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Kelly D. Marchiando  
May 2013

THE INFLUENCE OF ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS ON THE TEACHER  
APPRAISAL PROCESS

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the  
Faculty of the College of Education  
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education  
in Professional Leadership

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May 2013

## Dedication

To my husband, Chris Marchiando; your undying commitment and support have allowed me to realize this dream. You have always seen my potential and encouraged me to further my education, and even in my moments of greatest doubt, you pushed me forward with words of encouragement. You have sacrificed so much in order for me to be able to accomplish this goal. You are my best friend, soul mate, and coach. I love you more than you can ever imagine. For your love and patience throughout this process, I thank you.

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## Abstract

The appraisal system and perceptions surrounding the appraisal system in a medium sized suburban school district in southeast Texas were examined in this investigation. The specific purpose of this study was to reveal how administrator perceptions influence the appraisal process. Information gained from this study may be helpful in determining the validity of the appraisal instrument regarding teacher effectiveness as well as its use as a predictor of student achievement. In addition, results of the study may influence related research concerning evaluation and supervision and the extent to which the current evaluation system serves its intended purpose. A descriptive analysis of both survey results and interview responses served to identify administrator perceptions regarding the appraisal process and how those perceptions influenced the implementation of the appraisal instrument. Recommendations for campus and district leaders for improving the implementation of the appraisal process are included in this study. Recommendations include examining models that work in neighboring districts and across the state and nation in order to make change based on those findings. Furthermore, central administration must create a vision that provides a clearly defined purpose for the teacher appraisal process. Campus leadership must be provided the training and the support to implement the district's vision. A system of accountability must be developed in order to ensure consistency among campus leadership teams across the district.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **Introduction**

The appraisal system and perceptions surrounding the appraisal system in a medium sized suburban school district in southeast Texas were examined in this investigation. The specific purpose of this study was to reveal how administrator perceptions influence the appraisal process. Information gained from this study may be helpful in determining the validity of the appraisal instrument regarding teacher effectiveness as well as its use as a predictor of student achievement. In addition, results of the study may influence related research concerning evaluation and supervision and the extent to which the current evaluation system serves its intended purpose. A descriptive analysis of both survey results and interview responses will serve to identify administrator perceptions regarding the appraisal process and how those perceptions influence the implementation of the appraisal instrument.

### **BACKGROUND**

Ongoing debate exists regarding the idea of teacher appraisal systems and the extent to which they serve the intended purpose of professionally developing teachers to improve instruction as well as to evaluate teacher performance. Furthermore, extensive controversy is present regarding the notion that teacher appraisal ratings should be tied to student achievement. Administrators across the State of Texas serve a dual role with regard to teacher supervision. One aspect involves documenting teacher behaviors and forming judgments about teacher performance based on those behaviors and student achievement results. The other aspect is more of an instructional role wherein administrators provide an opportunity for professional growth based on individual needs of teachers without judgment (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Gleave (1997) described

this dual role as the supervision dichotomy; “school administrators need bifocal vision to effectively observe their dual focuses—appraisal and development of teacher performance” (p. 270).

Goens and Lange (1983) noted that supervision served two distinct purposes: supervision as developmental leadership and supervision as management appraisal. They implied that the two distinct purposes of supervision enabled the creation of two distinctly different systems. Currently, in the State of Texas as well as many other states across the nation, a single state adopted appraisal system is present and serves a dual purpose of evaluation and professional development of teachers as opposed to two distinctly different systems in which two distinctly different purposes are served (Goens & Lange, 1983).

Further discussion surrounding the topic is the notion that the conflicting role of the appraiser poses a barrier to the purpose of the appraisal system. With the implementation of No Child Left Behind Act in 2002 defining acceptable performance for students, a heightened awareness exists regarding how teacher effectiveness influences student achievement. Extensive documentation exists that effective teachers have the potential to influence student achievement positively. Ongoing debate is present, however, regarding what constitutes an effective teacher as well as how student achievement is tied to teacher effectiveness. Therefore the role of the appraiser in determining teacher effectiveness becomes contingent upon the appraiser’s beliefs and perceptions surrounding the appraisal instrument itself and its use as a tool to measure teacher effectiveness.

Ebmeier (2003) conducted a study in which he analyzed the link between supervision and teacher efficacy to gain an understanding of “how supervision of teachers influences individual teacher efficacy” (p. 19). Ebmeier (2003) examined the idea that principal supervision in the form of classroom observation in and of itself does not directly influence individual teacher efficacy.

This implies that formal and often ritualized teacher evaluation practices common across many school districts are of little value in building teacher-principal relationships that lead to improvement of instructional practices. Only when the principal engages in activities that actively demonstrate commitment to teaching is there any real hope of building trust, increasing teacher commitment, and building individual teacher efficacy. In effect, the supervision practices common in our schools do not seem to be directly connected to any of the variables that influence individual teacher instructional improvement. This partly explains the widespread disdain teachers generally have for teacher evaluation practices. (Ebmeier, 2003, pp. 19-20)

In a recent article, Donaldson (2010) discussed barriers to the effectiveness of the appraisal system. In the article, Donaldson (2010) contended that one barrier was the skill level of the evaluator. Some evaluators lack specific content knowledge needed to provide adequate feedback to teachers. Furthermore, a lack of accountability is present for evaluators to conduct rigorous evaluations, resulting in inadequate feedback provided to teachers (Donaldson, 2010).

One added hurdle in the appraisal process is the perception of the administrator using the appraisal instrument. The perceptions of these administrations directly influence the manner in which that instrument is implemented. In addition, teacher perceptions regarding the appraisal process influence the effectiveness of the instrument to serve as a tool for growth, which ultimately impacts student achievement.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Research efforts to ascertain consistent measures for effective teacher behaviors as they relate to student achievement have been ongoing. “School administrators need bifocal vision to effectively observe their dual focuses—appraisal and development of teacher performance” (Gleave, 1997, p. 270). In essence, administrators must examine teacher behavior both from an evaluative perspective as well as from a professional growth perspective. This examination requires adequate knowledge of both delivery of instruction and content in order to evaluate behavior as well as possessing the quality of relational capacity in order to facilitate professional growth. A lack of accountability for administrators to conduct rigorous evaluations results in inadequate feedback provided to teachers (Donaldson, 2010). In fact, revealed in the RAND study was “nearly all respondents felt that principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate effectively” (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984, p. 22). Many critics believe “the teacher evaluation system fails to differentiate performance among teachers, thereby ignoring teacher effectiveness” (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009, p. 6).

Both at the state level and at the national level, efforts to improve public school accountability have increased. Several states require districts to use specific appraisal

instruments to measure teacher effectiveness. In the State of Texas, specifically, one indicator of teacher effectiveness is student achievement. However, several factors influence the validity of those instruments in determining teacher effectiveness as it relates to student achievement. Therefore, the validity of the appraisal instrument is questionable when examining administrator perceptions and how those perceptions influence the implementation of the instrument.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The George W. Bush Administration made dramatic amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which resulted in the introduction of the No Child Left Behind (2002) Act. It was at this time that a shift occurred from simply providing educational equity to defining acceptable performance for all student groups and requiring that all states implement performance measures (Terry, 2010). The federal government's attempt to hold states accountable for student learning resulted in the development of and/or redesign of teacher appraisal systems in states across the nation.

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of administrators regarding the TOP Review process in a medium sized suburban school district, and to determine to what extent those perceptions influenced the validity of the TOP Review in providing an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness as well as serving as a tool for teacher growth. The findings of this study may influence further research concerning the link between student achievement, as measured by the state assessment and teacher evaluation ratings, as measured by the Teacher Objectives and Proficiency Review.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. What are administrators' perceptions of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process?
2. How do administrators' perceive the effectiveness of the evaluation process?
3. Do administrators perceive the appraisal process as serving the dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth?
4. What are the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review Part I?

Archival data to address the preceding questions included a district administered survey to administrators, cognitive interviews conducted with eight high school administrators, and district TOP Review data.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Through this investigation, data will be provided that could influence teacher supervision and professional growth, not only at a local level, but at the state and national levels as well. Administrator perceptions may serve either to validate or to invalidate the appraisal instrument's ability to predict teacher effectiveness accurately as well as to serve as a tool for professional growth. Findings, in turn, may influence the manner in which districts plan and implement professional development opportunities for both administrators and teachers. Furthermore, barriers may be revealed with regard to the consistency of the appraisal process itself within the district, from orientating teachers of the appraisal system to providing a common language in the feedback that is provided to teachers. The implication of these findings may force stakeholders to question, not only

the purpose of the appraisal instrument itself, but also the role of administrators and teachers in teacher supervision and public school accountability.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The study will be presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 consists of an introduction to the study, followed by the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 will include a review of the literature surrounding the topic. Not only will a theoretical framework be established for the topic itself, but relevant information that serves as a foundation for the development of this study will be provided. Chapter 3 will include the design of the study, including variables, instruments, participants, and procedures. Also in Chapter 3 will be the limitations to the study. Chapter 4 will contain the findings of the study and a detailed analysis of the results. Chapter 5 will be comprised of the researcher's interpretation of the results and implications of the study. Furthermore, implications of this study's findings regarding future research and current practice will be present in Chapter 5.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

1. Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) – recommended appraisal system for the state of Texas consisting of 51 evaluation criteria organized into eight domains for the purpose of evaluating teacher performance in the areas of (1) teachers' implementation of discipline management procedures and (2) the performance of teachers' students. The eight domains are as follows:
  - Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process



- Domain II: Learner-Centered Instruction
  - Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress
  - Domain IV: Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time and Materials
  - Domain V: Professional Communication
  - Domain VI: Professional Development
  - Domain VII: Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements
  - Domain VIII: Improvement of Academic Performance of all Students on the Campus
2. Teacher Objectives and Proficiency Review (TOP) – locally adopted appraisal system developed in accordance with Texas Education Code, Section 21.351 and Section 21.352 which consists of 28 evaluation criteria organized into eight domains for the purpose of evaluating teacher performance.
  3. High Stakes Testing – when data from statewide standardized testing are “used not only as assessment information about students’ progress, but also as a way to ‘grade’ schools, draw inferences about teachers, and provide typical one-time incentives to school districts to reform” (Duplass, 2006, p. 264).
  4. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act - federal mandate enacted by the George W. Bush Administration in 2002 in which states were required to implement performance measures for student achievement.
  5. Race to the Top (RTT) – a United States federal program in which states are awarded grants based on successful systemic reform in education. Grants are

awarded to schools who demonstrate a commitment to educational reform in the following areas:

- Designing and implementing a system of rigorous academic standards aimed to prepare students for college and career as well as high quality assessments that can adequately measure student achievement.
  - Preparing, recruiting, retaining, and rewarding high quality teachers and school leaders.
  - Developing data systems that allow for data driven instruction and make data more accessible to stakeholders.
  - Using innovative ideas to improve low performing schools
6. Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) – a federal competitive grant program that supports performance based compensation systems for both teachers and principals in high-need schools.
  7. Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund (TLIF) – a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in which competitive grants are awarded to states and school districts who implement educational reform in an effort to better develop, recruit, retain, reward, and advance effective teachers, principals, and leadership teams in high-need schools.
  8. Elementary and Secondary Education Act – federal education bill enacted in 1965 that attempted to provide equity of educational opportunity for all students regardless of their race or economic status.

## LIMITATIONS

No research study, regardless of how well it is conducted, is without limitations.

This study is limited by the following:

1. The sample population of the study included administrators from elementary, middle, and high schools within a single school district in the state of Texas.
2. Administrator survey results were strictly self-reported data.
3. Teacher perceptions surrounding the appraisal process were not accounted for in this study.
4. Because the use of archival data was relied upon in this study, no way exists to verify the integrity of the data. This limitation exists for all studies in which secondary data sets are analyzed.
5. The development of categories to capture emerging themes was developed by the researcher in collaboration with others who are both familiar with the district survey project and this study. However, another researcher quite possibly could create different categories which would produce different results from the ones generated in this particular study.
6. Cognitive face to face interview data was provided for eight high school secondary administrators with at least one representative from each high school in the sample district, other than the early college high school.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of administrator perceptions on the appraisal process in a medium sized suburban school district in order to determine if those perceptions affect the validity of the appraisal instrument. In this literature review, public school accountability and current state and federal mandates that have sparked a movement toward the reform of current models of teacher supervision are examined. The history of teacher supervision and evaluation is explored in order to gain an understanding of the evolution of teacher supervision and the framework for current models of supervision. Debate is ongoing regarding teacher supervision and the ability to measure teacher effectiveness; critics argue whether or not teacher appraisals ratings should be linked to improved student achievement. As such, arguments surrounding the debate are included in the review of literature. The purpose of supervision reveals the reason behind the development of the appraisal system but also includes the conflicting purposes of teacher supervision. The link between leadership and effective supervision seeks to explore leadership styles and behavior which enable school leaders to carry out the dual purpose of the principal role and what aspects of those leadership styles serve to break down barriers to effective teacher supervision. In this section, successful models of teacher supervision are explored to determine the aspects that make them successful.

#### **PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY**

In this era of continuous improvement in public schools, leaders are often faced with the question, “what genuinely makes a difference for children” (Platt, Tripp, Ogden, & Fraser, 2000, p. v)? The topic of public education entered the political arena in 1965 with the passage of the most expansive federal education bill ever passed, the Elementary

and Secondary Education Act. It was in this legislation that policy makers attempted to provide equity of educational opportunity for all students, regardless of their race or economic status. Since that time, the federal government has continued to be involved in policy making and accountability for public education. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) primarily focused on equality; however, the George W. Bush Administration made dramatic amendments to the ESEA, which resulted in the introduction of the No Child Left Behind (2002) Act. It was at this time a shift occurred from simply providing educational equity to defining acceptable performance for all student groups and requiring that all states implement performance measures (Terry, 2010). The federal government's attempt to hold states accountable for student learning resulted in the development of and/or redesign of teacher appraisal systems in states across the nation. This focus on accountability resulted in an emphasis on high stakes testing as a measure of student achievement. Many states included this measure as an indicator of teacher effectiveness in their formal appraisal systems.

In Texas, specifically, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) consists of eight domains that target specific areas of teacher pedagogy. Domains one through five provide specific indicators in areas such as student engagement, learner-centered instruction, evaluation and feedback on student progress, classroom management, and professional communication. This first section of PDAS is primarily related to instruction. However, the second section of PDAS, domains six through eight, focus primarily on professional behavior such as professional development, professional standards, and improvement of student academic performance. Both sections of PDAS, when examined together, are intended to measure teacher

effectiveness (TEA, Division of Educator Appraisal, 2011). A numerical value is associated with each rating for each indicator of the PDAS, and these numerical values are then added together for each domain to provide a cumulative score for each teacher. That cumulative score falls within a range to determine whether or not the teacher exceeds expectations, is proficient, below expectations, or unsatisfactory in each domain (TEA, Division of Educator Appraisal, 2011).

The Texas Education Agency allows school districts to create their own appraisal system; however, once created, before being implemented, the state has to approve it. Furthermore, the locally developed appraisal system must include “observable job related behaviors such as discipline management and the performance of teachers’ students” (TEC §21.351 [a]). The district examined in this study has created the Teacher Objectives and Proficiency Review (TOP). This appraisal system is much like that of PDAS, including eight domains of similar content. Two major differences between the instruments are that the locally developed instrument does not apply a numerical value to the evaluation ratings, whereas PDAS does, and the descriptors for each domain, as well as the indicators under each domain, differ in wording but not content. Therefore, the locally developed instrument (TOP) does not assign a numerical value to teacher effectiveness; no point value is associated with the ratings, nor does a cumulative score exist for each domain. The local district requires the creation of an intervention plan for any teacher when any of the following circumstances occur (Harris County School District, 1997, 2012):

1. A teacher at Level 1 who is evaluated on Part I of the TOP Review instrument as Unsatisfactory in one of more criteria.

