS-IS 4Cs Analysis for an Evaluation of Teacher Effectiveness Measures



APPENDIX G

Mid-Year and End of Year Focus Group Question Responses for Revision Task Force

Question 1	Classroom Teacher				Dean	Site-Based Administrator			District Staff
	Elementary	Middle	Middle	High		Principal (Middle)	Assistant Principal (High)	Principal (High)	
Question 1: What was your motivating factor in participating in the revision task force?	Better understanding of the expectations (participant from another school district)	Look at it [rubric] more in depth; Being part of something bigger than myself so I can help other people	X	Part of school leadership, the union, and a mentor teacher; Part of previous revision process			Dig deeper into the rubric and application to different situations	Part of the previous revision process	Important to understand the rubric (participant from another state)
		Being part of the process start to finish	Make sure voice was being heard	X		X	Better able to address teacher questions		Comparison to experience in another state

Question 2	Classroom Teacher				Dean	Site-Based Administrator			District Staff
	Elementary	Middle	Middle	High		Principal (Middle)	Assistant Principal (High)	Principal (High)	
Question 2: What did you believe to be the most important part of the implementation process? Why do you feel that way?	Task force were able to voice concerns in an equal way	The smaller task force that met face-to face to dissect it [rubric]; Talking from diverse perspectives [teacher, dean, administrator]; Invitation to participate in the process inconsistent across school sites	X	Agreed with Dean; Participation changed the tenor against naysayers	Having every stakeholder involved; Making sure everybody had a voice	Teachers felt valued and represented, Having a voice in the process	Face-to-face collaboration to document strengths and limitations of language; Opportunity for teacher input		
				X	Brought all stakeholders in from day one	X		Agreed with Dean; Knowledge made it easier to defend changes	Teamwork of individuals across the district

Question 3	Classroom Teacher				Dean	Site-Based Administrator			District Staff
	Elementary	Middle	Middle	High		Principal (Middle)	Assistant Principal (High)	Principal (High)	
Question 3: What was not included in the implementation of the evaluation system that should have been?	Trust and relationships need to be factored in	Consistency pushing out the new rubric at the start of the school year	X			A mandated face-to-face class allowing for questions to asked	A district-initiated video explaining the process; Score sheet in TNL to calculate submitted ratings in real time	Tools to guide administrators on various aspects of the observation process	
	More district-led professional development	More professional development	Strategic collaboration with other instructional personnel in scope of content expertise	X	Mandates have everyone strapped for time	X		Targeted, relevant, and differentiated professional development for administrators (novice and veteran)	

Question 4	Classroom Teacher				Dean	Site-Based Administrator			District Staff
	Elementary	Middle	Middle	High		Principal (Middle)	Assistant Principal (High)	Principal (High)	
<b>Question 4: How did the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system influence teacher quality? What evidence supports your response?</b>	The rubric must be placed in front of teachers at a face-to-face meeting	Increased my quality as a committee member	X		Reference the rubric during professional development and collaborative planning, but not consistent across sites			Need opportunities to speak with peers about relevant instructional practice	
	Established relationships with administrators is an important variable to consider when looking at the impact of the evaluation system	A few teachers taking it upon themselves, but as a group minimal change; Need opportunities to observe instruction (broaden the perspective beyond four walls of the classroom)	Veteran teachers only look to the rubric in instances they disagree with an evaluator's rating	X		X	Opportunity to have conversations to share what's going on in classrooms	Provided teachers with a safe space to ask questions regarding instructional practice	Studied the rubric more to have conversations with administrators

