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TEACHER EVALUATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT:

IMPROVING THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPEⁱ

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So why does teacher evaluation matter? Because teaching matters: “Without capable, high quality teachers in America’s classrooms, no educational reform effort can possibly succeed” (Stronge & Tucker, 2003, p. 3). The core of education is teaching and learning, and the teaching-learning connection works best when we have effective teachers working with every student everyday. While effectiveness can be defined in myriad ways (Cruickshank & Haeefe, 2001), the essential issue is that we have the most effective teachers possible guiding the learning of students. And, “without high quality evaluation systems, we cannot know if we have high quality teachers” (Stronge & Tucker, 2003, p. 3).

Teacher evaluation is, first, about documenting the quality of teacher performance; then, its focus shifts to helping teachers improve their performance as well as holding them accountable for their work. “In recent years, as the field of education has moved toward a stronger focus on accountability and on careful analysis of variables affecting educational outcomes, the teacher has proven time and again to be the most influential school-related force in student achievement” (Stronge, 2002, p. viii). Given the emphasis on teacher quality as expressed in *No Child Left Behind*, as well as legislation, public policy, and practice in every state (and, for that matter, many nations throughout the world), a premium must be placed on high quality teacher evaluation systems to a degree that didn’t exist heretofore.

So why does teacher evaluation matter? Because regardless of how well a program is designed, it is only as effective as the people who implement it (Stronge, 1993). Thus, a conceptually sound, well designed, and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers is

an important – indeed, essential - component of an effective school. Despite the fact that proper assessment and evaluationⁱⁱ of teachers is fundamental to successful schools and schooling, this key element in school reform is too frequently neglected - due not to the absence of teacher evaluation, but rather to the implementation of poor evaluation systems and poor evaluation practices.

The basic needs in a quality teacher evaluation system are for a fair and effective evaluation based on performance and designed to encourage improvement in both the teacher being evaluated and the school. The purpose of this book is to explore key elements for constructing and implementing fair and effective teacher evaluation systems. This introductory chapter attempts to set the stage by discussing critical components for a quality teacher evaluation system and by identifying how effective teacher evaluation contributes to effective schools. Specifically, the chapter addresses the following questions:

- Why is there a need for quality teacher evaluation?
- What are the basic purposes of a teacher evaluation system?
- What are obstacles to quality teacher evaluation systems?
- What are key features of an effective teacher evaluation system?
- How can a teacher evaluation system be designed for school improvement and personal growth?
- How can self-reflection and feedback improve teaching?

Why Is There a Need for Quality Teacher Evaluation?

Failures of educational reform

Too often, educational reform has produced disappointing results (Clark & Astuto, 1994) or outright failure (Pogrow, 1996). Fullan (1996) noted that one of the reasons for failure of systemic reforms is fragmentation: "Fragmentation occurs when the pressures - and even the opportunities - for reform work at cross purposes or seem disjointed and incoherent" (p.420). Other reasons for the failure of systemic reforms are that reform efforts are implemented too quickly, from too many directions, and without regard as to how the reform effort and the subsequent changes will affect teachers (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000). Thus, reform efforts fail.

One example of cross purposes, disjointed, and incoherent reform that is played out in schools on a regular basis is as follows: 1) change school policy for a given innovative teacher

program, 2) provide some level of staff development on the prospective innovation, 3) ostensibly implement the innovative practice, and 4) continue to use existing evaluation practices. When reform efforts are disconnected from assessment, there is no way to measure success in the reform effort. Such a disconnect is a formula for failure.

A conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers (and, indeed, for all educators) is a vital component for successful reform efforts. "A rational relationship exists between personnel and programs: If program effectiveness is important and if personnel are necessary for effective programming, then a conceptually sound and properly implemented evaluation system for ... education personnel is essential" (Stronge, 1993, p. 445).

Balancing the Needs of Teachers and the Needs of the Organization

A dynamic relationship between the teacher and the school exists in a healthy organization: What's good for the organization must also be good for the teacher. This type of synergistic relationship enhances the ability of both the teacher and the school to achieve desired goals. Moreover, balancing individual needs with institutional expectations is essential for fostering productive work environments (March & Simon, 1967, 1993).