2. A teacher at Level 1 who has two or more areas which are evaluated as Below Expectations or Absent/Below Expectations on any criteria of the TOP Review instrument (Parts I and II).
3. A teacher at Level 2 who is evaluated as Below Expectations on any item of the TOP Review Summary Form (p.5).

Furthermore, an intervention plan may be created at the discretion of the appraiser if at any time documentation is gathered that could potentially produce an evaluation of below expectations or unsatisfactory on any area of the evaluation (Harris County School District, 1997; 2012).

A variety of appraisal systems has been implemented in states across the country, with extensive debate regarding what constitutes the best measure of teacher effectiveness. Since enactment of the NCLB Act, the federal government has continued to be involved in policy making and accountability in public education. Currently, the Obama Administration is attempting to make substantial reforms in public education. Two initiatives include the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), which has been embraced and included in a new proposal from the Obama Administration, Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund (TLIF), and Race to the Top (RTT). In both of these initiatives, the focus is on funding for public education, with the overall purpose being to establish a system for advancing teacher quality (Smarick, 2011). The premise behind both initiatives is that teachers and districts will be rewarded with more money for improved student achievement (Smarick, 2011). Thus, the debate over how to measure teacher quality effectively and teacher effectiveness has reached greater heights. One New York public school administrator, Carol Burris, corresponded directly with Secretary of

Education, Arne Duncan, in an attempt to address the two initiatives which associate monetary rewards and/or funding based on student achievement (Burris & Welner, 2011).

In her correspondence, she pointed out that “teachers with ineffective teaching skills nevertheless might have strong value-added scores, especially when they teach high achieving students” (Hill, Kapitula, & Umland, 2011). Therefore, the debate concerning effective teacher evaluation systems continues to spark new research surrounding the use of student achievement data as a determinant of defining teacher effectiveness.

## **HISTORY OF TEACHER SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION**

The history of teacher supervision and evaluation serves to provide a foundation for the development of teacher supervision, the purpose of teacher supervision, and the evolution of supervisory models based on contributions from leaders who championed for educational reform throughout history.

### **Supervision and Evaluation 1700s – 1800s**

During the 1700s, education was not viewed to be a professional discipline. In actuality, teachers were seen more as servants of the community (Tracy, 1995). Local government and clergy took control of educational decisions and monitored the quality of instruction; therefore, the feedback provided to teachers varied greatly depending on the supervisor (Burke & Krey, 2005). The 1800s gave rise to the industrial age and the development of urban areas; with this development, schools became more complex. Therefore, the role of both the teacher and the administrator changed with the community. Clergy and local government were no longer considered to have the knowledge to make judgments about quality of instruction; instead, master-teachers who



became experts both in their subject area and delivery of instruction became the “principal teacher,” which later became known as the building principal (Tracy, 1995).

### **Scientific Management vs. Democracy**

The end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century gave way to two conflicting views of education. John Dewey introduced the idea of democracy within education. He believed that schools should be organized to develop students as citizens of the community and that education should be largely student centered with real world connections and differentiated instruction for the varied needs of students (Dewey, 1938, 1981). Frederick Taylor, on the other hand, embraced a scientific view of education; his views centered on the study of teacher behaviors to determine the most efficient method of teaching. Taylor’s principles influenced K-12 education, and educators began to embrace measurement as the scientific way to judge teacher effectiveness (Taylor, 1911). Ellwood Cubberley outlined the importance of classroom observation as a means to measure and to provide data for teacher effectiveness (Cubberley, 1929). William Wetzel expanded Cubberley’s view by discussing the importance of adding student performance into the judgment of teacher effectiveness (Wetzel, 1929). The tension between the democratic view and the scientific view of management continued through the 1930s. During this time, the two views were seen as separate approaches to supervision; it was not conceived that these two approaches could potentially be integrated for a more effective approach to teacher supervision (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011).

### **Post World War II**

Although competing views were present about educational supervision during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a shift away from the scientific view occurred after

World War II. Teachers began to be seen as individuals with unique needs. Emphasized in the literature was the responsibility of the supervisor to tend to the emotional needs of teachers (Coleman, 1945). During this time, Lewis and Leps introduced the ideas of shared decision making and delegation of responsibilities; democratic ideals were embraced in their guidelines for a successful supervisory model (Lewis & Leps, 1946). However, in spite of the focus on the teacher as the individual, the supervisor's list of responsibilities remained very broad and extensive. In William Melchoir's book, *Instructional Supervision: A Guide to Modern Practice* (1950), it was implied that the supervisor's primary responsibility was management of the physical plant as opposed to serving as an instructional leader. Matthew Whitehead (1952) discussed six broad areas of supervision and noted the importance of classroom observations. He pointed out, however, that the supervisory model for classroom observations needed improvement, stating, "It is not fair to teachers to visit them and not hold a conference following the visitation, nor is it just to visit in a 'piecemeal' fashion" (p. 102). Even with the broad list of supervisor responsibilities, one outcome remains from this era, the importance of teacher observations, which are influential in the movement toward the supervisor as an instructional leader (Marzano et al., 2011).

### **Clinical Supervision**

Clinical supervision was introduced in the late 1950s when Morris Cogan, professor and supervisor of Harvard's Master's of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program, proposed the need for a systematic approach for working with student teachers (Cogan, 1973). The process of clinical supervision became widely published in the 1960s and 1970s after Robert Goldhammer, an educational practitioner who worked under Cogan,

developed a five phase process for clinical supervision which included a pre-observation conference, classroom observation, analysis, supervision conference, and analysis of analysis. Goldhammer (1969) intended his model to serve as a vehicle for reflective dialogue in which effective teaching practices would be revealed. Goldhammer emphasized the importance of the supervisory process being implemented with the purpose of continuing education for teachers:

A cornerstone of the supervisor's work with the teacher is the assumption that clinical supervision constitutes a continuation of the teacher's professional education. This does not mean that the teacher is "in training," as is sometimes said of preservice programs. It means that he is continuously engaged in improving his practice, as is required of all professionals. In this sense, the teacher involved in clinical supervision must be perceived as a practitioner fulfilling one of the first requirements of a professional—maintaining and developing competence. He must not be treated as a person being rescued from ineptitude, saved from incompetence, or supported in his stumblings. He must perceive himself to be engaged in the supervisory processes as a professional who continues his education and enlarges his competence. (Goldhammer, 1969, p. 21)

However, over time, Goldhammer's vision quickly disappeared because the process became the structure for evaluating teachers, minus the reflective dialogue. It must be noted, that this use was not Goldhammer's intent (Marzano et al., 2011).

**Madeline Hunter Model**

Madeline Hunter is most known for her development of a seven step lesson design. However, she also contributed many ideas to the process of teacher supervision. During the 1980s, Hunter expressed the need to develop a common language for instruction. In addition, she developed a framework for supervisory conferences in which the content included instructional behaviors related to research, alternative approaches aligned with individual teaching styles, components of lessons that worked or did not work during a particular day's instruction, and discussion of ineffective teaching strategies. Hunter also introduced the concept of script taping lessons in which the supervisor would record teaching behaviors and then categorize them into behaviors that promoted learning, had no effect on learning, and those that interfered with learning. The supervisor would then conference with the teacher to discuss his/her findings (Hunter, 1980, 1984). Hunter's model, in a sense became the framework for teacher supervision in many states; teachers' lessons began to be described in terms of Hunter's model, and supervisors gauged whether or not those lessons were aligned with the model in an effort to measure teacher effectiveness (Fehr, 2001).

**Developmental/Reflective Models**

By the mid-1980s, William Glatthorn, took into consideration teachers' career goals in the development of his supervisory model which included teachers having a voice in the determination of their own professional development. The premise was that supervision should be differentiated based on individual teacher needs (Glatthorn, 1984). Thomas McGreal built on Glatthorn's idea of differentiating supervision for teachers. He developed a structure for categorizing teachers into intensive evaluation in which

decisions might be made concerning a teacher's employment, standard evaluation for continued teacher development, and finally, the granting of tenure to teachers who qualify (McGreal, 1983). Carl Glickman was another supporter of differentiated supervision; he believed the main purpose of supervision was to improve instruction and that for supervisory processes to be effective, educators must take a systemic approach to the process. (Glickman, 1985). The 1980s was an era in which the importance of teacher evaluations was emphasized and the rigid application of supervisory processes was challenged (Marzano et al., 2011).

### **The RAND Study**

During the 1980s, as approaches to supervision were being debated, the RAND group engaged in a study with the purpose of determining what evaluation practices were being used in districts across the nation. Four consistent problems with supervision and evaluation as it was being practiced were revealed in that investigation. First, "nearly all respondents felt that principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately" (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984, p. 22). Next, teacher resistance was present to feedback, which led to the third finding in the study, a lack of uniform evaluation practices. The final barrier to effective supervision and evaluation was a lack of training for the evaluators (Wise et al., 1984).

One important recommendation from the study was "the quality of evaluation and ability of the evaluators should be monitored" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 67); furthermore, adequate and consistent training need to be provided for those persons who evaluate teachers (Wise et al., 1984). Another recommendation worth noting was to "consider adopting multiple systems if there are different purposes" (Wise et al., 1984, p. 70). The

findings from the RAND study revealed barriers to effective supervision and evaluation, and, no doubt, sparked the movement toward improving the process.

### **The Danielson Model**

In the mid-1990s, Charlotte Danielson (2007) worked toward incorporating the processes of classroom instruction in order to measure teacher competence. Her efforts in creating the Danielson model were incorporated into new proposals regarding supervision and evaluation. The model included four domains: Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. Danielson's (2007) model provided a framework for the phases of teaching and included levels of performance for each of the 76 elements under the four domains. Because of the specificity of Danielson's work, it became the foundation for the most detailed approach to supervision and evaluation of that time. Not only was Danielson's model grounded in research, but it also was flexible enough to use across disciplines (Marzano et al., 2011).

### **Beginning of the 21st Century**

Since the turn of the 21st century, a shift has occurred from evaluating teacher behavior to examining student achievement as a means of determining teacher effectiveness. Tucker and Stronge (2005), in their book, *Linking Teacher Evaluation and Student Learning*, discussed the importance of student achievement as a criterion for teacher evaluation. They argued that effective evaluation systems are ones that use evidence from student gains as well as teacher observations of classroom instruction to determine teacher effectiveness.

Toch and Rothman's (2008), in their report *Rush to Judgment*, critiqued evaluative practices currently used across the nation by saying they are "superficial,

capricious, and often don't even directly address the quality of instruction, much less measure students' learning" (p. 1). They argued that current evaluation practices focus more on formal credentials than on effective teaching and student achievement. Toch and Rothman (2008) determined that only 14 states required annual evaluations of teachers. Of those states that required annual evaluations of teachers, it was noted that in most cases, the evaluation was nothing more than marking proficient or unsatisfactory (Toch & Rothman, 2008).

In a similar study, the *Widget Effect*, teacher evaluation practices across the United States were also highly criticized. Referenced in the report was that the majority of teacher evaluation systems "fail to assess variations in instructional effectiveness" (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009, p. 6) which then prevented districts from identifying specific areas of development needed for teachers. Conclusions from the report suggested a complete overhaul of current teacher evaluation practices. Stated in the report was that "evaluations are short and infrequent, conducted by untrained administrators, and influenced by powerful cultural forces—in particular, an expectation among teachers that they will be among the vast majority rated as top performers" (Weisberg et al., 2009, p. 6). Finally concluded in the report was that the teacher evaluation systems failed to differentiate performance among teachers, thereby ignoring teacher effectiveness.

### **Lessons From History**

The history of teacher supervision has gradually evolved to a focus on measuring teacher effectiveness through classroom instructional observations. However, the era of clinical supervision has taught a lesson that solely focusing on classroom observation is

not sufficient. Glatthorn, McGreal, and Glickman discussed the importance of differentiating supervision based on individual teacher needs; in the reflective/developmental models of the 1980s, the addition of self-reflection to the supervisory models results in clear goals for improvement. The first decade of the 21st century added one more component to the supervisory models: student achievement. This addition of student achievement to the supervisory model has sparked debate in both educational and political arenas; supporters of this added component argue that teachers would have little incentive to develop their craft if student achievement was not linked to supervision (Marzano et al., 2011).

Although multiple supervisory models have been explored over time to determine teacher effectiveness and has married several components of different models to refine the process, the addition of student achievement as a component of the process in the 21st century has not clearly linked teacher evaluation ratings to student achievement. Too many gaps remain; with multiple researchers revealing the lack of relationships between evaluation instruments and student achievement as a measure of teacher effectiveness.

#### **TEACHER SUPERVISION: WHAT THE CRITICS SAY**

“No More Valentines” is an article in which Donaldson (2010) discussed the effectiveness of teacher evaluations and addressed their potential to improve instruction. Donaldson (2010) concluded that teacher ratings were inflated. Moreover, Donaldson discussed problems that limit the extent to which evaluations could improve instruction and achievement.

For example, some evaluation instruments are considered to be poor, emphasizing what can be measured, and not necessarily what is important. Therefore, these evaluation



systems may not indicate high quality instruction. Next, Donaldson addressed the lack of guidance by districts to determine what evaluators should look for. Most districts tend to emphasize processes and timelines of these evaluations as opposed to providing guidelines and rubrics regarding the substance of evaluations. Evaluators also report a lack of time needed to conduct thorough and accurate evaluations, stating that the increased requirements of schools limits the amount of time available to perform classroom observations. The skill level of evaluators also seems to be an issue worth investigating. For example, some evaluators lack specific knowledge about the content areas for which they appraise, and professional development for evaluators provided by school districts is typically infrequent and non-comprehensive. Donaldson also addressed the lack of evaluator will and absence of high quality feedback for teachers. Lack of evaluator will refers to the lack of accountability for principals to conduct rigorous evaluations. Without the accountability system in place, principals often times “suppress critical feedback” (Donaldson, 2010, p. 55). Donaldson referenced Peter Cummings, principal of West Woods Upper Elementary, as suggesting the “culture of nice” which principals tend to fall into, rating all teachers above average. The absence of high quality feedback for teachers can quite possibly be attributed to the lack of evaluator skill. Teachers express a desire for more concrete, detailed feedback; yet, evaluators generally do not provide the feedback after their observations. Finally, Donaldson discussed the fact that typically few consequences are attached to teacher evaluations. This lack of consequences may be attributed to the fact that little variation tends to be present between teachers’ summative evaluation ratings (Donaldson, 2010).

The New Teacher Project presented a report in 2009 called “The Widget Effect.” Analyzed in the report was whether or not classroom observations could identify teaching practices that served to increase student achievement. Teacher evaluation systems from 14 American schools were studied. Surprisingly, 98% of teachers were included in the category of satisfactory. Many persons believed that the report exposed the fact that the nation currently has a flawed approach to identifying teacher effectiveness (Kane, Taylor, Tyler, & Wooten, 2011). Other researchers have also noted limited success in identifying effective teachers when the evaluation system is comprised of well-executed classroom observations. The point is that it is impossible to identify those behaviors and practices that result in effective teaching when evaluation systems are tied to student achievement scores alone (Kane et al., 2011).

A noted area of concern regarding the supervisory role is the process of observation and feedback. Administrators must be trained to provide quality feedback; consistency needs to be present among administrative teams, and teachers must be provided with a summary evaluation that contains multiple sources of data with multiple observers (Platt, Tripp, Ogden, & Fraser, 2000). The standards movement is the belief that learning and success for all students should be tied to performance standards and assessments. Standards are typically associated with benchmarks from within each academic discipline and have minimally acceptable levels of performance for every student. The use of data about student performance is a controversial idea. Many teachers and administrators oppose proposals to use student test scores as a performance measure; employers wonder why the evaluation of teacher proficiency “examines the means that teachers use but not the ends they produce” (Platt et al., 2000, p. 189).