**Question 5**

	Classroom Teacher				Dean	Site-Based Administrator			District Staff
	Elementary	Middle	Middle	High		Principal (Middle)	Assistant Principal (High)	Principal (High)	
<p><b>Question 5: Inter-rater reliability ensures that all observers are on the same page in their ability to identify and rate observations with consistency. Do you feel that the current evaluation system is consistent among various administrators within your building? Explain.</b></p>		Only evaluated by 1/3 administrators on campus (unsure if it is reliable)	X		No				Multiple evaluators were great because it provided different perspectives
		Inconsistencies with program implementations leads to the assumptions; Inter-rater reliability is lacking with evaluations	Going to take a couple years to see if site-based administration is consistent	X		X	Experience on the task force brought perspective to administrative decision-making		It takes time to build and establish trusting relationships
	Mid-Year Focus Group Responses								
	End of Full Implementation Year Focus Group								
X	Not Present for Focus Group								

## APPENDIX H

### Pre-Observation Conference Guide: Classroom Teacher

<p><u>Introduction and Greeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the tone.</li> <li>• Verify dates and times for the observation and post-observation conference.</li> <li>• Review the summary conference process.</li> </ul> <p style="color: red;">A couple protocols that I would like to share with you now are that this pre-conference process will be used to rate Domain 1. Also, I will be taking notes today, just as I will during your lesson and during the post-conference.</p> <p style="color: red;">Before I ask you some questions about the upcoming lesson, do you have any questions about the formal observation cycle?</p>
<p><b><u>Learning Goals and Objectives</u></b></p>
<p>1. <u>What is/are your lesson objective(s)?</u> (1a and 1c)</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>*Clearly stated objective of what students will learn and be able to do</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you determine these goal(s) and objective(s)?</li> <li>• Where are you in relation to presenting this content on the spectrum of initial delivery and mastery?</li> <li>• How do you plan to communicate the learning objective to students?</li> <li>• How much time are you spending on these goal(s) and objective(s)?</li> </ul>
<p>2. <u>How is/are the lesson objective(s) aligned with state curriculum standards?</u> (1a, 1c)</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>*Relationship between the lesson objective to district curriculum and state standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where does this lesson fall in relationship to the curriculum map?</li> </ul>
<p>3. <u>What data did you use to design this lesson? How did the data influence the planning of this lesson?</u> (1b, 1c, 1f)</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>*Evidence how student data is collected and used to design the observed lesson</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of background knowledge do you think students need to have for this lesson?</li> <li>• What sources of student data did you use to determine student performance levels?</li> <li>• How have you become familiar with students' background knowledge, skill levels, experiences, and cultural resources?</li> <li>• Talk me through how you utilized students' learning needs when determining how to teach this/these concept(s)?</li> <li>• What difficulties or misunderstandings might students have? How have you planned for those?</li> <li>• What are some of the ways you will make learning relevant to students?</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Assessment</u></b></p>
<p>4. <u>How will you know if your lesson objective(s) was/were achieved?</u> (1f)</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>*Techniques/methods used by the teacher and students to monitor and assess student learning of the objective (s) during the lesson</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you plan to provide feedback to students?</li> <li>• How will students be assessed by both the teacher and by the students themselves?</li> <li>• Where have you built in time for student reflection and self-assessment in your lesson?</li> <li>• What are some questions you plan to ask students during the lesson?</li> <li>• How do you expect students to respond to questions – whole class? Individual?</li> <li>• Are there opportunities in the lesson for students to generate questions that would encourage them to think?</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should I expect to see the students/teacher doing during this lesson?</li> <li>• What will success look like to me as an observer?</li> <li>• How did you formulate your check for understanding and what did you do with the information that resulted?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Instructional Strategies and Activities</u></b>
<p>5. <u>What teaching strategies will you use to teach this lesson? What resources will be utilized?</u> (1a, 1d)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you model or explain clear expectations for students' learning?</li> <li>• How will each task/activity promote rigorous thinking?</li> <li>• How will students be grouped for learning? How is the grouping related to the intended concepts and habits?</li> <li>• How will differentiated assistance be provided to individual students, struggling students as well as those needing an extra challenge?</li> <li>• How will you know when to move from one activity to the next?</li> <li>• Are there parts of the lesson where you plan to evoke curiosity, exploration, and discovery?</li> <li>• Are you using visual aids to help enhance student understanding?</li> <li>• Choose one activity and talk about the way you plan on presenting this to your students.</li> </ul>
<p>6. <u>Why did you use these strategies and resources?</u> (1a, 1b, 1d) <i>*Theories of learning and teaching</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did you choose the strategy _____?</li> <li>• Could you tell me more about the varying learning styles you mentioned?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Connecting Learning</u></b>
<p>7. <u>What is the academic relationship between this lesson with past or future lessons (Why this lesson? Why now?)</u> (1a, 1e)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where does the lesson fall within the continuum of learning?</li> <li>• How are you planning to connect what students will learn to what they have previously learned?</li> <li>• How will you determine students' retention and ongoing application of learning from this lesson?</li> </ul>
<b><u>Other</u></b>
<p>8. <u>Please explain any special situations or circumstances of which the observer might need to be aware.</u> <i>*Pertinent and relevant information</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me a little bit more about your group of students. (the dynamic)</li> <li>• I see that you listed some specific information about your students in your room. Is there anything else you would like to share with me in regards to these students?</li> </ul>
<p>9. <u>The observer will provide feedback on this lesson. Are there specific areas you would like the observer to look for/focus on?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will be sharing lesson feedback with you during the post conference. Is there a specific area you would like me to focus on?</li> </ul>
<p><u>Closing</u> After the observation I will share areas of strength, areas for focus, and possible next steps that facilitate continuous improvement, professional growth, and student achievement.</p>