An organization's beliefs about performance appraisal are inherent in the assumptions underlying the development of an appraisal system. Castetter (1996) explained that these assumptions "form a basis for achieving integration of individual and organizational interests" (p.282). If the assumption is correct that individual and institutional goals are intertwined, then it is logical to consider teacher evaluation as a vehicle to facilitate and assess success for both the teacher (e.g., personal growth and performance improvement) and the school (e.g., goal accomplishment, accountability). Thus, teacher evaluation can and should be considered a vital part of the total improvement-restructuring efforts in education.

Improvement can take numerous forms, including:

- improvement in performance of individual teachers, and other educators (administrators, support personnel);
- improvement of programs and services to students, parents, and community; and
- improvement of the school's ability to accomplish its mission.

Fostering improvement in teacher evaluation systems means balancing individual and institutional demands. Little (1993) stated that "the language of reform underestimates the

intricate ways in which individual and institutional lives are interwoven" (p. 147) As Fullan (1991) noted, "Combining individual and institutional development has its tensions, but the message ... should be abundantly clear. You cannot have one without the other" (p. 349). In order to accomplish personal and professional goals, the individual needs the institution. In order to accomplish organizational goals, the institution needs the individual.

Purposes of Teacher Evaluation

In addition to the basic function of school, teacher, and, ultimately, student improvement, how can the requisite time, effort, and resources needed to design, implement, and support a quality teacher evaluation system be justified? Why should school divisions develop a teacher evaluation system? The Personnel Evaluation Standards of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1988, pp. 6-7) identified ten distinct purposes for high quality teacher evaluation as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1.1 here

The two most frequently cited purposes of personnel evaluation are accountability and professional growth (see, for example, Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000). The accountability purpose reflects the need for determining competence of teachers in order to assure that services delivered are safe and effective (McGaghie, 1991), and typically has been viewed as summative in nature. The performance improvement purpose reflects the need for professional growth and development of the individual teacher, and typically has been considered to be formative in nature.ⁱⁱⁱ

There is room in teacher evaluation systems for both accountability and performance improvement purposes. In fact, evaluation systems that include both accountability and personal growth dimensions are both desirable and necessary for evaluation to productively serve the needs of individual teachers and the school and community at large.

Performance improvement and accountability purposes are not competing, but supportive interests - dual interests that are essential for improvement of educational service delivery. These two roles are inextricably intertwined in the total evaluation process. Moreover, a conceptual framework for [teacher] evaluation should emphasize the

dynamic relationship between individual and institution where the needs and interests of one fuse with and support the other. (Stronge, 1995, p. 13)

For multiple purposes in teacher evaluation systems to be feasible, however, there must be a rational link between the purposes (Stronge, 1995). McGreal (1988) argued that multiple purposes of evaluation can be met successfully with a single evaluation system when the system is viewed as one component of a larger mission - furthering the goals for the school. This conception of teacher evaluation ties evaluation not only to teacher improvement but also to school improvement. Thus, a comprehensive teacher evaluation system should be rooted in two broad purposes:

- It should be *accountability-oriented*, contributing to the personal goals of the teacher and to the mission of the program, the school, and the total educational organization, and should provide a fair measure of accountability of performance (i.e., summative focus).
- It should be *improvement-oriented*, contributing to the personal and professional development needs of the individual [teacher] as well as improvement within the school (i.e., formative focus). (Stronge, Helm, & Tucker, 1996)

Accountability Orientation

The school or system-wide purposes form the basis of all organizational action. An effective school is one in which the school or system-wide purposes become a unifying agent (Stronge, 1993). A sound evaluation system revolves around the mission and goals of the individual school and of the school district (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Stronge & Helm, 1991). The evaluation system should facilitate not only accomplishment of the school's goals but also compatibility with and support for individual teacher goals. Given the various implications of the *No Child Left Behind* Act, accountability to teacher evaluation is required. Additionally, if goal accomplishment (both school and teacher) are fundamental to success, then the evaluation system should reflect this orientation (Stronge & Helm, 1992).