Because the quality of the teacher is the “most important determinant of learning after family background” (Wechsler & Shields, 2008, p. 1), efforts to measure teacher effectiveness have increased. Danielson’s (2010) framework for teaching is at the forefront of this effort. Danielson’s model consists of four domains: planning and preparation, instruction, classroom environment, and professional responsibilities. Many teacher evaluation instruments include domains similar to the ones developed by Danielson (2010). The indicators in each of these domains constitute the behaviors of an effective teacher, what teachers should know and implement both in their classroom and professional environment. According to Phillips (educational consultant, Danielson Group), Danielson’s framework is so widespread that it has become “the ‘go to’ set of teaching standards for districts, regional cooperatives, and states that seek to operationalize their standards for teaching evaluation.” Danielson (2010) stressed the fact that effective teachers must have strong content knowledge. This idea parallels the requirements of the NCLB Act, requiring “highly qualified” teachers, teachers who are certified in the area for which they teach and have at least 18 college credit hours in the content area (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Danielson emphasized, however, that content knowledge alone is not enough to influence student achievement; knowledge of and being able to implement instructional strategies is just as important as being an expert in the content area.

Marshall (2005), in the article, “It’s Time to Rethink Teacher Supervision and Evaluation,” examined why current supervision and evaluation practices do not adequately serve to improve teaching and learning. Marshall (2005) referenced multiple forward thinkers in the field of teacher supervision, and her thoughts surrounding the

topic marry ideas from several theorists such as Wiggins, McTighe, Dufour, Marzano, Howard, Schmoker, and Reeves. Marshall (2005) agreed with these theorists in that high student achievement is a result of teachers working collaboratively toward common goals, implementing common assessments which serve continuously to improve teaching, and finding avenues to meet the needs of struggling learners. However, one caveat to Marshall's (2005) thinking is that schools who buy-in to this theory must change the way they conduct evaluations of teachers.

Marshall (2005) argued that current evaluation systems limit the amount of time administrators are required to observe classroom instruction, stating that typical models require only one formal evaluation of a full class period per year. This time limit led Marshall (2005) to question how an accurate judgment about teacher effectiveness can be made with only 0.1% of instruction being examined per teacher in a given year. Because of the little time principals spend engaging in formal classroom observations, generally teachers do not buy-in to the feedback they are given (Marshall, 2005). Furthermore, the lessons that administrators observe during the appraisal process are, oftentimes, not truly representative of the teaching that takes place on a daily basis. In most evaluation models, teachers are given advanced notice of when to expect a formal observation, which directly impacts the instruction delivered on that particular day. Marshall (2005) contended that this factor can give the administrator an unrealistic view of the teaching that takes place daily, thereby resulting in a skewed perception of the teacher's instructional effectiveness.

Another barrier to the current evaluation system is the general perception of teachers that "every time a principal walks into their classrooms, clipboard in hand, their

jobs are on the line” (Marshall, 2005, p. 730). Because formal evaluations create such anxiety among teachers, the appraisal process makes it difficult for teachers to buy-in to the fact that one purpose of the appraisal process is to serve as an instrument for professional growth. Marshall (2005) added that because the appraisal process is a confidential process between the administrator and the teacher, the process does not lend itself to the idea of teachers talking to one another about evaluations in an effort to improve and grow professionally.

Teacher evaluations, although by nature of the term are intended to judge teachers, “fail to give teachers ‘judgmental’ feedback” (Marshall, 2005, p. 731). Marshall implied that “evaluation instruments allow principals to fudge teachers’ general status with an overall ‘satisfactory’ rating and a lot of verbiage. These evaluations don’t tell teachers where they stand on clearly articulated performance standards” (2005, p. 731).

Finally, Marshall (2005) pointed out that administrators get bogged down by discipline and operational duties which prevent them from regularly observing classroom instruction. Marshall (2005) mentioned that administrators’ contractual deadlines force them to focus on teacher evaluations for the sole purpose of meeting those deadlines. She concluded that “principals need a better way to observe, support, and judge teachers-a way that is more accurate and time efficient and more closely linked to an effective strategy for improving teaching and learning” (2005, p. 731).

#### **PURPOSE OF TEACHER SUPERVISION**

A common thread is present in the history regarding the purpose of teacher supervision as a means of not only evaluating teacher effectiveness, but also serving to develop the teacher professionally. Goens and Lange (1983) explored the definition of

teacher supervision and delineate between the dual purpose; they provided a definition of supervision which includes both development and management functions. Gleave (1997) explored this dichotomy in his research surrounding teacher development and appraisal. He explained that supervision through the lens of developmental leadership supports teachers in learning from their own experiences as well as from establishing a knowledge base through current educational theory and research. Furthermore, supervision through the lens of managerial leadership seeks to appraise the teacher to ensure that professional job duties are performed and performance standards are measured so that the highest quality of personnel can be maintained. Gleave (1997) pointed out, however, that:

Confusion and frustration result when a single lens—that is, a single supervision inventory process—is used to capture a dual-focus portrait of the classroom. Recognition of the different focuses for development and appraisal enables creation of two distinct systems, each effective for its purpose. These distinct systems then enhance the school culture. (p. 270)

Debate surrounding the effectiveness of the supervisory model in achieving this dual purpose has continued through the first decade of the 21st<sup>1</sup> century. Now a component has been added to this debate with the notion that student achievement should be used in supervisory models as a measure of teacher effectiveness.

With the federal government's renewed effort for public education accountability, states and local school districts are focusing more attention on the evaluation models of teacher effectiveness. For example, the Race to the Top initiative has challenged states to define and measure teacher effectiveness. State Race to the Top applications indicate that many states have included systems that, not only measure student growth, but teacher

performance as well. Because funding is now tied to both teacher and student performance, states are working to develop or re-define the appraisal systems already in place. A focus still exists on using the evaluation instrument as a means to determine professional development (Smarick, 2011). According to the first round of applications for Race to the Top funds, several states are not willing to “link teacher evaluations to processes for terminating the lowest performing teachers” (Smarick, 2011).

Teacher evaluations have traditionally been used to identify teacher needs and determine professional development for teacher growth. However, since this new era of accountability, teacher evaluations have shifted from a tool for professional development to a tool used for accountability or to determine funding/incentive pay. However, “there are no formal studies connecting educator evaluation systems that use test-score growth data with learning outcomes, making their effectiveness impossible to judge” (Hill et al., 2011, p. 29). The ongoing debate surrounding the use of student achievement data as a means of measuring teacher effectiveness through supervisory processes clouds the purpose of teacher supervision; “continuing disagreement on the definition and the purposes of supervision in education have ... contributed to weak preparation programs for instructional supervisors” (Alfonso, 1990, p. 187).

The conflicting purpose of teacher supervision as a means of evaluation versus improvement has “been only marginally addressed in the literature of supervision and remains unresolved” (Glanz, 1995, p. 101). These conflicting views of supervision result in a seemingly endless tango of back and forth, some theorists asserting that supervision is grounded in the developmental, artistic approach which individualizes and personalizes supervision (Gleave, 1994); whereas others ascertain supervision is grounded in the

technological, scientific approach of evaluation which emphasizes objectivity through documentation, measurement, and impartial analysis of data (Eisner, 1981).

The implication of the debate surrounding teacher supervision directly influences how the appraisal instrument is implemented; an administrator's perception of how the tool should be used to measure teacher effectiveness influences, not only which professional teaching behaviors evaluators look for, but also, what type of feedback is given to teachers and what data are used to determine that feedback.

### **LINK BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION**

Researchers have been exploring methods of supervision which merge aspects of both developmental and management approaches. To understand the reasons why the appraisal process is more effective in some areas than in others, a foundational knowledge of leadership styles surrounding effective supervision is needed.

Leadership theorist, Michael Fullan, examined leadership in education and its impact on implementing change in an organization. Fullan (2007) discussed how important the role of the principal is during times of change and how the leadership style implemented by the principal is key to the success of school improvement. In the current movement toward improvement of student achievement through high stakes testing, researchers agree that it is effective leadership and management that move organizations toward meeting this goal. Transformational and transactional leadership approaches, first introduced in the business realm (Burns, 1978), are essential for principals trying to make change and encourage improvement under the pressures of public school accountability. Transformational leadership relates to leadership during times of change, and transactional leadership applies to management (Burns, 1978).



## **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is essential when considering the current role of the principal as the instructional leader; the transformational approach, according to Sergiovanni (2007), focuses on the idea of creating a shared vision and empowering staff members to embrace that vision and take ownership toward implementing change through shared decision making and collaboration. A leader who embraces the transformational approach is a leader who builds capacity in his/her staff and entrusts the process of change to the organization. The idea is that the collaboration that takes place toward meeting a shared vision helps to shape the culture and commitment of the school. A transformational leader is less concerned about the process and more concerned about the end results (Pepper, 2010). According to Lezotte and McKee (2006), the organization's commitment to change is the most important factor in determining the success of organizational change. Elmore (2004) discussed the idea of shared leadership within the transformational approach and its effect on the school's culture. He emphasized the idea of fostering leadership from the bottom up and utilizing peoples' strengths within the organization to move the organization forward. In essence, a transformational leader works toward the development of the staff, building leadership capacity, building trust, and enabling each person in the organization to play a part in moving toward a common goal. Transformational leaders aim to meet one purpose of teacher supervision through development of all staff members, allowing each member to take ownership of the change process.

## **Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership embodies the management and organizational needs of the school; it focuses on the managerial aspect of school leadership. Sergiovanni (2007) described transactional leadership as the organization being tightly structured, “predictable, with set routines and procedures” (Pepper, 2010, p. 49). The implementation of transactional leadership in order to establish a safe and orderly school environment has been positively linked to student learning (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2008). Transactional leadership is a direct approach to managing the school environment; it calls for the leader to clarify expectations as well as to provide accolades when goals are reached (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Positive reinforcement works to strengthen the commitment of staff and their willingness to work collaboratively toward organizational goals (Goodwin, Wofford, & Whittington, 2001). If transformational leadership serves as a vehicle to develop teachers professionally, then transactional leadership is the other side of the coin, so to speak. Transactional leadership enables building leaders to meet the managerial responsibilities associated with the role of the principal.

## **Finding a Balance**

When relating leadership styles to effective supervision, transformational leadership and transactional leadership can be connected to serve as a vehicle for the dual purpose of teacher supervision. In Gleave’s (1997) exploration of the dichotomy of supervision, he discussed the dual purpose of supervision and how leaders require a dual lens to separate evaluation successfully from professional development. Transactional and transformational leadership will serve that purpose if leaders can successfully find a

balance between the two styles. In essence, a balance between the two leadership approaches will “allow the faculty and staff to share their knowledge and expertise in making decisions which focus on improving instruction and curriculum toward a shared vision” (Pepper, 2010, pp. 49-50). Furthermore, the school environment will be one of routine, where expectations for both students and teachers are clear and standards are set high (Pepper, 2010).

For any leader to implement and to find a balance of transformational and transactional leadership successfully, they must be committed to leading by example. Ebmeier (2003) revealed that teacher efficacy and teacher commitment are directly related to the behaviors exhibited by the principal. “Only when the principal engages in activities that actively demonstrate commitment to teaching, is there any real hope for building trust, increasing teacher commitment, and building individual teacher efficacy” (p. 19).

### **Models that Work**

One example of this forward thinking can be located in the current supervisory model of Cincinnati Public Schools. The district has adopted a standards-based teacher assessment system as “a foundation for both teacher evaluation and knowledge and skill-based pay” (Milanowski, 2004, p. 35). Essentially, the system is based on a framework of teaching standards from Danielson’s *Framework for Teaching*, where 16 standards are organized into four different categories. For each standard, a set of rubrics is present in which four levels of performance (i.e., unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, and distinguished) are described. Teachers are evaluated by the data collected from six classroom observations and a portfolio prepared by the teacher. However, these six

classroom observations are not all conducted by the building administrator (appraiser). Instead, four of the observations are conducted by teacher evaluators who have been identified from within the district as master teachers worthy of undergoing rigorous training in order to conduct observations of their peers. These teachers do not rise above the ranks indefinitely, however; instead, each serves a 3-year term as a teacher evaluator, and then returns to the classroom to make way for the next rotation of teacher evaluators (Milanowski, 2004).

In the model being implemented, strengths of teacher leaders are embraced, and teachers within the Cincinnati public schools who have met specific criteria and have been released from teaching for three years in order to serve as teacher evaluators undergo considerable training which consists of meeting a standard of agreement with expert evaluators through the rating of videotaped lessons. Those teachers who meet the standard are permitted to conduct evaluations. “Teacher evaluators make the final summative rating on each of the standards in Domains 2 (Creating an Environment for Learning) and 3 (Teaching for Learning)” (Milanowski, 2004, p. 37) of the supervisory model.

Building administrators then perform the supervisory functions related to completing Domains 1 (Planning and Preparation) and 4 (Professionalism) of the supervisory model (Milanowski, 2004). It should be noted, as well, that researchers have concluded that the model allows for specific teaching practices to be connected to student achievement outcomes and that teachers’ classroom practices as measured by the supervisory model do predict differences in student achievement growth (Kane et al., 2011; Milanowski, 2004).

Upon examining the Cincinnati public schools model, it is evident that the dual purpose of the supervisory system gives way to the system being carried out in a manner that requires dual leadership capacity, a balance between the transactional and transformational approach. A transformational approach allows for leaders to build capacity in teachers by encouraging others to embrace the common vision and take on leadership roles and then utilize the expertise of those teachers to measure teacher effectiveness and facilitate effective change in the organization. At the same time, a transactional approach, allows for these same leaders to focus on rules, procedures, and job descriptions to accomplish goals and expectations within the organization.

The appraisal model implemented in Cincinnati public schools originates from the idea of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR). The PAR is an approach wherein expert teachers are used to conduct regular evaluations for novice teachers and underperforming veteran teachers (Anderson & Pellicer, 2001). Peer Assistance and Review serves three purposes: “improving teacher support and evaluation, raising teacher quality, and professionalizing teaching” (Johnson, Papay, Fiarman, Munger, & Qazilbash, 2010, p. 2).

Although PAR has gained national attention for being an effective way to raise a district’s human capital, multiple barriers exist to establishing the program and obtaining buy-in from the community. For example, for PAR to be developed properly, the program requires a significant financial investment. It also challenges many people’s beliefs about the roles of teachers and principals. A paradigm shift must occur for PAR to be accepted on a large scale. In addition, PAR requires collaboration between teacher unions and administration. In essence, PAR must be “grounded in a systemic approach to teacher evaluation” (Johnson et al., 2010). In fact, local policymakers must take the time

to plan the PAR program to fit the needs of the district. Essentially, it takes one to two years of planning in order to gain support of an effective PAR program (Johnson et al., 2010).

One component of PAR that makes it collaboration between union representatives, administrators, and teachers is what is called the PAR panel. The panel is comprised of an equal number of union and district representatives who govern the PAR program jointly. The primary responsibility of the panel is to determine whether or not the district should continue to employ sub-par teachers based on the evidence presented by the consulting teachers. It is the PAR panel's to focus on how to serve students best. Because the PAR panel acts as a single entity, few decisions are challenged (Johnson et al., 2010).

The consulting teachers are those teachers who are promoted from within the district to receive rigorous training to prepare them to be able to give detailed feedback and advice to teacher within their case loads. Consulting teachers have the responsibility to make frequent scheduled and unscheduled visits to teachers as well as regular email contact. The goal is to provide support through a variety of activities such as: growth plans, observing lesson and providing feedback in a post-observation conference, co-planning lessons, modeling lessons, and arranging for the teacher to observe another colleague's class. At regular intervals throughout the year, consulting teachers are required to report their findings to the PAR panel via both written and oral reports (Johnson et al., 2010).