## APPENDIX I

### Post-Observation Discussion Guide: Classroom Teacher

<p><u>Introduction and Greeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the tone.</li> <li>• Review the summary conference process.</li> </ul> <p>The post-conference is the culminating phase of the formal observation cycle, and evidence is still being collected to determine and finalize ratings. Today I will be asking you to reflect on the lesson and the lesson's impact on student learning so that we may collaboratively come up with areas of strength, areas for focus, and next steps. Your reflection today will impact the rating of component 4a. Reflecting on Teaching.</p>
<p><u>Discussion: Guiding Questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your lesson plan indicated a goal of _____. Were you and your students successful? (If yes) What made you/them successful? (If no) What happened that prevented you/your students from being successful?</li> <li>• What data support your answer to the previous question?</li> <li>• What do you feel worked well and what would you refine if you were to teach this lesson again to the same class?</li> <li>• Were there any surprises about how your students responded to the lesson/task/activities?</li> <li>• Based on student learning of your objectives, what are your next steps?</li> <li>• As you reflect on this observation cycle, what ideas or insights are you discovering about your teaching?</li> </ul>
<p><u>Areas of Strength</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share strengths of the lesson and provide specific evidence. During your lesson, I noticed [specific strategy] and as a result [present data related to student mastery of the objective.]</li> <li>• Prompt the observed employee to talk about one strength you want to reinforce. Elicit feedback to explain why the skill is critical to student learning.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Probing and Clarifying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share noticings and wonderings to facilitate the necessary evidence collection to determine ratings.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Areas for Focus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share areas for focus and provide specific evidence from the observation. Example: I noticed 15 out of 18 students had their hand raised, and only five had the opportunity to share ideas. Example: Three students had the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the objective at the board during the observation.</li> <li>• Recommend actions to improve practice (e.g. coaching cycles, peer observation, lesson modeling).</li> </ul>
<p><u>Closing and Follow-up</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss next steps for continuous improvement.</li> <li>• When would be best to observe your implementation of [specific strategy]?</li> <li>• Are there any questions you have for me at this time?</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX J