Ralph Tyler (1942) reflected the outcome/goal orientation that should serve as a basis for teacher evaluation systems:

A ... basic assumption involved in evaluation is that the kinds of changes in behavior patterns in human beings which the school ... seeks to bring about are its educational

objectives. The aims of any educational program cannot be stated in terms of the content of the program, or in terms of the methods and procedures followed by the teachers, for these are only means to other ends. Fundamentally, the purposes of education represent these changes in human beings which we hope to bring about through education. (p. 495)

Improvement Orientation

While a teacher assessment and evaluation system should be oriented toward accomplishing the school's goals, it also should be focused on improvement. Goals typically reflect a desired state of being, not an existing state. Therefore, if established goals (for both the individual teacher and the school) are to be achieved, an emphasis on improvement and monitoring of progress toward goal accomplishment is inherent in a sound evaluation system (Stronge & Helm, 1992). Davis, Ellett, and Annunziata (2002) argued that “school level professionals can either use a system for the evaluation of teaching as a perfunctory and meaningless bureaucratic necessity, or to use the evaluation system as a meaningful process that is viewed as a catalyst for improving teaching and learning in schools” (p.299).

A teacher performance assessment and evaluation system, properly designed and implemented, supports a balanced relationship between school or district-wide goals and individual teacher professional growth and improvement. For teacher evaluation systems to support professional growth, both organizational barriers (e.g., incompatibility of individual and institutional needs) and personal barriers (e.g., disillusionment, distrust, stress, fear of failure) must be removed (Duke, 1993). Despite the complexities of addressing both improvement and outcome concerns, such a combination is needed. As Saphier (No date) surmised:

There are those who say supervision must be separated from evaluation because it is impossible for teachers to open up and have productive, growth-oriented dialog with one who judges them. In other words, teacher evaluation is incompatible with stimulating teachers' thinking and growth. We reject that notion. The problem is not that evaluators can't supervise, it is that they cannot supervise often enough. (p. 50)

What Are Key Features of an Effective Teacher Evaluation System?

To achieve a high quality teacher assessment and evaluation system built upon a dynamic balance between school and teacher improvement, several key features are essential. Among

these important concepts and criteria are mutually beneficial goals, emphasis on systematic communication, climate for evaluation, technical sound evaluation systems, and use of multiple data sources. Each of these features will be briefly explored on the following pages.

Mutually Beneficial Goals

As described in the previous section of the chapter, goals that are valued by both the individual teacher and the school are vital to successful teacher evaluation systems. Unless the individual and institutional purposes and goals are mutually beneficial, the efforts of the school are likely to be futile, and teacher evaluations based on those efforts will be meaningless. Scriven described the essence of this position: "it is obvious that if the goals aren't worth achieving then it is uninteresting how well they are achieved" (1972, pp. 126-127). Mutually beneficial and supportive goals make the evaluation process and outcomes more acceptable and beneficial to the school community and the teacher, alike. Goals that are mutually beneficial (i.e., compatible) to the individual as well as the institution are essential. Indeed, if goal accomplishment (both for the school and the teacher) is fundamental to success, then the evaluation system should reflect this balanced perspective (Stronge & Helm, 1992).

Emphasis on Systematic Communication

Teacher evaluation systems should reflect the importance that effective communication plays in every aspect of the evaluation process, including aspects that are more public in nature (e.g., public relations) as well as those that require more private communication (e.g., interpersonal relations) (Stronge, 1995).

One aspect of an emphasis on systematic communication in evaluation is that of public disclosure of those elements about which teachers, administrators and the general public have the right to be informed. Vital elements for public disclosure in teacher evaluation include, among others:

- establishing institutional goals;
- determining evaluation purposes in relation to those goals;
- developing teacher job descriptions and roles and responsibilities;
- identifying acceptable standards of performance,;

- delineating procedural guidelines and safeguards embedded in the evaluation system; and
- describing the evaluation timeline.

From the beginning of discussion regarding the identification of the needs/goals of the school through summative evaluations of performance, stakeholders should know as much about the evaluation system as possible. Guidelines should specify “that teachers should be informed about and understand the means by which they will be evaluated and that the evaluation should take into account any factors that affect evaluation results” (Seyfarth, 2002, p. 153).

For teachers and other educators, certain aspects of public communication and disclosure regarding teacher evaluation are codified in law (e.g., state statutory requirements for substantive and procedural due process in evaluation decisions). For the general public, this right to know about the school's evaluation system is reflected both in general public policy and in law. For instance, state open meetings acts typically provide for public disclosure and opportunities for public discussion on all relevant issues of policy and practice being considered by a local school board, with a few narrowly defined exceptions (e.g., personal and confidential information about individuals).