Although many principals struggle with the idea of PAR because they view it as a threat to their authority, once they gain comfort in the ability of consulting teachers and

truly see the effect they have on quality teaching, they grow to both appreciate and accept the PAR program.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

The appraisal system and perceptions surrounding the appraisal system in a medium sized suburban school district in southeast Texas were examined in this investigation. The specific purpose of this study was to reveal how administrator perceptions influence the appraisal process. Information gained from this study may be helpful in determining the validity of the appraisal instrument regarding teacher effectiveness as well as its use as a predictor of student achievement. In addition, results of the study may influence related research concerning evaluation and supervision and the extent to which the current evaluation system serves its intended purpose. A descriptive analysis of both survey results and interview responses will serve to identify administrator perceptions regarding the appraisal process and how those perceptions influence the implementation of the appraisal instrument. In this chapter are the methods that were used to investigate these questions and is organized into the following sections: Research Design, Research Questions, Subjects, Procedures, and Instruments.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study was conducted using a mixed methods data collection approach. Both quantitative and qualitative archival data from a previous study conducted by the medium sized suburban school district were used to investigate administrator perceptions of both the appraisal process and the appraisal instrument. The quantitative data gained from the 2011-2012 TOP Review provided percentages for the numbers of teachers who were performing below, at, or above standard as measured by the Teacher Objectives and Proficiency Review instrument. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from a survey that was administered district wide to elementary and secondary



administrators. The survey contained both quantitative and qualitative data; part of the survey consisted of multiple questions measured by a Likert scale, and the survey also contained open-ended response questions. Furthermore, follow up (one to one) interview sessions were administered to multiple administrators at both elementary and secondary levels as well.

The purpose of the mixed methods approach was to understand the data more fully than use of a single method would have permitted. Because a descriptive analysis of the data was completed, it was essential to have a well-rounded view of the topic in order to merge predominant themes which arose in both data sets (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). The archival data gathered from the TOP Review data, survey study, and the interview sessions were examined to reveal predominant themes surrounding the appraisal process and how administrator perceptions influenced the appraisal process. Furthermore, to determine whether statistically significant differences might be present in administrators' responses to survey items as a function of school level (i.e. elementary, middle, high), Pearson chi-square statistical procedures were conducted. Because the independent variable (i.e. school level) and dependent variables (i.e. survey items) constituted categorical data, Pearson chi-square statistics were the optimal statistical procedures to calculate.

Following the organization of the data, a descriptive analysis was developed to "assess attitudes, opinions, preferences, practices, and procedures" (Gay et al., 2006, p. 159) surrounding the appraisal process. The descriptive analysis of the qualitative data pieces served to identify administrator perceptions regarding the appraisal process and how those perceptions influenced the implementation of the appraisal instrument.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. What are administrators' perceptions of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process?
2. How do administrators' perceive the effectiveness of the evaluation process?
3. Do administrators perceive the appraisal process as serving the dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth?
4. What are the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review Part I?

Archival data to address the preceding questions included a district administered survey to administrators, cognitive interviews conducted with eight high school administrators, and district TOP Review data.

## **SETTING**

The setting for this study was a medium sized suburban school district in southeast Texas. A committee was formed by this school district to examine the current appraisal process as well as the current appraisal instrument. The goal of the committee was to gather as much data as possible to make changes to both the instrument and the process. Therefore, the district embarked on a survey project in which surveys were distributed to both teachers and administrators at elementary and secondary levels. In addition, interviews were conducted with both elementary and secondary administrators, and data from the Texas Professional Development and Evaluation System (PDAS) was used as comparative data in determining and making changes to the Teacher Objectives and Proficiency (TOP) Review, which is the local teacher evaluation instrument. Once the archival data from this study were obtained, the information was organized into

emerging themes so that a descriptive analysis can be developed and presented in an effort to reveal how the archival data revealed administrator perceptions and how those perceptions influenced the appraisal process.

## **SUBJECTS**

The importance of utilizing the results of the district study with regard to administrator responses was to provide a descriptive analysis of the results, including administrator perceptions and their influence on the appraisal process. Respondents to the survey conducted by the school district were seated elementary and secondary administrators, including assistant principals and building principals. The TOP Review data included appraisals from the 2011-2012 academic school year for both elementary and secondary teachers who were included in the formal teacher appraisal process. All data related to the TOP Review for elementary and secondary teachers are confidential. The data were masked before it was provided for this study.

## **PROCEDURES/DATA ANALYSIS**

Archival data were relied upon in this study. The district distributed the survey, containing questions on a Likert scale as well as open-ended response questions via email to every elementary and secondary administrator. The survey was available for administrators to access over a 4-week period, extending into two consecutive summer weeks of summer. Reminder emails were sent each week for the duration of the survey project. Views from district administrators were that administrators may have more time to complete the survey after students had been dismissed for the summer break. The face to face cognitive interviews with high school administrators were completed over a period of three weeks and consisted of open-ended response questions specifically related

to the appraisal process and the appraisal instrument. The cognitive interviews were conducted in an effort to follow up on survey responses to obtain additional details and/or clarification about specific administrator perceptions. The data compiled from the cognitive interviews provided for a greater understanding of administrator perceptions and enabled the data to be more easily categorized into predominant themes (Desimone & Le Floch, 2004). Categorizing the open-ended response data and interview data into emerging themes as well as presenting selected quotes from the questions enabled the study to capture the tone and context of the responses, thereby providing a deeper understanding of how administrator perceptions influence the appraisal process.

Descriptive analysis as well as Pearson chi-square statistical procedures were used to investigate comparisons in the data; “thus possible explanations for certain attitudes and behaviors can be explored by identifying factors that seem to be related to certain responses” (Gay et al., 2006, p. 172). Developing and analyzing groups of responses related to the same issue made the report of survey results more meaningful and served to highlight those administrator perceptions that influenced the appraisal process.

## **INSTRUMENTS**

The administrator survey questionnaire used in this study was created by a designated district committee within the medium sized suburban school district in south east Texas. The survey was organized into three sections comprising of eight yes/no questions, two open-ended response questions, and 20 statements which required a degree agreement or non-agreement as represented on a Likert scale. In addition as a measure of the committee to follow up on the open-ended response questions from the survey, multiple cognitive interviews were conducted with administrators across the

district, both elementary and secondary which consisted of questions that were constructed in an interview guide; all interviews were conducted in essentially the same manner. The interview guide consisted of structured, semistructured, and unstructured questions.

Furthermore, the district's formal teacher appraisal data were provided by district personnel in the form of a summative report obtained from the software program used specifically by the district to interpret teacher formal appraisal data. A descriptive analysis was conducted to make the data meaningful and provide comparisons and observations derived from the teacher appraisal data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Results**

In this investigation, four research questions were addressed:

1. What are administrators' perceptions of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process?
2. How do administrators' perceive the effectiveness of the evaluation process?
3. Do administrators perceive the appraisal process as serving the dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth?
4. What are the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review?

Archival data to address the preceding questions included a district administered survey to administrators, cognitive interviews conducted with eight high school administrators, and district TOP Review data.

#### **RESULTS FOR SURVEY PART I**

With respect to the first research question, *(1.) What are administrators' perceptions of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process?*, an analysis of administrators' responses to the eight teacher evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process was conducted. Similar to the previously discussed analyses, the responses of administrators were analyzed separately by school level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high) and then for the merged group of school administrators. In Table 4 - 1 below are presented the elementary school administrators' responses to these items. For the 31 elementary school administrators who responded to this survey, 30 of them indicated that they used, in their teacher evaluation process, *Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation; Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete; and Summative conference*

(*feedback and discussion with your supervisor*). Elementary school administrators responded that they held a *Pre-observation discussion with the teacher* only 35.5% of the time and used *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)* only 32.3% of the time.

Table 4 - 1

*Elementary School Administrators' Responses to Eight Teacher Evaluation Strategies Used in the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Evaluation Strategy	Yes	No
Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation	96.8%	3.2%
Pre-observation discussion with the teacher	35.5%	64.5%
Post-observation conference with the teacher	87.1%	12.9%
Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete	96.8%	3.2%
Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)	96.8%	3.2%
Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)	74.2%	25.8%
Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)	32.3%	67.7%
Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher,	71.0%	29.0%

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e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)

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Depicted in Table 4 - 2 are the middle school administrators' responses to these items. For the 15 middle school administrators who responded to this survey, all 15 indicated that they used, in their teacher evaluation process, *Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation*; and a *Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete*. Only slightly more than half, 53.3%, of the middle school administrators responded that they used *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)* in their teacher evaluation process.

Table 4 - 2

*Middle School Administrators' Responses to Eight Teacher Evaluation Strategies Used in the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Evaluation Strategy	Yes	No
Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation	100.0%	0.0%
Pre-observation discussion with the teacher	60.0%	40.0%
Post-observation conference with the teacher	93.3%	6.7%
Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete	100.0%	0.0%
Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)	93.3%	6.7%
Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)	66.7%	33.3%

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Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)	53.3%	46.7%
Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher, e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)	80.0%	20.0%

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Presented in Table 4 - 3 are the high school administrators' responses to these items. For the 15 high school administrators who responded to this survey, all 15 indicated that they used, in their teacher evaluation process, *Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation*; and a *Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete*. Less than half, 40.0%, of the high school administrators responded that they used *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)* in their teacher evaluation process. Another strategy that high school administrators noted that had a low level of use in the teacher evaluation process was *Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)*, 53.3%.

Table 4 - 3

*High School Administrators' Responses to Eight Teacher Evaluation Strategies Used in the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Evaluation Strategy	Yes	No
Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation	100.0%	0.0%
Pre-observation discussion with the teacher	66.7%	33.3%
Post-observation conference with the teacher	86.7%	13.3%
Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete	100.0%	0.0%
Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)	93.3%	6.7%
Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)	53.3%	46.7%
Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)	40.0%	60.0%
Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher, e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)	73.3%	26.7%

Denoted in Table 4 - 4 are the responses of all 61 administrators to the eight teacher evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process. The teacher evaluation strategies of *Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation*; *Written*

*observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete; and Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)* were used by 98.4%, 98.4%, and 95.1% of administrators, respectively. Used less than half of the time were two teacher evaluation strategies: *Pre-observation discussion with the teacher*; and *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)*.

Table 4-4

*All Administrators' Responses to Eight Teacher Evaluation Strategies Used in the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Evaluation Strategy	Yes	No
Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation	98.4%	1.6%
Pre-observation discussion with the teacher	49.2%	50.8%
Post-observation conference with the teacher	88.5%	11.5%
Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete	98.4%	1.6%
Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)	95.1%	4.9%
Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)	67.2%	32.8%
Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)	39.3%	60.7%
Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections		

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and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher,	73.8%	26.2%
e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)		

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Commensurate with the previous analyses, Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated to ascertain the extent to which statistically significant differences might be present in administrators' responses to their use of the eight teacher evaluation strategies in their teacher evaluation process. Because the independent variable (i.e., school level) and dependent variables (i.e., Yes No survey items) constituted categorical data, Pearson chi-square statistics are the optimal statistical procedures to calculate. Revealed in Table 4 - 5 below are the Pearson chi-square values and the level of statistical significance for each of the teacher evaluation strategies by school level of the administrator.

Table 4 - 5

*Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Output for Teacher Evaluation Strategies by School Level of School Administrator*

Evaluation Strategy	Chi-Square Value	<i>p</i> value
Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation	0.984	.611
Pre-observation discussion with the teacher	4.864	.088
Post-observation conference with the teacher	0.455	.797
Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete	0.984	.611
Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)	0.386	.824
Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)	1.999	.368
Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson	1.885	.390

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plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)		
Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher, e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)	0.428	.807

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For one teacher evaluation strategy, school administrators responded differentially to the strategy of *Pre-observation discussion with the teacher*,  $\chi^2(2) = 4.86$ ,  $p = .08$ , Cramer's  $V$  of .28, small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Though not statistically significant at the conventional .05 level, this preliminary research result merits discussion. Higher percentages of high school administrators, 66.7%, and of middle school administrators, 60.0%, indicated that they held pre-observation discussions with their teachers than was reported by elementary school administrators, 35.5%. These percentage differences are depicted in Figure 4 - 1 below.

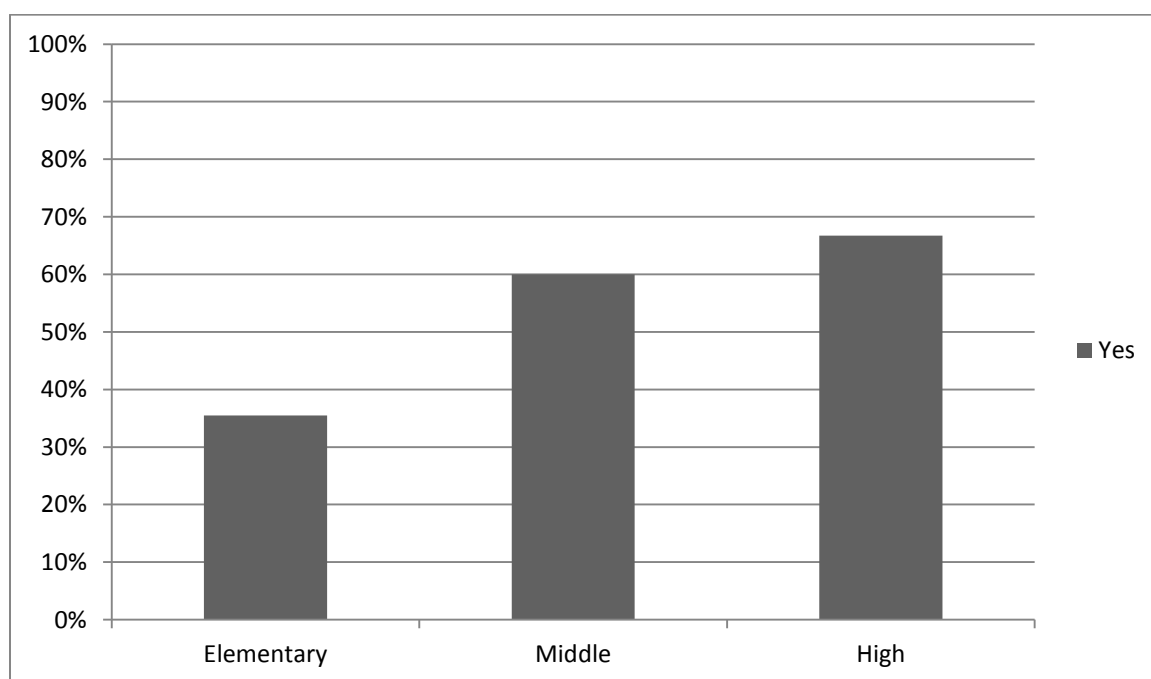


Figure 4 - 1. Administrator responses to use of teacher evaluation strategy of *Pre-observation discussion with the teacher*.

For the other seven teacher evaluation strategies, administrators did not provide statistically significant responses as a function of the school level at which they worked (all  $p$  values were greater than .05). Readers are directed to Table 4 - 5 above for the specific Pearson chi-square values and level of statistical significance for these seven teacher evaluation strategies. Accordingly, with the one exception, the teacher evaluation strategies received similar levels of support by elementary, middle, and high school administrators with respect to their use in the teacher evaluation process.