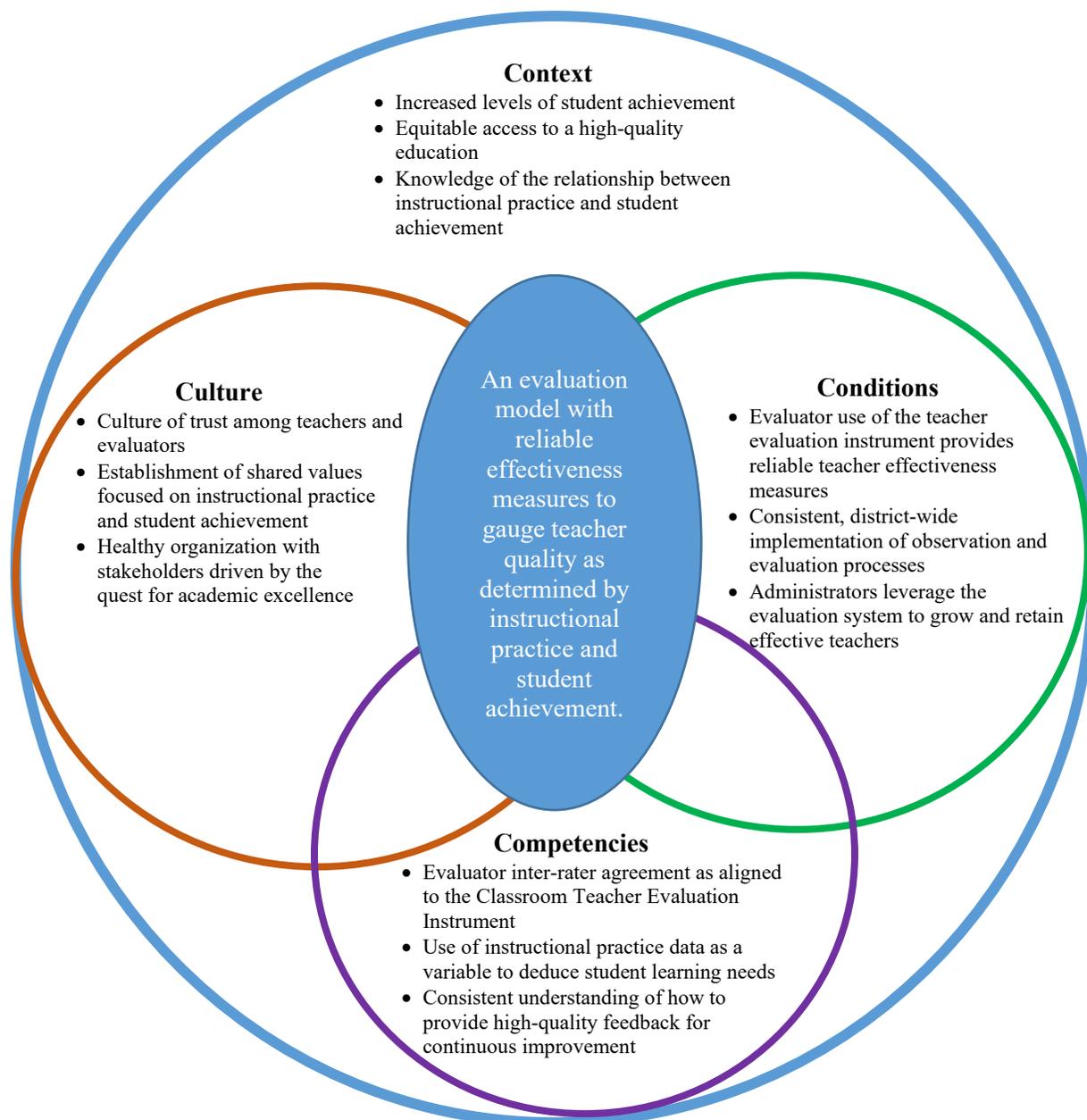
**Coached Evaluator Credentialing Tool for New Administrators  
Lesson Observation**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Element</b> (Check all Met by Trainee)
<b>Interacts with Students</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Works unobtrusively in the classroom</b> Does not interrupt instructions, uses appropriate voice/tone <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Obtains appropriate evidence from students</b> Questions target specific components, questions are meaningful and appropriate, does not lead students <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Strategically chooses students</b> Circulates room, utilizes various sources of students
<b>Scripts Evidence</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Captures Cause/Effect Relationship</b> Scripting of teacher/student evidence is even, connections made between related pieces of data <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Scripts evidence in a purposeful manner</b> Evidence is specific to the observed lesson, no extraneous information <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Aligns evidence with framework components</b> Makes connections between evidence collected and specific components of the evaluation framework
<b>Rates Accurately</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Uses preponderance of evidence</b> Collects sufficient evidence to justify rating, does not rely on a single piece of evidence to support rating <input type="checkbox"/> <b>7/10 ratings align with the trainer</b> Components Domains 2 and 3 only <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Does not differ by more than one (1) performance measure on two (2) components</b>
<b>Summarizes Observational Data</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Identifies areas of strength</b> Areas are identified and prioritized accurately at time of debrief with the trainer <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Identifies areas for focus</b> Areas are identified and prioritized accurately at time of debrief with the trainer <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Justifies areas of strength and focus as related to evidence</b>