Contrasting with the openness in communication described above, another vital aspect of effective communication is more personal and private in nature - that of ongoing two-way communication between the administrator-evaluator and teacher-evaluated. Good communication between the evaluator and the evaluatee:

- allows for the cooperative development of an evaluation plan;
- provides a systematic opportunity for individual skill enhancement and improved performance;
- provides the teacher with enhanced self-expectations;
- increases the likelihood of changes in performance;
- identifies ways to reach higher standards and correct significant discrepancies; and
- establishes a check and balance system for the evaluation process.

Systematic communication between the evaluator and the evaluatee throughout an evaluation cycle minimizes unintended consequences and maximizes organizationally relevant improvement and performance (Cummings & Schwab, 1973). Since the ultimate goal of any evaluation is to continue successful programs or improve less successful ones, communication in

the forms of public disclosure and evaluator-evaluated communication is essential. Indeed, systematic communication should be viewed as a hallmark of sound evaluation.

Climate for a Quality Evaluation

Evaluation conducted in an environment that fosters mutual trust between the evaluator (representing the school) and the teacher holds the greatest potential for benefiting both parties. Indeed, Castetter (1996) maintained that the quality of the relationship between the evaluator and evaluatee plays a central role in the effectiveness of the evaluation system due to the fact that evaluation is personal and emotional. Although teacher evaluation as a process too frequently has tended to generate suspicion if not outright conflict, trust between evaluator and evaluatee can prevail in an effective personnel evaluation system (Stronge, 1991). Thus, training for evaluators is critical in developing a sound evaluation system (Castetter, 1996; Seyfarth, 2002).

Satisfaction, an attribute closely associated with the concept of climate (Owens, 1998), should exist if teacher evaluation systems are to fulfill their potential. A critical variable in creating a climate of satisfaction in the workplace is that of consideration (i.e., fair and humane treatment among employees and between employer and employee). George (1987) noted that performance management is based on communications and personal relationships and that, similar to other relationships, "the qualities of empathy, honesty, and esteem need to be consistent" (p.23).

While a supportive climate is logically related to productive evaluations, there are instances when productive evaluations require less than ideal environments. When employees are not measuring up to reasonable performance expectations, and when improvement through remediation will not remedy the problem, then it may be necessary to proceed with meaningful evaluations and, if necessary, to make negative personnel decisions based on the results of those evaluations. It is essential to remember that, ultimately, the best interests of the school's primary clients, the students, must be protected.

Technically Sound Evaluation Systems

While a conceptually sound and technically correct teacher evaluation system will not guarantee effective evaluation, one that is technically flawed and irrational most assuredly will guarantee failure. Evaluation systems that are conceptually and technically sound promote the

likelihood of achieving desirable outcomes such as those described in the guiding assumptions of the Personnel Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1988):

- to provide effective service to students and society;
- to establish personnel evaluation practices that are constructive and free of unnecessary threatening or demoralizing characteristics; and
- to facilitate planning for sound professional development experiences.

Technically sound evaluation systems enjoy the benefits of the four basic standards espoused in the Personnel Evaluation Standards:

- *propriety* (i.e., legally and ethically acceptable)
- *utility* (i.e., useful, informative, timely, and influential)
- *feasibility* (i.e., efficient, viable in the context of the organization, and relatively easy to use), and
- *accuracy* (i.e., valid and reliable).

Proper use of the Standards can provide assurances of quality control to stakeholders and can support improvement in the overall personnel evaluation process (Stufflebeam & Brethower, 1987; Stufflebeam & Sanders, 1990).

Use of Multiple Data Sources

An important feature of an effective teacher evaluation system is the use of multiple data sources for documenting performance. The most common method for evaluating teachers is a clinical supervision model consisting of a pre-conference, observation, and post-conference. In fact, as noted in a study conducted by the Educational Research Service (1988), 99.8% of American public school administrators use direct classroom observation as the primary data collection technique. A study conducted in 1996 reached similar conclusions regarding the use of direct classroom observations, with 94.1% of school districts reporting using this technique as a primary method of data collection (Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996). However, primary reliance on formal observations in evaluation presents significant problems (e.g., artificiality, small sample of performance).

The creative use of multiple data sources to provide an accurate measure of teacher performance invokes a fuller view of performance than would be available through a more

narrowly defined approach to data collection (Peterson, 2000; Stronge & Tucker, 2003). While formal classroom observation can be a significant data source, it is too limiting as a single source of data for teacher evaluation.^{iv} Thus, teacher performance can be judged best by means more comprehensive and inclusive than merely direct observation.