## **RESULTS SURVEY PART II**

With respect to the second research question, (2.) *How do administrators' perceive the effectiveness of the evaluation process?* descriptive statistics were calculated from a completed survey which was designed to measure perceptions for the aforementioned research question. Because three groups of administrators (i.e., elementary, middle, high school) were surveyed in this investigation, descriptive statistics were calculated for each group separately and then for the merged group of administrators. In Table 4 - 6 below, the perceptions of elementary school administrators regarding the effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review system were provided. As mentioned previously, participants responded to these items using a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Table 4 - 6

*Elementary School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of the  
Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review System*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	41.9%	41.9%	6.5%	9.7%	0.0%
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to evaluate my teachers' performance.	29.0%	45.2%	9.7%	16.1%	0.0%
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	9.7%	48.4%	22.6%	16.1%	3.2%
My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards.	19.4%	61.3%	12.9%	6.5%	0.0%
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	40.0%	50.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	29.0%	54.8%	6.5%	9.7%	0.0%
I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance.	16.1%	80.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
I assess all teachers fairly.	35.5%	61.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	41.9%	48.4%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	38.7%	51.6%	6.5%	3.2%	0.0%
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	16.1%	64.5%	12.9%	6.5%	0.0%
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	19.4%	58.1%	6.5%	16.1%	0.0%
My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	19.4%	64.5%	12.9%	3.2%	0.0%
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	16.1%	61.3%	22.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Elementary school administrators in this investigation ( $n = 31$ ) responded with the most agreement to the following items: *I am accurate in the assessment of teachers'*

*performance, 96.8%; I assess all teachers fairly, 96.8%; My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements, 90.3%; I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability, 90.3%; and My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching, 90.0%. At least 90% of the elementary school administrators responded with either an Agree or a Strongly Agree to these survey items. The least amount of agreement was expressed for My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them, 58.1%.*

Delineated in Table 4 - 7 are the perceptions of middle school administrators ( $n = 15$ ) regarding the effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review system. Readers will note that 100% was expressed for the following items: *My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards; My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching; I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance; I assess all teachers fairly; My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements; and I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.*



Table 4 - 7

*Middle School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of the Teacher**Objective and Proficiency Review System*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	46.7%	46.7%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to evaluate my teachers' performance.	26.7%	60.0%	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	46.7%	46.7%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards.	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	26.7%	73.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	46.7%	46.7%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance.	26.7%	73.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I assess all teachers fairly.	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	26.7%	73.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	46.7%	53.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	26.7%	60.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	40.0%	40.0%	13.3%	6.7%	0.0%
My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	26.7%	60.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The least amount of agreement present in Table 4 - 7 was expressed by middle school administrators for *I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to*

*evaluate my teachers' performance, 13.3%; My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them, 6.7%; and for During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year, 6.7%.*

Delineated in Table 4 - 8 are the perceptions of high school administrators ( $n = 15$ ) concerning the effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review system. Readers will note that 100% agreement was expressed for the following items: *I provide timely feedback to my teachers; I assess all teachers fairly; My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements; and I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.*

Table 4 - 8

*High School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review System*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	40.0%	46.7%	0.0%	13.3%	0.0%
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to evaluate my teachers' performance.	20.0%	53.3%	13.3%	13.3%	0.0%
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	6.7%	46.7%	20.0%	26.7%	0.0%
My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards.	13.3%	60.0%	13.3%	13.3%	0.0%
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	13.3%	80.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	46.7%	53.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance.	26.7%	60.0%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%
I assess all teachers fairly.	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	13.3%	66.7%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	26.7%	33.3%	6.7%	33.3%	0.0%
My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	13.3%	66.7%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The least amount of agreement present in Table 4 - 8 was expressed by high school administrators for *During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year*, 33.3%; *My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them*, 26.7%; and *My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching*, 20.0%. To determine whether statistically significant differences might be present in administrators' responses to these items as a function of school level (i.e., elementary, middle, high), Pearson chi-square statistical procedures were conducted. Because the independent variable (i.e., school level) and dependent variables (i.e., survey items) constituted categorical data, Pearson chi-square statistics are the optimal statistical procedures to calculate. For all survey items, however, administrators did not provide statistically significant perceptions as a function of the school level at which they worked (all  $p$  values were greater than .05). The Pearson chi-square values and level of statistical significance for each analysis are presented in Table 4 - 9 below.

Table 4 - 9

*Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Output for Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review System by School Level of School Administrator*

Survey Item	Chi-Square Value	p value
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	2.937	.817
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to evaluate my teachers' performance.	2.655	.851
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	8.713	.367
My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards.	4.873	.560
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	5.681	.224
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	5.271	.510
I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance.	8.480	.205
I assess all teachers fairly.	4.255	.373
My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	4.861	.302
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	3.680	.720
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	3.229	.780
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	6.908	.329
My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	7.367	.288
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	0.317	.989

Revealed in Table 4 - 10 are the perceptions of all of the administrators ( $n = 61$ ) in this investigation concerning the effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review system. At least 90% agreement was expressed for the following items: *I assess all teachers fairly*, 98.4%; *My evaluation process provides an opportunity*

*for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements, 95.1%; I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability, 95.1%; I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance, 95.1%; My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching, 93.3%; and I provide timely feedback to my teachers, 90.2%;*

Table 4 - 10

*All Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Effectiveness of the Teacher Objective and Proficiency Review System*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	42.6%	44.3%	4.9%	8.2%	0.0%
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to evaluate my teachers' performance.	26.2%	50.8%	8.2%	14.8%	0.0%
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	6.6%	47.5%	27.9%	14.8%	3.3%
My evaluation of my teachers is based on clearly defined performance standards.	18.0%	65.6%	9.9%	6.6%	0.0%
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	30.0%	63.3%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	37.7%	52.5%	4.9%	4.9%	0.0%
I am accurate in the assessment of teachers' performance.	21.3%	73.8%	3.3%	0.0%	1.6%
I assess all teachers fairly.	47.5%	50.8%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%
My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	36.1%	59.0%	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	39.3	55.7%	3.3%	1.6%	0.0%
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	18.0%	63.9%	14.8%	3.3%	0.0%
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	26.2%	47.5%	8.2%	18.0%	0.0%

My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	21.3%	57.4%	14.8%	6.6%	0.0%
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	16.4%	62.3%	21.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Next, the administrators' responses to the survey question, *List ways your school's evaluation system could be improved*, were analyzed. A classical content analysis was conducted in that participant responses were read and then re-read. Consistencies in word phrases and words were noted. From these consistencies, groupings or clusterings of word phrases were revealed. From these groupings of word phrases, themes were identified for each administrator level (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school). Delineated in Table 4 - 11 below are the themes that were determined to be present for the elementary school administrators: Technology, Training, Time, More Specificity in the Evaluation System, Consistency, Self-Reflection/Self-Evaluation, Support, Staff Development, and No Changes. Participant responses that were included under each theme are provided in Table 4 - 11.

Table 4 - 11  
*Themes from Elementary School Administrators Regarding How the Teacher Evaluation System Could Be Improved*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Technology</b>	<p>the new eduphoria programs will be nice</p> <p>Walk thru should be recorded in Eduphoria by iPad so immediate recording of walk through and feedback to teacher is given</p> <p>Easy access from home and full access to all reports on ipad</p> <p>Now that everything is on line next year I plan to do walkthroughs with the iPad so teachers will have immediate feedback</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>Continued training for the supervisor to become more proficient in this process</p>

More training in the different domains so that administrators on one campus can be consistent within the campus

I'd like more training

Standardized training of ALTs to identify continued growth of teacher's instructional practices

### **Time**

Having more time to be able to spend in classrooms rather than at ARDs, meetings or dealing with discipline issues

Need more time for follow up discussions with teachers after their evaluation

Time for peer review would elevate the level of instruction and provide a reflective piece to the evaluation process

Spending more time developing and reviewing appropriate staff goals

### **More Specificity in the Evaluation Process**

I think we could identify better indicators that we are looking for when in the classroom. We are basically looking to see if the student is successful.....not sure that is enough

More specific things to look for during observations

Having handbook that quantifies the criteria

Set reasonable criteria and timelines so the process can be meaningful to all and not a compliance piece to check off in a busy environment

better goal setting and connecting how efforts/strategies to reach goals fit in with walkthroughs and observations.

### **Consistency**

Having consistent, clear observation criteria

I just wish that all campuses enforced the same criteria such as more than 10 absences and less than 40 hours of professional development equals a BE rating which then triggers an intervention plan. I know it should be that way, but I'm not sure that it is district wide and teachers do talk

### **Self-reflection/Self-evaluation**

Include a self-evaluation piece where teachers can reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses

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	<p>I think teachers observing other teachers in the building as a reflective piece for themselves would aid in becoming a better teacher</p> <p>Better use of reflective feedback from teachers</p> <p>Possibly adding a self-assessment for teachers throughout the year so that they might reflect on their classroom management and teaching styles as it affects their students, and as it relates to the administrative walkthroughs and observations</p>
<b>Support</b>	<p>Support for the discipline and crisis situations that distract and take away valuable time from an administrators schedule thus decreasing the time that we can be in the classrooms without interruptions</p>
<b>Staff Development</b>	<p>Staff development on new system for admin and staff</p>
<b>No Changes</b>	<p>no suggestions at this time</p> <p>None, I like the organizational structure of the evaluation process</p> <p>I have no suggestions as the current system is adequate with walk throughs</p>

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Revealed in Table 4 - 12 below are the middle school administrators' responses to this item. Themes present in these middle school administrators' responses were: Time, Specific Suggestions for Improvements, Consistency, and No Changes. Fewer themes were revealed for these middle school administrators than were present for the sample of elementary school administrators.



Table 4 - 12

*Themes from Middle School Administrators Regarding How the Teacher Evaluation System Could Be Improved*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Time</b>	<p>More time devoted to evaluations and being in the classroom, the process suffers due to time constraints</p> <p>Time to do more walk throughs</p> <p>It is always hard to find time to get into the classrooms for observations. To be fair I want to spend as much time as possible doing walk throughs and longer observations but with all the other responsibilities that becomes very difficult</p> <p>Every year we all find ourself trying to complete so many observations per month, but it always seems that we are rushing at the end to complete them. So, I guess better time management.</p>
<b>Specific Suggestions for Improvement</b>	<p>I would like to see a more balanced approach to evaluating; meaning that it would be best if all administrators had input into each evaluation. It can sometimes be difficult to be the only evaluator</p> <p>establishing a common theme when observing teachers clearly defining in observable teacher and student behaviors what engagement looks like and sounds like in the classroom</p> <p>As an ADM team we should observe a class or two together and come together after to discuss our observations. We should also break down the entire evaluation instrument and discuss each Domain</p> <p>Readily available resources for teachers that may need additional assistance in areas of classroom management and student engagement</p> <p>We currently make regular classroom visits that are not part of the HISD observations process. However, these observations provide an easy line of professional communication between administrators and teachers. This also makes it easy to identify and address areas that need assistance.</p> <p>Would like to see a time on task section that would show how much of the students were on task on a given lesson and note what off task behaviors I observed.</p> <p>maybe less walk-throughs</p>

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**Consistency**

Build consistency among evaluators.

We could shadow each other in observations and compare what each of us saw. I think this would help with consistency among APs

**No Changes**

I would not change too much

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Finally analyzed were the secondary school administrators' responses to how the teacher evaluation system could be improved. Specific themes revealed in their responses as noted in Table 4 - 13 were: Training, Consistency, Specific Suggestions for Improvement, Time, More Frequent Assessments, Technology, and No Changes.

Table 4 - 13

*Themes from Secondary School Administrators Regarding How the Teacher Evaluation System Could Be Improved*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Training</b>	<p>I like the TOPS training module</p> <p>Perhaps more training with teachers as to what they should expect from administrators with regard to the process would help to hold all administrators accountable to that process</p> <p>More in depth initial training using the evaluation documents as tools</p> <p>Supervisors can have more training so that evaluations can be done consistently throughout the school</p> <p>Training and consistency</p>
<b>Consistency</b>	<p>More dialogue, consistency, team goals and structures in place</p> <p>Training and consistency</p>

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**Specific Suggestions  
for Improvement**

There is a lack of consistency among administrators in terms of feedback given to teachers. Although there has been an effort to move toward common language and campus improvement targets, there is nobody, per say, to hold administrators accountable for the type of feedback they provide, whether or not they hold a pre or post observation conference, and even whether or not they visit with teachers about the PDP at the beginning of the year or simply sign off on it. The implementation of the appraisal instrument itself is the issue; there is inconsistency within each campus and within the district as a whole.

More aligned to the PEEQ state indicators for the 1-3 year (new) teachers which is very heavy on formative assessment (student non-graded feedback along the way) Implement an informal and formal process of teacher evaluation with more observation points to compare performances

I think a face to face question answer meeting would be more useful to our teachers

And also a timeline for completing the different observation components. For example pre-conference in September and first walk-through by the end of October The district could provide some guiding questions to use during pre-conferences

**Time**

More time to complete

An administrator must take the time to improve or move out the below average teachers instead of just hand wash it and move on because it is easier, takes less effort and won't rock the boat

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**More Frequent Assessments**

Quarterly assessments. At the end of every 9 weeks, teachers should receive a required, formative evaluation that consists of an observation with feedback, and data that indicates their fulfillment of job-related tasks such as submitting reports on time and providing a parent contact log. The purpose of this would be to provide ongoing feedback in key areas that we struggle to objectify

**Technology**

Teachers need to input lesson plans and unit plans on the eduphoria system

**System is Okay As Is**

I do not think there is anything wrong with the system. It has all the components you need to help a teacher improve instruction

I don't think the PDP that we make our teachers fill out is useful. It is just more paper work that they have to do

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For these three group of school administrators, the following themes were present in their responses: Time, Technology, Training, Consistency, Specific Suggestions for Improvements, and No Changes.

**RESULTS SURVEY PART III**

With respect the research question, (3.) *Do administrators perceive the appraisal process as serving the dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth?*, separate analyses were conducted for elementary, middle, and high school administrators, followed by an analysis of the merged group of school administrators. Delineated in Table 4 - 14 below are the views of elementary school administrators concerning the importance of objectives in the teacher evaluation process. The highest levels of importance were assigned to *Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process*; 93.5%; and *Improving teaching*

*performance is important objective of the evaluation process, 87.1%. The most disagreement was expressed for Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process, 19.4%*

Table 4 - 14

*Elementary School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Objectives of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	93.5%	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	77.4%	22.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	45.2%	45.2%	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	25.8%	29.0%	25.8%	6.5%	12.9
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	87.1%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities is important objective of the evaluation process.	67.7	32.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Revealed in Table 4 - 15 below are the views of middle school administrators concerning the importance of objectives in the teacher evaluation process. The highest

levels of importance were assigned to *Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process*; 86.7%; and *Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process*, 86.7%. The most disagreement was expressed for *Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process*, 6.74%; and for *Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process*, 6.7%.

Table 4 - 15

*Middle School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Objectives of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	86.7%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	86.7%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	26.7%	66.7%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	13.3%	40.0%	40.0%	6.7%	0.0%
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities is important objective of the evaluation process.	33.3%	53.3%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%

Shown in Table 4 - 16 below are the views of high school administrators concerning the importance of objectives in the teacher evaluation process. The highest levels of importance were assigned to *Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process*, 73.3%; *Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process*, 73.3%; and *Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process*, 73.3%. The most disagreement was expressed for *Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process*, 20.0%; and for *Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process*, 6.7%.

Table 4 - 16

*High School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Objectives of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	73.3%	26.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	73.3%	26.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	53.3%	26.7%	13.3%	6.7%	0.0%
Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	33.3%	26.7%	20.0%	13.3%	6.7%
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	73.3%	26.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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Promoting self-reflection on my teachers'

professional abilities is important objective of 53.3% 46.7% 0.0% 0.0% 0.0%  
the evaluation process.

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Congruent with the previous analyses, Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated to ascertain the extent to which statistically significant differences might be present in administrators' views of the importance of objectives in their teacher evaluation process. Because the independent variable (i.e., school level) and dependent variables (i.e., Likert scale importance of objective survey items) comprised categorical data, Pearson chi-square statistics are the optimal statistical procedures to calculate. The Pearson chi-square values and the level of statistical significance for each analysis are delineated in Table 4 - 17 below.