<b>Observation Credentialing Summary</b>	
<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth</b>
<b>Next Steps:</b>	

## APPENDIX K

### TO-BE 4Cs Analysis for an Evaluation of Teacher Effectiveness Measures



## APPENDIX L

### Strategies and Actions Chart

Strategies	Actions
Establish a Sense of Urgency to Revise a Flawed Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District and site-based administrators will determine if the language in the existing instrument reflects sound educational principles and provides evaluators and observed personnel with clear delineations of instructional practice performance measures.</li> <li>• Engage in honest stakeholder discussions to determine the reliability of instructional practice data in relation to student achievement.</li> </ul>
Create the Guiding Coalition for Transformation of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the opportunity to contribute and collaborate on the rubric transformation journey to all instructional stakeholders.</li> <li>• Establish a Rubric Revision Task Force with key individuals representing evaluators and various instructional perspectives.</li> </ul>
Develop a Vision and Strategy for Equitable Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals serving on the Rubric Revision Task Force will serve as agents to represent the collective perspectives and will not allow personal motivations to cloud the discussion.</li> <li>• The Rubric Revision Task Force will address only the documented strengths and limitations of component language.</li> </ul>
Communicating the Change Vision through Centralized Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly outline all expectations pertaining to observation and evaluation in an accessible, published resource.</li> <li>• Engage in a standing, monthly dialogue with a representative for the teacher's collective bargaining union to place value on the incorporation of diverse groups involved in policy development.</li> </ul>
Empower Employees for Broad-Based Action through Targeted Learning Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District leadership will design and implement professional development experiences to provide classroom teachers with a foundational understanding of the Classroom Teacher Evaluation Instrument and accompanying processes of evaluation.</li> <li>• Prior to conducting observation and evaluations, district leadership will require site-based and district evaluators to participate in an overview session detailing proper use of the evaluation criteria and procedures.</li> </ul>

Generate Short-Term Wins by Understanding Clarity Precedes Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the evaluator behaviors in need of clarification as well as the evaluator behaviors reinforcing evaluator competence.</li> <li>• Monitor observation completion status reports to recognize change agents.</li> </ul>
Consolidate Gains and Produce More Change Through Differentiated Evaluator Learning Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District leaders will promote inter-rater agreement through small group calibration opportunities as a structure for authentic progress monitoring and sharing of barriers/potential pockets of resistance</li> <li>• District leaders will invest in the instructional performance evaluation system as a tool for improving student achievement through increasing the effectiveness of teaching quality.</li> </ul>
Anchor New Approaches in a Culture of Collective Efficacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation system will promote teacher engagement in cycles of continuous improvement, producing the powerful cumulative effect of student achievement gains.</li> <li>• School district stakeholders will ensure that every child learns from the most effective teacher possible.</li> </ul>