Using multiple data sources in the teacher evaluation process offers numerous advantages over single source data collection processes (See, for example, Conley, 1987; Dyers, 2001; Peterson, Stevens & Ponzio, 1998). Among the advantages are those described in Table 2:

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Major sources for teacher evaluation include:

- Observation (observation of teachers, e.g., formal classroom/work setting observation, ongoing anecdotal observation of performance, *and* observation of student work);
- Client feedback (i.e., client interviews or surveys for students, parents, subordinates, and peers);
- Student performance data (i.e., student achievement);
- Portfolios (e.g., actual materials and reflections on performance logs, case notes, lesson plans); and
- Self evaluation (i.e., self reflection and analysis of performance).^v

Integrating multiple data sources in a teacher assessment and evaluation system offers a much more realistic picture of actual job performance and provides a stronger platform upon which to build realistic improvement plans than would be possible with merely a single source of information such as classroom observation. As multiple data sources are properly employed in performance evaluation, the validity and utility of the process can be dramatically enhanced.

What Are Obstacles to Quality Teacher Evaluation?

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation identified several prominent criticisms of performance evaluation practices, including those for teachers (Table 3):

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In addition to those common failures noted above, another major obstacle to effective teacher evaluation systems can be the influence of politics. The process is described as both emotionally laden and politically challenging (Stronge & Tucker, 1999). The stakeholders involved in the development of the new evaluation system must buy in to the new system.

In a study of the evaluation practices in the 100 largest school districts, the groups involved in the process represented both external and internal stakeholders (Loup, Garland, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1996). Groups included business leaders, state department of education staff, central office staff, school site administrators, teachers, teacher organization representatives, parents, and students. “These stakeholders often have conflicting expectations regarding what is good practice and effective reform and, yet, the input and support of these groups is an important aspect of gaining political support for a new evaluation system” (Stronge & Tucker, 1999, p. 339). They have differing views on issues related to both improvement and accountability.

Fullan stated that “power in school systems is distributed throughout the organization . . . and decision-making is inevitably a bargaining process to arrive at solutions that satisfy a number of constituencies” (1997, p. 5). Bridges and Groves (1999) explained that major decisions must be made regarding ground rules, procedures used in the evaluation system, judgments made through the evaluation system and the uses of those judgments in an evaluation system. The internal and external stakeholders involved in the development process of an evaluation system have differing views on issues related to both improvement and accountability (Stronge, & Tucker, 1999). A major challenge for developing quality teacher evaluation is listening to and accounting for these differing views. Johnson (1997) described the challenge in this way:

One should not underestimate the difficulties associated with developing and sustaining over time evaluation systems that are valid, reasonably reflective of both teaching and learning literatures, contextually sensitive, politically viable, legitimate, and consistent with what is known about schools as organizations (p.85).

In other words, teacher evaluation systems must be legally defensible, useful, feasible, and accurate measures of teacher performance.

How Can a Teacher Evaluation System Be Designed for School Improvement and Personal Growth?

It is important to consider the unique contributions made by each teacher to the accomplishment of the school's mission if a teacher assessment and evaluation system is to be effective. The Goals and Roles Evaluation (Stronge, 1995; Stronge & Helm, 1990, 1991, 1992)^{vi} is one evaluation model that offers a practical, research-based model of teacher evaluation that is rooted on the premise of individual-institutional improvement. The model is designed generically for use with a variety of positions and it may serve well as the basis for an evaluation system not only for teachers but also administrators and support personnel.

The Goals and Roles evaluation model reflects two phases with six distinct steps in the evaluation process:

Development Phase

1. Identify system needs
2. Develop roles and responsibilities for the job
3. Set standards for job performance

Implementation Phase

4. Document job performance
5. Evaluate performance
6. Improve/Maintain Professional Service

The following provides a brief description of each step as represented in Figure 1

Figure 1.1 about here

Development Phase

Step 1: Identify System Needs

Each school has specific needs that relate to its mission and that are met through the collective performance of all personnel (e.g., principal, classroom teachers, resource specialists, counselors). A systematic examination of the needs of the school's constituents will help clarify its mission and purpose. Goals should be developed within the context of the greater community and in consideration of relevant variables such as financial and personnel resources. School or

district-wide goals often are found in a mission statement, a set of educational goals, a multi-year school plan, or a strategic plan.