Table 4 - 17

*Pearson Chi-Square Statistical Output for Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Objectives of the Teacher Evaluation Process by School Level of School Administrator*

Survey Item	Chi-Square Value	<i>p</i> value
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	3.626	.163
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	0.856	.652
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	7.830	.251

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Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	5.700	.681
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	2.856	.240
Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities is important objective of the evaluation process.	9.554	.049

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One of the six important objective items yielded a statistically significant difference among the school administrators, *Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities*,  $\chi^2(4) = 9.55$ ,  $p = .049$ , Cramer's  $V$  of .28, small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Higher percentages of elementary school administrators, 67.7%, strongly agreed with the importance of this objective, compared to 53.3% of high school administrators. Interestingly, only 33.3% of the middle school administrators strongly agreed with the importance of this objective. These percentage differences are depicted in Figure 4 - 2 below. No differences were present for the other importance of the objective items (all  $p$  values greater than .05).

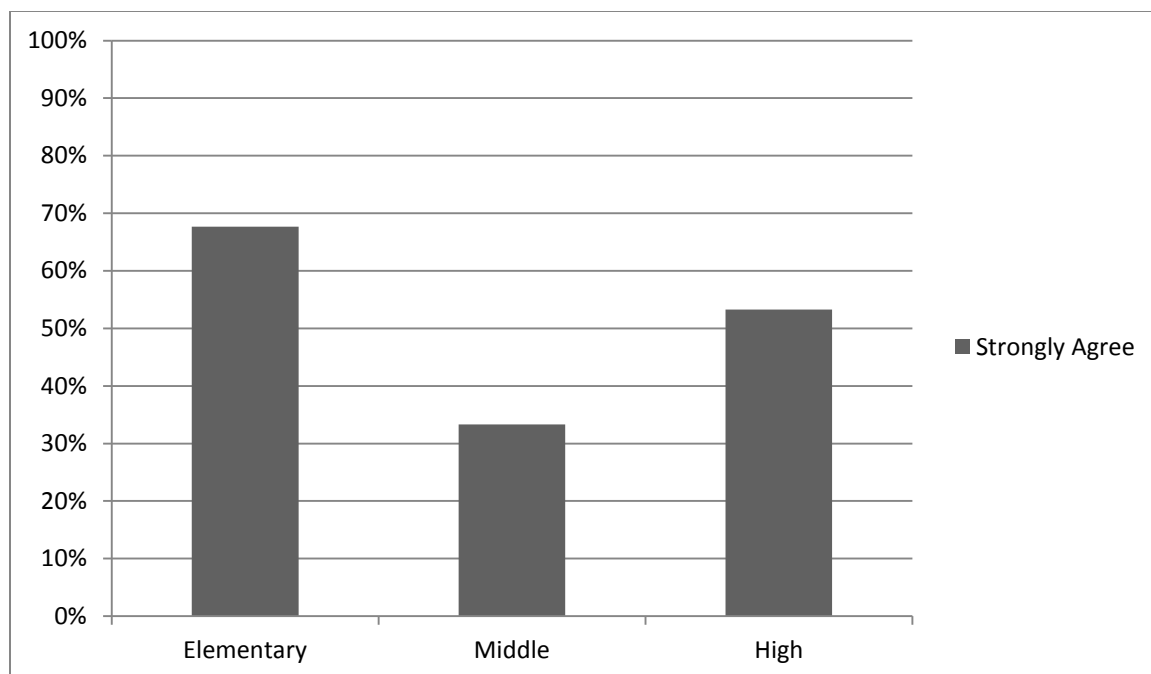


Figure 4 - 2. Administrator responses of strongly agree to importance as objective of *Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities*.

Presented in Table 4 - 18 are the views of all 61 school administrators concerning the importance of objectives in the teacher evaluation process. The highest levels of importance were assigned to *Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process*; 86.9%; *Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process*, 78.7%; and *Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process*, 78.7%. The lowest levels of agreement were expressed for *Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process*, 24.6%; and for *Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process*, 42.6%.

Table 4 - 18

*All School Administrators' Perceptions Regarding the Importance of Objectives of the Teacher Evaluation Process*

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	86.9%	13.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	78.7%	21.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	42.6%	45.9%	8.2%	3.3%	0.0%
Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	24.6%	31.1%	27.9%	8.2%	8.2%
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	78.7%	21.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities is important objective of the evaluation process.	55.7%	41.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%

#### **RESULTS SURVEY PART IV**

Presented in Table 4 - 19 below are the demographic characteristics of the school administrators who responded to the survey. Noted previously was that the majority of respondents were elementary school supervisors. The majority of the school administrators had between 4 to 8 years of supervisory experience in this school district.

Table 4 - 19

*Demographic Characteristics of Administrators Who Completed Survey*

Characteristic	Yes	No
School Level Supervisor		
Elementary	31	30
Middle	15	46
High	15	46
Years of Supervisory Experience in School		
District		
0 to 3 Years	18	43
4 to 8 Years	25	36
9 to 15 Years	10	51
16 or More Years	8	53

**INTERVIEW RESULTS**

Following the distribution of the survey, face to face cognitive interviews were conducted with a sample of eight high school administrators. Classical content analysis was conducted in that participant responses were read and then re-read. Consistencies in word phrases and words were noted. From these consistencies, groupings or clusterings of word phrases were revealed. From these groupings of word phrases, themes were identified. Delineated in Table 4 – 20 are the results to interview question, *What do you feel is the purpose of the appraisal process?*

Table 4 - 20

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding What is the Purpose of the Appraisal Process?*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Professionally Develop</b>	<p>To gauge teachers' learning level, like where they are, professionally and how can we help them grow</p> <p>To give teachers meaningful feedback on their performance</p> <p>To identify strengths and weaknesses of our teachers and provide an opportunity for feedback for the purpose of growth</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>To determine where you lie on the spectrum, whether you're good or not so good</p> <p>To ensure that the level of instruction meets the expectations of the district</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom teacher</p> <p>To serve as a tool for evaluation</p>

It is worth noting that out of the eight high school administrators, one response included both purposes. Seven out of the eight participants believe that trust in the appraiser impacts the appraisal process. Represented in Table 4 - 21, below, are administrator responses to the survey question, *How does trust in the appraiser impact the appraisal process?*

Table 4 -21

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding How does Trust in the Appraiser Impact the Appraisal Process?*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Feedback</b>	<p>Makes feedback valid/more meaningful</p> <p>Directly impacts how the feedback is given by the appraiser and how it is internalized by the teacher; if there is no trust in the appraiser, then the feedback may not be taken seriously and the teacher may feel uncomfortable engaging in open honest communication</p> <p>Creates a relationship where meaningful dialogue can occur</p>
<b>Level of Instruction</b>	<p>When trust is there, the appraiser will get a true picture of the teacher's behavior</p> <p>If the teacher trusts the appraiser, then you'll see what you would normally see on a day to day basis; there won't be a "dog and pony" show</p>
<b>No Impact</b>	<p>It doesn't impact what I do; me, personally, I don't care if they trust me or not. I'm going to grade what I see</p>

Specific themes revealed in the question, *How do you build trust?*, are revealed in

Table 4 - 22, below.

Table 4 - 22

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding How do you Build Trust?*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Build Relationships</b>	<p>When there are positive relationships with the administrator, they are seen as someone who is part of the team, not just someone who shows up</p> <p>Positive interactions with teachers; it takes time and work, but the more opportunities you have allows you to build relationships</p> <p>Like anything else, spend time with the person</p> <p>Building a relationship that is not just verbal but is demonstrated over a period of time.</p> <p>Before I ever go in for an observation, I focus on building a relationship. I will visit a lot of teams, seek individuals out, and have conversation with them about how things are going, what they need from me</p> <p>Long term meaningful relationships with people which have to be developed over time; get to know people on a personal basis as well as professional so that you have insight into what they are thinking and what they value</p> <p>Building trust happens when you establish a positive relationship with the person. You do this by reaching out to them regularly, taking an interest in them, both personally and professionally, making them feel safe, letting them know you're here to support and help them strengthen their craft</p>
<b>Availability</b>	<p>Making yourself available, not waiting for people to find you</p>

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### **Open and Honest**

Letting them know they can talk to you and you'll be honest  
 For me, it's being open and honest and making yourself available  
 Engaging in open, honest communication on a regular basis

### **Ask Questions**

Asking more questions to teachers and giving feedback in a positive way, not belittling them

### **Discuss Appraisal Process**

I will call a teacher in and discuss the appraisal process so they know what I am looking for  
 I make it a point to make it clear what I am looking for; before a formal observation, I talk to the teacher and ask them if there is anything they would like me to look for  
 Feedback must be given through informals so that they know what you're looking for

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When asked the question, *Do you feel there is consistency regarding the implementation of the appraisal process among your team?*, six out of eight administrators responded they did not feel there was consistency among their team. Below in Table 4 - 23 are emergent themes for why the administrators feel no consistency was present among their teams.



Table 4 - 23

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding Why do you feel there is no*

*Consistency Regarding the Implementation of the Appraisal Process among your Team?*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Calibration</b>	<p>We, as an administrative team, did not come together to regularly to calibrate both the document and the process and what teaching and learning looks like</p> <p>We need more time calibrating, but it takes time and we haven't done that</p> <p>We haven't spent a great deal of time calibrating because we've had other priorities</p>
<b>Differing Opinions</b>	<p>I don't believe we would score the same classroom the same way; we have different opinions about what good instruction looks like</p> <p>We, as a team, have different views about what good instruction looks like and no amount of calibration is going to change that</p> <p>We have different opinions about what constitutes quality feedback</p> <p>The team has different levels of understanding about what good instruction looks like; some truly believe the purpose of the appraisal process is to develop teachers and others on the team see it as an "I gotcha" and this greatly impacts the feedback we give teachers</p>
<b>Time</b>	<p>We just can't seem to find the time to have conversations about our appraisals</p>

It is worth noting that the two administrators who answered "yes" to the question,

*Do you feel there is Consistency Regarding the Implementation of the Appraisal Process*

*among your team?*, discussed the importance of calibration and making the time to engage in informal walkthroughs as a team to discuss their findings.

Interview responses to the question, *Are there Obstacles to Implementing the Appraisal Process effectively, and if so, What are They?*, are represented in Table 4 - 24 below. It must be noted that eight out of eight administrators responded yes to the aforementioned question. Emerging themes for the responses included: Time, Appraiser Knowledge, Differing Opinions/Perceptions, Training, Appraisal Document and Requirements. Participant responses that were included under each theme are represented in Table 4 - 24.

Table 4 - 24

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding Obstacles to Implementing the Appraisal Process Effectively*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Time</b>	<p>Time is a huge obstacle; for me, personally, sometimes the process feels fragmented because I'm trying to fit it in between a slew of other duties</p> <p>Time is the biggest obstacle, time for us to do them and time for us to sit down with teachers and have those conversations</p> <p>Time gets in the way a lot of times; I know we have the freedom to do more than two informals but is it feasible with our job duties? Absolutely not</p> <p>Time is a huge obstacle – I mean I got mine done, but was I really fair? I don't know, I was rushed for time</p> <p>Biggest obstacle is time. I think we all start off with good intentions about getting into classrooms regularly, but then the year starts, and in our positions, we end up having to deal with discipline and management issues more so than instruction – but that's the nature of the beast</p> <p>Time is always an obstacle because we're stretched in so many directions</p> <p>Time - not enough to complete appraisals effectively</p>

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## **Differing**

### **Opinions/Perceptions**

We all see different strengths and weaknesses in teachers; some of that might be based on our personal relationships with teachers....our pre-conceived perceptions. We've tried to correct that, but the evaluation is based on our perception and our interpretation of what we see

I think we all have a different perception about what the appraisal process is. We all value different things, and often times, even with us trying to calibrate, we still miss the mark

No matter how hard we try to get consistent with our feedback, it comes down to our own opinion. We see instruction differently because we value different things

I know for my team, we see the appraisal process differently. Some of us see it as a tool for growth and offer quality feedback and engage in instructional dialogue with the teachers in order to grow them and maximize instruction. Others offer little to no feedback and strictly see the process as a way to measure the teacher and where they are compared to other teachers on campus; there's no effort to help improve or grow teachers when you look at it this way

Appraiser's background/awareness of the process and level of integrity – each administrator must come to the table with the understanding that the purpose is to grow the teacher. If one administrator comes to the table without that opinion, it causes inconsistency among the team and lack of trust; it compromises the entire process

### **Appraisal Instrument**

The difference between the appraisal levels and the process for each is very confusing

The informal forms are always changing from campus to campus; the district needs to agree on one, and don't even get me started on the process for co-teachers...our forms do not reflect what they do and that makes it difficult. One size does not fit all

The document itself is not user-friendly. Some of the items on the document appear to be repetitive and they overlap in domains

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## Appraisal Process

I don't think you see a teacher's effectiveness in one formal observation. The way we have it set up with two informals and one formal isn't enough to evaluate performance. You have to visit consistently over time and use that cumulative data for the appraisal rating to mean something

I think it's crazy that we only do one formal observation for the whole year and that's and that's what the rating reflects. To me, that's a problem; the process itself is a problem

## Training

A big obstacle is getting clear guidelines and guidance from the district about the appraisal levels, and I don't think the district has guides us on how to effectively conduct and carry out the process

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Next, administrator responses to the interview question, *Are your formal observations, as outlined in the TOP Review, an accurate assessment of teacher performance , why or why not?*, were analyzed. It must be noted that eight out of eight administrators answered "yes" to the question. Seven out of the eight of those administrators specified that it is accurate for that day only. Table 4 - 25 below depicts emerging themes from the seven administrators who specified that it was an accurate assessment of teacher performance for the day of formal observation only.

Table 4 - 25

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding Formal Observations being an  
Accurate Assessment of Teacher Performance*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Only for the Day of the Formal Observation</b>	<p>Yes, for that day only. The quantity part of the instrument makes it inaccurate because have I really been in the classroom 80-90% of the time to see that it's done at a level that exceeds? No, I haven't. I think my previous interactions/knowledge of the teacher allows me to justify that score whether it's documented or undocumented. I believe so for that particular time I was in the room, yes. Because the scoring domains encompass what is involved in the day to day teaching, yes, I can make an accurate assessment of teaching performance for that day. Can I generalize it? No</p> <p>On that day, yes. I can only accurately report what I see that day. Beyond the scope of that day, I can't say because I'm not in there every day; so, we get what they show us on that day</p> <p>I think it is an accurate view of teacher performance on that day that I observed. Because the bulk of the appraisal is based on that one observation, the rest of the 34 weeks might be complete crap</p> <p>For that one day it is, but for a true evaluation of performance, I would need cumulative data gathered over time, not just a snapshot</p> <p>I think it's valid for that day, but is it a true assessment of teacher performance? No, it's not. How can you make an evaluation of teacher performance with only one formal observation document?</p> <p>I think it is absolutely accurate for that day only. However, because I only have time in most cases to visit a classroom three times a year with two informals and one formal, I don't feel like it provides an accurate overall assessment of teacher performance. Regular unscheduled visits could help ensure accurate assessment of teacher performance, but honestly, I don't have time to visit all of my teachers as often as I would like</p>

Depicted in Table 4 - 26 are the responses for the interview question, *Does the appraisal process serve the purpose, as outlined in the TOP Review, to professionally develop teachers as well as evaluate teacher performance?* The responses are organized into yes/no categories with specific comments next to each category. It must be noted that seven out of the eight respondents answered “no”.

Table 4 - 26

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding whether or not the Appraisal Process Serves the Purpose, as Outlined in the TOP Review, to professionally develop teachers as well as evaluate teacher performance*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
No	<p>No, I don't have any documented evidence that teachers improve because of the process. That's what makes me question why we do this if we don't see results. Part II is the only true measure with the professional job duties, but those are outside of the classroom domain</p> <p>No, in order to develop, they need more feedback than prescribed in the appraisal process. If you really want to develop teachers, then take minimum standards off the table; do it longitudinally, with a lot of informal observations</p> <p>No, it does not serve both purposes with what the requirements are for our appraisal process. I don't think we get a holistic view of teacher performance. I think we look at data from three observations and then make a gut decision. If the grade distribution looks good and we haven't had complaints, then we go with our gut. I think we do a dis-service to teachers because we don't have time to truly develop the craft</p> <p>I don't think it serves to professionally develop them. For that piece, they need to be engaged in the learning, and the feedback isn't worth anything to teachers unless you have that relationship with them – that trust</p>

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	<p>I don't think it professionally develops the teachers. It might highlight some areas to improve upon and allow the teacher to reflect. But do we use that and move forward by offering professional development specific to teachers?</p> <p>No, it's up to the teacher. Unless a teacher is put on a growth plan, there is no way to determine if they are seeking growth</p> <p>I keep getting caught up in the one formal observation and whether or not it serves to professionally develop and evaluate teacher performance. It is a valid document and good discussion can be had, but I don't think that one time serves either purpose, no, it's simply a snapshot</p> <p>No, it does not serve the intended purpose. While it might provide an accurate assessment of what occurred on that day, I don't think there is enough data to make an overall appraisal rating for teacher performance. There are just too many variables that come into play. Right now, because of the lack of consistency, the system is flawed</p>
<b>Yes</b>	<p>Yes, it does. Does it serve them well? I don't know.</p> <p>Right now, we only see a snapshot, not what happens on a daily basis.</p>

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For the question, *Is content knowledge of the appraiser important to the appraisal process? Why or why not?*, six respondents answered “yes”. The emerging theme for respondents that answered “yes” was that content knowledge helps to build trust. For the two administrators who responded “no”, the emerging theme was that good instruction was good instruction, regardless of the content. Specific responses are highlighted below in Table 4 - 27.

Table 4 - 27

*Specific Responses from High School Administrators Regarding whether or not Content Knowledge of the Appraiser is Important to the Appraisal Process*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Yes</b>	<p>I think you can build trust quicker if you have content knowledge</p> <p>You can only appraise pedagogy so far. You can put a clown in a classroom who teaches juggling; the clown can do a great job engaging students and challenging them at a higher level, and learning could be an outcome. But, there's no content; you're kind of at the mercy of the teacher when it comes to content if you don't have prior knowledge</p> <p>Yes, it's very important. You need to know what you're grading; you need to have a clue.</p> <p>I think it helps, particularly in specialty areas, like science. If you have a working knowledge of the content, then you are more likely to determine whether objectives are met, appropriate TEKS covered, and whether or not they were covered at the right depth</p>
<b>No</b>	<p>Engagement is engagement; good questioning is good questioning; good feedback is good feedback. You don't need content knowledge to determine whether or not learning is taking place</p> <p>I've found that good instruction is good instruction</p>

For the following interview question, *Do you feel you are adequately trained to evaluate teacher performance?*, seven out of eight administrators responded with a yes. All seven administrators who felt they were adequately trained referenced the fact that it was “on the job” training. Each of the seven administrators referenced that they were not adequately prepared to evaluate teacher performance and that it came with time and experience. The one administrator who responded “no” mentioned that this is the first year in administration and there is little to no preparation about the appraisal process and



how to implement it effectively. It was suggested that the district provide ongoing specific formal training to all administrators in order to ensure consistency.

The final interview question, *What would you suggest is needed to improve the evaluation process?*, is reflected, below, in Table 4 - 28. Emerging themes are represented along with illustrative comments for each.

Table 4 - 28

*Themes from High School Administrators Regarding Suggestions Needed to Improve the Evaluation Process*

Theme	Illustrative Comments
<b>Change and/or Addition to the Instrument</b>	<p>A formal teacher portfolio would be a good component; maybe one piece could be for the teacher to video him/herself the reflect on what they saw</p> <p>An added component of student feedback would be valuable to the process. Ask for evidence as to how the teacher uses that feedback to improve instruction or develop his/her craft</p> <p>I don't think one size fits all. We need to tailor the instrument to each discipline</p> <p>The summative document should be only a comment box so we can provide the teacher with what we saw and ask questions. We can then talk about it and provide feedback</p>

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**More Frequent Assessments**

I think more emphasis on smaller snapshots in the classroom is essential. I know the appraisal process allows for us to do that now, but no one ever does; there's just not enough time

I think there needs to be a way for the instrument to look at teacher performance over time and not just three separate occasions. You need to be able to do it to where you go in each grading period, write what you're observing, have conversation with the teacher, set goals and continue the cycle the next grading period, like an ongoing process

**Training**

More structured training would be helpful – a defined process for the campus team to discuss what they're seeing, what feedback is most appropriate, and advice about how to have meaningful discussions

I would suggest more formal training for new administrators who haven't had the extensive experience of doing the appraisals

Teachers need to be more informed of the process. They have a general knowledge of the process, but I'm not convinced teachers believe the document can be used as a tool for growth

**Outside Evaluators**

I would create a business of evaluating teachers for the purpose of the "where are we now?" approach. A baseline of teacher performance should be conducted annually; bringing in an independent auditor can give administrators a new view of where they're at, and that can give administration the opportunity to re-calibrate

Outside evaluators should come in and observe teacher performance regularly and that data can be paired to additional data gathered by the campus appraiser and averaged together to provide an overall assessment of teacher performance. I just feel if time is the biggest obstacle, then why not give the bulk of the job to individuals who are highly qualified and passionate about instruction.

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## RESULTS FOR TOP REVIEW DATA

With respect to the fourth research question, *What are the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review Part I?*, archival district appraisal data was obtained.

Represented in Table 4 - 29 is the sample district's TOP Review Part I data from the 2011-2012 school year. Appraisal data reflect documents submitted for 1,238 teachers.

Table 4 - 29

### *TOP Review Part I Domain Scores Descriptive Data*

Part I Domain	Indicator	Scoring Criteria		
		EE	P	BE
Domain I	Indicator 1	687 (55%)	507 (41%)	28 (2%)
	Indicator 2	517 (42%)	684 (55%)	21 (2%)
Domain II	Indicator 3	567 (46%)	652 (53%)	3 (0%)
	Indicator 4	585 (47%)	634 (51%)	4 (0%)
	Indicator 5	561 (45%)	652 (53%)	10 (1%)
	Indicator 6	538 (43%)	668 (54%)	16 (1%)
	Indicator 7	635 (51%)	566 (46%)	21 (2%)
Domain III	Indicator 8	445 (36%)	764 (62%)	11 (1%)
	Indicator 9	780 (63%)	434 (35%)	6 (0%)
Domain IV	Indicator 10	773 (62%)	419 (34%)	31 (3%)
	Indicator 11	494 (40%)	722 (58%)	5 (0%)
	Indicator 12	700 (57%)	491 (40%)	31 (3%)
Domain V	Indicator 13	662 (53%)	552 (45%)	5 (0%)
	Indicator 14	939 (76%)	272 (22%)	9 (1%)

*Note.* The Unsatisfactory column was not provided because no teachers scored a mark in the Unsatisfactory category.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the appraisal system and perceptions surrounding the appraisal system in a medium sized suburban school district in southeast Texas. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to reveal how administrator perceptions influence the appraisal process. Administrator perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and values regarding the TOP Review instrument as well as the district appraisal process were explored through survey results and a small sample of cognitive face to face administrator interviews. A descriptive analysis of the data was provided in order to understand the data more fully. Predominant themes were revealed in order to “assess attitudes, opinions, preference, practices, and procedures” (Gay et al., 2006, p. 159) surrounding the appraisal process.

The four research questions explored in this study were:

1. What are administrators’ perceptions of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process?
2. How do administrators’ perceive the effectiveness of the evaluation process?
3. Do administrators perceive the appraisal process as serving the dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth?
4. What are the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review

Archival data to address the preceding questions included a district administered survey to administrators, cognitive interviews conducted with eight high school administrators, and district TOP Review data.

## **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

- I. Evaluation Strategies used in the Appraisal Process
  - A. Perceived importance but not used consistently among elementary, middle, and high school administrators
  - B. Ineffective use of pre-observation conference and professional portfolios – used less than half the time
- II. Effectiveness of the Evaluation Process
  - A. Perceived to be ineffective due to the following barriers:
    - a. Time
    - b. Consistency
    - c. Differing opinions of what good instruction looks like
    - d. Too few informal observations
    - e. Training
    - f. Content Knowledge
    - g. Technology
    - h. Lack of Specificity in Evaluation System
  - B. Trust in the appraiser influences the effectiveness of the appraisal process
- III. Dual Purpose of the Appraisal Process
  - A. Most agreement for the purpose of evaluation and improving teaching performance
  - B. The appraisal process does not serve both purposes well.
- IV. TOP Review Data
  - A. Approximately 97% of all teachers in the sample district scored proficient and above in all Domains and all indicators.
  - B. Zero teachers scored a mark in the unsatisfactory category

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In the first research question, administrators' perceptions were explored regarding the influence of the evaluation strategies used in the teacher evaluation process. Both survey and interview data confirm that administrator perceptions influenced, not only the teacher evaluation strategies used in the appraisal process, but also the purpose of the appraisal process itself. For example, 90.3% elementary and 100% middle and high school administrators agree with the statements *I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability*, and *My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements*. Yet, as noted in Table 4 - 8, used less than half of the time were two teacher evaluation strategies: *Pre-observation discussion with teacher*; and *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)*. Furthermore, the least amount of agreement among all levels, elementary, middle and high school, was in relation to the statement, *Establishing goals for the next school year is an important objective of the evaluation process*. How then, if the majority of administrators in the sample district believe the appraisal process serves to help teachers improve their teaching ability, could so few engage in pre-observation discussion and use of professional portfolios for instructional dialogue and goal setting? It is crucial to use the evaluation instrument as a means to determine professional development (Smarick, 2011). Goal setting should be an important component to the evaluation process, yet according to survey and interview data, it is one of the least used strategies. The answer

is clear. Administrators perceive the appraisal process to be ineffective. Obstacles are present that prevent the appraisal process from being implemented with fidelity.

Administrator perceptions surrounding the purpose of the appraisal process, strategies used to carry out the process, as well as perceived obstacles that prevent the process from being implemented effectively, greatly influence how the appraisal instrument itself is implemented. Survey and interview data reflect that administrators at all levels, elementary, middle, and high school, have differing opinions/perceptions of the appraisal process; some truly believe it serves a dual purpose of professional growth and as a tool for evaluation of teacher performance/effectiveness. In contrast, other administrators believe the sole purpose of the appraisal process is either professional growth or a tool for evaluation, not both. How administrators view the process, and what they value, directly influences how the instrument is implemented. It is clear that there is a flawed approach to identifying teacher effectiveness (Kane et al., 2011). For example, as evidenced in the cognitive face to face interviews of high school administrators, administrators who view the instrument as a tool for evaluation may engage less frequently, or not at all, in instructional dialogue. They may even spend less time developing trust or fostering professional relationships with teachers. On the other hand, an administrator who views the purpose of the instrument is to professionally develop and/or serve a dual purpose, will spend time building trust and seeking out teachers to engage in instructional dialogue. One cannot ignore how these scenarios influence teacher effectiveness.

Finally, perceived obstacles to implementing the appraisal process hinder the ability of the appraisal instrument to be effective in serving either purpose. As evidenced

in both survey and interview data, the following themes were cited as obstacles to implementing the appraisal process effectively: Time, Differing Opinions/Perceptions, the Appraisal Instrument, the Appraisal Process, and Training. Contrary to the RAND Study, referenced in Chapter 2, which reported that “nearly all respondents felt that principals lacked sufficient resolve and competence to evaluate accurately” (Wise et al., 1984, p. 22), findings in this study are not congruent. Concluded from analyzing the survey and interview data was that administrators have an in-depth understanding of how to evaluate effectively. However, administrators are bound by a system that prevents effective evaluation from occurring (Platt et al., 2000).

In research question two, an exploration of factors that influenced administrators’ perception of teacher effectiveness occurred. The following factors were revealed through the survey and interview results of this study: Performance Standards, Productive Dialogue/Reflection, Content Knowledge of the Appraiser, Training, and Time.

The performance standards, as outlined in the sample district’s appraisal manual, serve as a guide for how administrators conduct the appraisal process. How the administrator interprets these performance standards within the realm of classroom instruction greatly influences the results of teacher evaluations. Productive dialogue/reflection is deemed to be an important part of the teacher appraisal process; however, administrators revealed that barriers hindered this piece from being conducted effectively. Again, as referenced above, used less than half of the time, were *Pre-observation discussion with the teacher*, and *Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)*.



As evidenced by six out of eight administrators responses gathered from the interview process, *content knowledge of the appraiser* was cited as another factor that influences the appraisal process in determining teacher effectiveness. One comment was that *having a working knowledge of the content enables the administrator to determine whether objectives are met, appropriate TEKS covered, and whether or not they were covered at the right depth*. The two respondents who did not believe content knowledge of the appraiser to be an important factor in determining teacher effectiveness stated *good instruction is good instruction*. Whether content knowledge of the appraiser is important in the appraisal process is a non-issue for the purpose of this study. The fact remains, that an administrator's belief of its importance directly influences how that administrator will perceive teacher effectiveness (Marshall, 2005).

Both survey respondents and interview participants referenced *Time* and *Training* as a factor contributing to effectively evaluating teacher performance. Administrators comment that an insufficient amount of time was spent in classrooms to generalize a teacher's effectiveness by assigning a performance rating. Although all eight administrators who participated in the interview processes stated that they have confidence that their own appraisals were an accurate reflection of teacher performance, seven out of eight interview respondents clarified it was specific to that one day only. Furthermore, administrator responses on the survey indicated that time prevented them from engaging in instructional conversations with teachers, completing more frequent informal walkthroughs, and it prevented them from completing appraisals effectively. Because typical models of evaluation, including the TOP Review in the sample district, only require administrators to conduct one formal evaluation per year, one must question

how accurate judgment about teacher effectiveness can be made with only 0.1% of instruction being examined per teacher in a given year (Marshall, 2005). Training also influenced an administrator's perception of teacher effectiveness. One administrator commented *I don't think the district has guided us on how to effectively conduct and carry out the process*; another indicated that *more training is needed in order to become more proficient in this process*; finally, another stated that *more training in the specific domains is needed so that administrators can be consistent*. It goes without saying that unclear guidelines from a district as well as lack of training to ensure consistency would greatly influence an administrator's perception of teacher effectiveness (Donaldson, 2010).

In research question three, the extent to which the appraisal process effectively served a dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth was examined. Revealed in this study was that, in fact, the process does not serve these two functions well. Administrator perceptions concerning the purpose of the appraisal process varied; in addition, even those administrators who felt the appraisal process served a dual purpose of measuring teacher effectiveness and determining professional growth, did not feel it served both purposes effectively (Weisburg, 2009). For example, all eight administrators who participated in the interviews referenced that the appraisal process, specifically their formal observations were effective in determining teacher effectiveness for that day only (the day of the formal observation). None agreed that the formal observation should be used to determine an overall appraisal rating for teachers. Furthermore, when asked if the appraisal process served the purpose, as outlined in the TOP Review, to develop teachers professionally as well as evaluate

teacher performance, seven out of eight respondents believed it did not serve both purposes. The one administrator who responded that the appraisal process served the dual purpose, specified that it did not serve them well. Both survey and interview data revealed, too, factors that prevented the appraisal process from effectively serving dual purposes. Lack of consistency among administrators in the implementation of the appraisal instrument as well as a lack of trust between administrators and teachers contributed to the inability of the process to serve dual purposes effectively (Toch & Rothman, 2008).