Once school goals have been established, attention should turn to the matter of translating those goals into operational terms. One logical way of accomplishing this task is to consider all programs (e.g., math curriculum, guidance-counseling services, athletic program) in light of whether they contribute to the accomplishment of the school's goals, and, then, to relate program objectives to position expectations (Stronge & Tucker, 1995b). In essence, a domino effect is initiated in this line of planning and evaluation (Figure 2):

Figure 1.2 here

Determining the needs of the organization is a prerequisite for all remaining steps if the evaluation process is to be relevant to the school's mission and, ultimately, responsive to public demands for accountability (Castetter, 1996; Connellan, 1978; Goodale, 1992; Locke, 1968; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Phi Delta Kappa National Study Committee on Evaluation, 1971; Seyfarth, 2002; Smith, 1998).

Step 2: Identify Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

Accurate and appropriate descriptions of the teacher's roles and responsibilities can be developed only from clear statements of school or district goals and philosophies. Once school goals are determined, then it is only sensible to relate program expectations to position expectations. Typical areas of responsibility might include: instructional planning and delivery, assessment, management, and professionalism. These areas of responsibility can serve as a framework for the categorization of more specific responsibilities (or "duties")^{vii} (Educational Review Office, 1998; Redfern, 1980; Scriven, 1988a, 1988b, 1991; Weiss & Weiss, 1998).

Danielson (1996) explained that “the components of professional practice are a comprehensive framework reflecting the many different aspects of teaching” (p.2). Danielson’s framework includes four domains: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. This framework can be used to guide both novice and experienced teachers, to provide a structure for reform efforts, and to communicate expectations to the community (Danielson, 1996).

Because job performance must reflect behavior in order to be evaluated, an important addition to the definition of the teacher's role and responsibilities is to identify sample performance indicators. While professional responsibilities are intended to capture the essence of the teacher's job, it is difficult, if not impossible, to document the fulfillment of professional responsibilities without some measurable indication of their accomplishment. Thus, to give meaning to the teacher's professional responsibilities, it is advisable to select a *sampling* of performance indicators that are both measurable and indicative of the job (Bolton, 1980; Cascio, 1998; Keegan, 1975; Redfern, 1980; Sawyer, 2001; Valentine, 1992).

Step 3: Set Performance Standards

Setting standards involves determining a level of acceptable performance. It also may entail determining performance that exceeds acceptable expectations. Because of school needs, available resources, the purpose of a specific position, and a variety of other factors, standards of performance may vary from organization to organization. Although operational definitions for standards may vary from organization to organization, they must be standard and consistently implemented within the school or school district in order to ensure fairness and legal defensibility. This step is important in any goals-oriented personnel evaluation system such and should be addressed by both the administrator-evaluator and the teacher (Ellet, Loup, Naik, Chauvin, & Claudet, 1994; Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1988; Manatt, 1988; McCarthy, Cambron-McGabe, & Thomas, 1998; Phi Delta Kappa National Study Committee on Evaluation, 1971)

Note: Steps 1 through 3 constitute the Development Phase of the Goals and Roles Evaluation Model and are intended to be given careful consideration in advance of the Implementation Phase.

Implementation Phase

Step 4: Document Job Performance

Documentation is the process of recording sufficient information about the teacher's performance to support ongoing evaluation and to justify any personnel decisions based on the evaluation. The basic question is: How will the teacher demonstrate performance of the roles and responsibilities of the job? Documentation procedures need to rely on multiple data sources as

discussed earlier in the chapter (Conley, 1987; Helm, 1994; McGreal, 1988; Peterson, 2000; Stronge & Tucker, 2003; Wilkerson, Manatt, Rogers, & Maughan, 2000).

Step 5: Evaluate Performance

Evaluation is the process of comparing an individual teacher's documented job performance with the previously established roles and responsibilities and acceptable performance standards. While this step clearly entails an end-of-cycle summative evaluation, evaluating performance also must include periodic feedback through formative assessment. By providing feedback throughout the evaluation cycle, the teacher is supported in his/her ongoing efforts to fulfill performance expectations and is able to identify areas of performance that need attention while there is still time to improve. Additionally, an opportunity for adequate notice is provided through periodic formative feedback, leading to a fair summative evaluation in which there should be no surprises.