In research question four, the performance levels of teachers on the TOP Review were examined. Archival data were obtained from the sample district and reflected the overall district appraisal ratings for the 2011-2012 school year. It is worth noting that over 50% of teachers within the district performed at a level that exceeded expectations in three or more of the five domains. Furthermore, no teachers within the district were performing at an unsatisfactory level in any domain. Are these results a true picture of teacher performance within the sample district? Survey and interview data would suggest that the district appraisal data do not accurately reflect teacher performance, and if that is the case, why, then, continue to implement a system that is ineffective (Donaldson, 2010)?

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS**

Recommendations for practice are based on the findings of this study as well as information presented in the literature review. It is important to examine implications for school leaders at multiple levels, both campus and district.

### **Campus Leaders**

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that many obstacles exist that prevent the appraisal process from being implemented effectively. One such obstacle, time, can be addressed at the campus level. It is essential for building principals to structure their leadership team in order to maximize the talents of each member. Therefore, the leadership team can work most efficiently, and valuable time that is needed to implement the appraisal process will not be lost due to inefficiency. It is crucial for administrators to make time for face-to-face conferences with teachers (whether informal or formal). This contributes to the building of trust between administrators and teachers and can lead to productive instructional dialogue which results in improved instruction (Fullan, 2007).

Time is needed to provide administrators the opportunity to visit teachers' classrooms more than three times out of the school year (as required by the state and local appraisal process). Results from this study were that the majority of administrators feel that to be able to make a true assessment of teacher effectiveness, a teacher must be visited on multiple occasions throughout the year. If administrators are provided with the time to conduct these visits, then they could be compiled and averaged together to provide a clear picture of what teaching and learning truly looks like on a daily basis (Marshall, 2005).

Another suggestion would be to look at how the duties of administrators are distributed among the team and possibly assign teachers to administrators whose duties focus on instruction. One possible solution to ensure effective implementation of the appraisal process is to not only limit the duties assigned to instructional administrators,

but also limit the number of students assigned to them (Elmore, 2004). This would allow for more time to complete in depth and accurate appraisals for teacher performance which average together the multiple classroom visits that take place throughout the year. “Principals need a better way to observe, support, and judge teachers – a way that is more accurate and time efficient and more closely linked to an effective strategy for improving teaching and learning” (Marshall, 2005).

Consistency was revealed to be another barrier to conducting effective appraisals. Interview results indicate that calibration is crucial to ensuring consistency with teacher feedback. Therefore, the vision that the campus principal established will set the tone for how successful the implementation of the appraisal process truly is on each campus. A building principal who takes the time to develop his/her team professionally by engaging in informal walkthroughs, together, and debriefing about what was seen and what type of feedback should be given to the teachers allows the team to identify and communicate with a common language (Wise et al., 1984). This will also serve to improve consistency among appraisers as well as strengthen the instructional leadership capacity of each administrator. “Good leadership improves both teacher motivation and work settings. This, in turn, can fortify classroom instruction” (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010, p. 15).

Although a brief training of the TOP Review is provided to administrators each year, the training focuses on the instrument itself as opposed to effective implementation of the instrument. Therefore, it is suggested that campus leaders provide ongoing support for administrators regarding the effective implementation of the appraisal instrument. Ongoing support will directly impact the effectiveness of the appraisal process and serve

to ensure its intended purpose. It is essential for leaders to be concerned about the end results (Pepper, 2010). Campus leaders must establish a clear vision and common language for what good instruction looks like, and they must engage in frequent dialogue with each other concerning the feedback given to teachers. It is crucial for appraisers to provide specific, descriptive feedback to teachers and for administrators to maintain consistency in this area, ongoing professional development, both at the district and campus levels (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Relational Capacity is one component that contributes to the effectiveness of the appraisal process. The relationship between the appraiser and the teacher directly impacts the feedback loop. If a lack of trust is present, then feedback will be less meaningful and teachers will be less likely to improve their craft based on administrator feedback. However, administrators who are skilled in the art of building relationships with others, often times, encourage and support teachers as they grow professionally. Teachers take to heart the feedback given by someone they trust. It is important for the building principal to establish a vision of open and honest communication among the faculty and staff. Fullan (2007) discussed how the leadership style of the principal is key to the success of school improvement. A leader who fosters growth within an environment where teachers feel safe is a leader who is most effective at implementing the appraisal process. “There are specific aspects or dimensions of the climate that significantly influence student achievement in schools” (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2007, p. 5).

**District Leaders**

District leaders directly impact the effectiveness of the appraisal process because they establish the vision and the purpose for teacher appraisals. It is imperative that district leaders provide support to campus administrators so that the appraisal process is most effective (Elmore, 2004). Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that district leaders examine the formal observation process in order to determine the best way to include multiple classroom visits in the teacher appraisal rating.

Interview data and survey data reveal the need for more training for teacher evaluators in order to ensure consistency and quality feedback. It is suggested that the training focus on developing instructional leaders who can identify what good instruction looks like, determine when learning is taking place, and provide descriptive and quality feedback (Donaldson, 2010). Several administrators indicated that they received little to no training in the teacher appraisal process, besides the training for the instrument itself and guidelines for implementation of the instrument which included mostly timelines. However, the need for training, specifically in classroom observation and feedback, is essential when trying to implement an effective appraisal system and maintain consistency (Danielson, 2010).

It is imperative for district leaders to clearly define the purpose of the appraisal process. If the appraisal process is truly designed to serve a dual purpose of teacher growth and teacher evaluation, then district leaders must examine the current instrument to determine if the instrument best serves both purposes (Weisburg, 2009). Based on the results of this study, the instrument in the sample district does not serve both purposes

well. One suggestion is for the district to examine models that work in surrounding districts as well as across the state (Milanowski, 2004).

Additionally, district leaders should examine what resources are needed in order to implement models that work. Both survey and interview data reveal alternative models that have the potential to be successful in serving the dual purpose of teacher development and teacher evaluation; however, providing the opportunity for peer review as well as bringing in outside evaluators entails financial resources for effective implementation (Johnson et al., 2010).

District leaders should create a system of accountability for the implementation of the appraisal process (Wise et al., 1984). Examining the quality of feedback provided to teachers and for what specific areas that feedback relates could influence the professional development opportunities provided for both administrators and teachers.

#### **IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study was conducted in one district in the state of Texas and cannot be generalized to represent administrators' perceptions throughout the state or even in other states. Therefore, it is suggested that studies similar to this one be conducted in other areas across the state of Texas and across the nation to yield a more in depth understanding of administrators' perceptions surrounding the teacher appraisal process. It is suggested that a study be conducted to examine teacher perceptions surrounding the teacher appraisal process so that the perceived effectiveness of the process can be examined from the teacher perspective.

A dual study, combining both teacher and administrator perceptions, could yield a multi-perspective view of the effectiveness of the teacher appraisal process and identify



specific areas of improvement based on the multi-faceted study. Research should be conducted to explore the relationship between administrators' years' experience and their perceptions of the effectiveness of the process. Furthermore, the various teacher appraisal models and perceptions should be explored surrounding each model's effectiveness to provide districts a choice between several models that work as well as caution for models that are not perceived to be proficient.

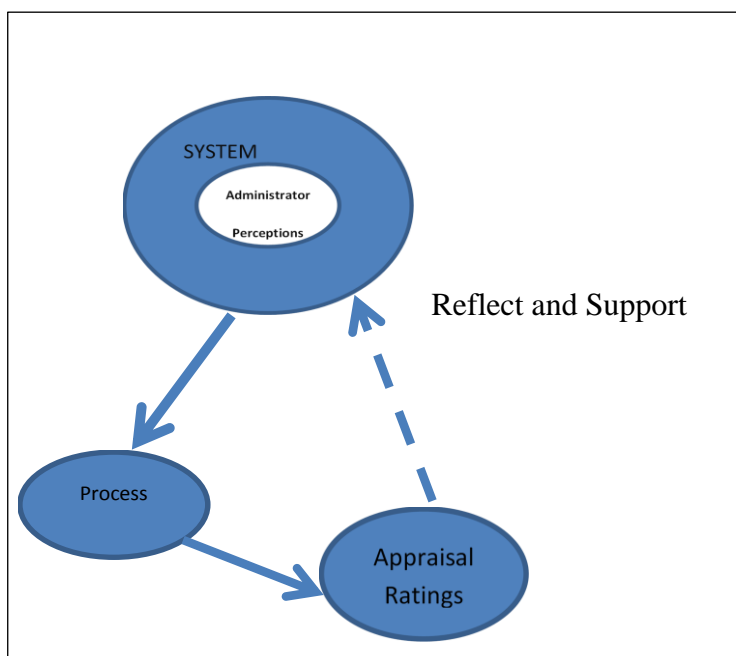
Finally, a study in which the multi-faceted relationship is analyzed between districts with high teacher performance ratings, what professional development is provided within the district, and the results of the district's climate study might reveal not only what seems to work successfully and contribute to effective teacher performance, but also what deficiencies serve as barriers to effective teaching.

## **CONCLUSION**

Concluded in this study is that the TOP Review is not effective in providing an accurate assessment of teacher performance, nor does it adequately serve as a tool for teacher development. Administrators within the sample district do have a clear understanding of the process; however, administrator perceptions reveal barriers that prevent the process from being implemented effectively.

Administrators operate within a system where their perceptions influence the teacher appraisal process, and the process determines the teacher appraisal ratings. There is a gap between the appraisal ratings and administrator perceptions. Each year, administrators go through the cycle with the end result being the teacher appraisal ratings, and with the start of each year, the cycle starts over. However, there is a missing link that should connect those teacher appraisal ratings back to the start of the cycle. It is

imperative for both campus and district leaders to understand what perceptions influence the appraisal process and how those perceptions influence the process, whether positive or negative. In order for this to happen, there must be a reflective link added to the cycle. There is power in knowledge, and if district and campus leaders have knowledge of those perceptions that influence the appraisal process (whether positive or negative), and how those perceptions influence the process, then they could make adjustments and provide support. District and campus leaders should develop a plan to compensate for the negative influences and capitalize on the positive influences. Knowledge of all perceptions, whether positive or negative, could allow for district and campus leaders to provide ongoing professional development for administrators and teachers or make needed adjustments to the appraisal system. This would result in a more effective system which provides a more accurate assessment of teacher performance as well as serves as a tool for teacher development.



*Illustration 5 – 1 Effective Implementation of the Teacher Appraisal Process*

The illustration above represents how district and campus leaders should respond to administrator perceptions of the teacher appraisal process. District and campus leaders are responsible for creating a vision and holding the organization accountable for implementing that vision. However, it is also the responsibility of district and campus leadership to reflect on the implementation of the vision and provide support as needed. In order for this to happen, leadership must have an accurate picture of their reality. Once areas for improvement are identified, then the campus and district leadership can develop a plan to address those areas.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**APPROVAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HUMAN SUBJECT**  
**RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

**UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON**  
**DIVISION OF RESEARCH**

August 3, 2012

Ms. Kelly Marchiando  
c/o Dr. Steven Busch  
Educational Leadership & Cultural Studies

Dear Ms. Kelly Marchiando,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "The Influence of Administrator Perceptions on the Teacher Appraisal Process" was conducted on July 5, 2012.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 4** was approved pending modification of your proposed procedures/documents.

The changes you have made adequately respond to the identified contingencies. As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review. \* Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and further approval. Please contact me to ascertain the appropriate mechanism.

If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Vargas at (713) 743-9215.

Sincerely yours,



Kirstin Rochford, MPH, CIP, CPIA  
Director, Research Compliance

\*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **June 1, 2017**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 12533-EX

## APPENDIX B

### TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY FOR SUPERVISORS

Archival data from the sample district included the results from the survey below:

### TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY FOR SUPERVISORS

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#### TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY FOR SUPERVISORS

The following anonymous survey measures your perceptions of the teacher evaluation process, as well as your practices as an evaluator. Please respond to each question as it applies to your experience as a supervisor. Your responses will be strictly confidential. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful responses.

#### Part I - Evaluation Strategies Used in the Teacher Evaluation Process

Identify whether the following eight teacher evaluation strategies listed are used in your evaluation of teachers.

1. Classroom observation for the purpose of evaluation`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Pre-observation discussion with the teacher`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Post-observation conference with the teacher`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Written observation in the form of an email or informal/formal evaluation template that I complete`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Summative conference (feedback and discussion with your supervisor)`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Students' performance on standardized tests (such as state assessments and/or CBA/DBA data)`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Professional portfolios (may contain artifacts such as lesson plans, teaching materials, evidence of student learning, and/or reflections on teaching)`  
☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Teacher self-evaluation (self-assessment involving reflections and judgment for the purpose of self-improvement as a teacher, e.g., may be in the form of a PDP)`  
☐ Yes ☐ No

#### Part II - Perceived Effectiveness of the Teacher Evaluation Process

9. Using the Strongly agree...Strongly disagree scale provided, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.`

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am adequately trained to evaluate my teachers' performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I spend sufficient time conducting classroom observations to					

evaluate my teachers' performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My teachers do not change their teaching style to meet my expectations when I observe them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My evaluations of my teachers are based on clearly defined performance standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My evaluations of my teachers are based on performance standards that promote better teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I provide timely feedback to my teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am accurate in my assessment of teachers' performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I assess all teachers fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My evaluation process provides an opportunity for me to have a productive dialogue with my teachers about their strengths and needed improvements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I use the evaluation process as a way to help my teachers improve their teaching ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The teacher evaluation process has a positive influence on my teachers' future teaching methods.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the evaluation process, I ask my teachers to set professional development goals for the next teaching year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My teachers and I discuss workshops/seminars/courses they might attend to improve their teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My evaluation increases my teachers' confidence in their teaching ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. List ways your school's evaluation system could be improved. \*

▲

▼

### Part III - Perceived Objective of the Teacher Evaluation Process

11. Using the Strongly agree...Strongly disagree scale provided, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements. \*

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Assessing quality of instruction is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessing teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establishing goals for the next school year is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fulfilling an administrative requirement is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improving teaching performance is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting self-reflection on my teachers' professional abilities is important objective of the evaluation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Part IV - Background and Demographics

This information will be used to give an accurate description of the population being surveyed.

## TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY FOR SUPERVISORS

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12. I am a supervisor at a(n)\*

☐ Elementary School ☐ Middle School ☐ High School

13. Number of years of supervisory experience at Humble ISD is \*

☐ 0-3 Years ☐ 4-8 Years ☐ 9-15 Years ☐ 16+ Years

Thank you for your participation!

**Done****Save****Cancel**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **COGNITIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

Archival data obtained from the sample district included the interview questions used in the face to face cognitive interviews with eight high school administrators:

1. What is the purpose of the appraisal instrument?
2. Does trust in the appraiser impact the appraisal process?
  - a. If yes, how does it impact the appraisal process
  - b. If yes, how do you build trust?
  - c. If no, why not?
3. Do you feel there is consistency regarding the implementation of the appraisal process among your team?
  - a. Why?
  - b. Why not?
4. Are there obstacles to implementing the appraisal process?
  - a. If yes, what are they?
5. Are your formal observations, as outlined in the TOP Review Manual, an accurate assessment of teacher performance?
  - a. Why or why not?
6. Does the appraisal process serve the purpose as outlined in the TOP Review Manual to both professionally develop teachers and evaluate teacher performance?
  - a. Why or why not?

7. Is content knowledge of the appraiser important to the appraisal process?
  - a. Why or why not?
8. Do you feel you are adequately trained to evaluate teacher performance?
  - a. Why or why not?
9. What would you implement, or suggest is needed, to improve the evaluation system?