Summative evaluation provides an opportunity to determine individual merit based on performance. Further, the evaluation affords the basis for judging worth, first, by viewing evaluation performance in light of the school's goals and, second, by maintaining compatibility between individual performance and school goals. In an ongoing, systematic evaluation process, identifying system needs and relating those needs to performance ensures that the evaluation is concerned with both the merit (internal value) and worth (external value) of performance (Castetter, 1996; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Frels & Horton, 1994; Medley, Coker, & Soar, 1984; Scriven, 1973, 1995; Valentine, 1992)

Step 6: Improve/Maintain Professional Service

With an emphasis in the evaluation process on both improvement (i.e., formative) and accountability (i.e., summative) purposes, Step 6 brings the Goals and Roles Evaluation process full circle. Formative aspects of evaluation, intended to provide recognition for noteworthy performance, along with immediate and intermediate feedback for performance improvement and correction where needed, should be ongoing throughout the evaluation process and are implicit in this model. Nonetheless, it is beneficial to provide an explicit step for improving or maintaining professional service as the culmination of the evaluation cycle and as an entrée into the following cycle.^{viii}

Improving and maintaining professional service may take the form of a variety of personnel decisions, including assisting the teacher in improving performance, personnel

transfers, and when necessary, termination. Moreover, this step suggests the importance of professional development with a balance between the interests of the teacher and the interests of the school in a continuous improvement cycle (Little, 1993). After all, the most fundamental purpose of an evaluation is to *improve* both the individual's and institution's performance (Colby, Bradshaw, & Joyner, 2002; Hunter, 1988; Iwanicki, 1990; Johnson, 1997; McGreal, 1988; Stufflebeam, 1983).

While six distinct steps in the Goals and Roles evaluation model are described, it is important to recognize that the first four steps require intensive attention only during the *Development Phase*. For example, once the organizational goals are established (Step 1), it is not necessary to reassess those goals every year; rather, most schools implement a mid to long range systematic plan that is reviewed and updated periodically. Additionally, once roles and responsibilities are determined for a given position (Step 2), and performance standards are established (Step 3), there typically exists a need for only review and minor modifications during the *Implementation Phase*. Thus, once the *Development Phase* has been completed, most of the energy and effort are invested in the *Implementation Phase* (the last three steps of the evaluation): documenting performance (Step 4), evaluating performance (Step 5), and improving and maintaining professional service based on that performance (Step 6).

How Can Self-Reflection and Feedback Improve Teaching?

A teacher evaluation system that is designed for school improvement and teacher growth can improve teaching. The *value* in evaluation is improving performance. At its most fundamental level, teacher evaluation helps teachers identify the need to improve and then serves as a catalyst for accomplishing those desired improvements. If teacher evaluation is to serve this important function, then there must be a mechanism for communicating why and how to change. Among the viable sources for offering assistance for improving performance are teachers, themselves, peers, and supervisors. Each of these sources will be discussed, briefly, in turn.

Teachers Helping Themselves: Self-reflection

Good teachers don't just teach; rather, they think about what they plan to teach, they teach, and then they think about it, again. In essence, they self-reflect. Reflection is a powerful

force for improvement. A hallmark of expert teachers is their ability to learn from experience through observation and reflection (Tucker, Stronge, & Gareis, 2002). In fact, expert teachers engage in instructional self-assessment as a mechanism for continual improvement (Covino & Iwanicki, 1996). While experience can be valuable in the teaching profession, “experience without reflection does not improve instruction or teacher effectiveness. Rather, it is the combination of experience and thoughtful analysis that makes teachers more effective” (Tucker, Stronge, & Gareis, 2002, p. 79).

Teachers Helping Teachers: Peer Feedback

Is there value in teachers serving as peer assistants or assessors in a performance evaluation system? The available evidence is quite promising as suggested in the following references:

- Peer assistance programs offer helpful support to new and veteran teachers in need of improving their skills or knowledge. Most peer review programs have some form of peer assistance in place, thus connecting formative (improvement) and summative (accountability) aspects of teacher evaluation (Hurling, 1999).
- In school districts such as Toledo, Ohio, and Rochester, New York, where peer review programs have been implemented, the percentage of teachers who have received less-than-satisfactory evaluations and, thus, additional assistance and training, has increased dramatically over traditional administrator-only evaluations (from 0.1 percent to 8 percent) (Pfankuch, 1997).
- Significantly higher percentages of first year teachers have been identified as needing assistance or as not satisfactory through peer-review (Bradley, 1998). Interestingly, “anecdotal accounts suggest that new teachers need and welcome assistance from more-experienced colleagues, even when those colleagues render a negative evaluation (Ruenzel, 1999, p. 1).
- Consulting teachers typically spend more time observing classrooms, are more thorough in documenting performance, and are able to offer more extensive improvement assistance than traditional administrator evaluators.

- “New teachers stay on the job far longer in Columbus, Ohio, than in typical urban districts that lack such programs, where about 50 percent of new hires leave after five years. In Columbus, 80 percent of new teachers remain on the job five years later” (Bradley, 1998, p. 2).
- There is evidence that peer review programs even help satisfactory teachers become better (Pfankuck, 1997).

Administrators Helping Teachers: Supervisor Feedback

Evaluation systems have been criticized for relying merely on observation by an administrator or supervisor as the primary data collection tool (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Peterson, 2000; Stronge & Tucker, 2003). However, feedback from administrators and supervisors in meeting both the accountability and professional growth purposes of an evaluation system. Supervision, defined in this way, takes the form of instructional leadership (McEwan, 2003).

- “Educators agree that there should be some internal consistency to sequences of subject matter and that there should be articulation between grades of a school and levels of the school system. A supervisor is the one person in a school system who can help achieve these goals” (Oliva & Pawlas, 1997, p. 42).
- “Effective instructional leaders take personal responsibility for making sure that trustworthy research and proven practices are talked about frequently and demonstrated ably in their schools” (McEwan, 2003, p. 36).
- “At the individual school building level, the principal, assistant principal, lead teacher, curriculum coordinator, or curriculum resource teacher can oversee the planning for continuous sequences among courses or grades within a particular school” (Oliva & Pawlas, 1997, p. 42).
- “If supervision is a service designed to help teachers become more effective so that their students will benefit, then staff development is an important domain of supervision” (Oliva & Pawlas, 1997, p. 54).
- “Supervision in the form of curriculum support can be very helpful to the teacher ... Curriculum support focuses on materials, objectives, and philosophy of instruction” (Acheson & Gall, 1997, p. 14).

Summary

Effective teacher evaluation is essential for effective schools. The advantages of a quality teacher evaluation system are listed in Table 4.

Table 1.4 here

In the final analysis, teacher evaluation in its myriad forms is nothing more than a process for determining how an individual, program, or school is performing in relation to a given set of circumstances. When evaluation is viewed as more than this process (that is., evaluation as an end within itself), it gets in the way of progress and, thus, becomes irrelevant. When evaluation is treated as less than it deserves (that is, superficial, little or no resource allocation, invalid evaluation systems, flawed implementation designs), the school, its employees, and the public at large are deprived of opportunities for improvement and the benefits that accountability afford. All of us, whatever our relationship to the educational enterprise, deserve high quality evaluation. A teacher assessment and evaluation system that is built squarely upon individual and institutional improvement holds the promise of filling this need and better serving our students and our communities.

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ⁱ Portions of this chapter are derived from an earlier article, "Balancing Individual and Institutional Goals in Educational Personnel Evaluation: A Conceptual Framework," by Stronge (1995).

ⁱⁱ The term, "assessment" is used more typically to connote the formative aspects of performance review while "evaluation" is sometimes used to describe the summative aspects. While both terms are used in this chapter, "evaluation" will be considered to be the more inclusive term and, thus, will be used to include both formative and summative aspects of performance review.

ⁱⁱⁱ Please refer to Scriven (1967) for a discussion of the concepts of formative and summative purposes in evaluation.

^{iv} For additional discussion of the limits of classroom observation for teacher evaluation, see Chapter 6, "Using Client Surveys in Teacher Evaluation," in this text.

^v Separate chapters are provided in this text on each of these data sources.

^{vi} Initial work on the model was in the context of evaluation for educational specialists (e.g., school counselor, school psychologist) described as Professional Support Personnel. The model is intended to provide an evaluation paradigm that can be adapted to each individual and institution. Permission is granted for use in this text.

^{vii} Scriven (1991) developed an extensive list of the Duties of the Teacher (DOTT).

^{viii} The length of an evaluation cycle should be determined based on the context of the setting. In some schools and for some teachers (e.g., probationary status), a one year cycle may be most beneficial while in other settings, a multi-year cycle may work best.