12-2015

Perceptions of Western Pennsylvania Elementary Principals on the Teacher Effectiveness System

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PERCEPTIONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS ON THE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS SYSTEM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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December 2015

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Improving education continues to be at the forefront in the minds of policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Franklin, 2014; Manigiante, 2011). Most states are in the process of implementing policies that base teacher ratings on student learning. Sweeping changes have impacted school districts with the signing of House Bill 1901 (Act 82 of 2012), which required the Secretary of Education to establish a new rating system for evaluating teachers and principals in Pennsylvania. Teacher quality is critical to school improvement. Decades of research has concluded that the biggest factor influencing a student's educational experience is the effectiveness of their teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Rockoff, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kane 2005.) In order to establish effective teacher supervision and ensure teacher quality in the classroom, principals must take an active role in the evaluation process.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions that elementary principals have on the Teacher Evaluation System in western Pennsylvania. The intent was to gain a greater understanding from principals who have been implementing the system in their elementary schools. The Teacher Effectiveness System, established in 2013 by the Secretary of Education, evaluates teacher performance through classroom observations, building data, teacher-specific data, and other elective data.

Principals in Pennsylvania must use multiple sources of data, as dictated by Act 82 to evaluate teachers on an annual basis.

The participants included ten elementary school principals currently implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. Demographic data were collected from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and other public websites. Interviews were conducted with principals in order to explore this topic.

Findings show that implementing a large-scale teacher evaluation system requires building leadership from the principal. Four significant themes emerged: technology, professional development, data-driven practices, and an instructional leadership model. The research confirmed the importance of a Systems Thinking approach as well as factors to promote effective reform through Fullan's Change Theory. Gaps were identified in implementation practices that could inform changes for principals, school districts, state departments, and college and university preparation programs. This study concluded that more research is needed to further explore models for teacher supervision and evaluation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very fortunate to have such caring and talented individuals that help me finish this journey. First, I would like to thank my dissertation committee. Dr.Joseph Marcoline, committee chair, you supported and guided me through this lengthy process and encouraged me to stay with the process. You always found something positive to say and provided a pathway for success. I will always be grateful for your encouragement and to continue on during the dissertation process. I would also like to thank Dr. Cathy Kaufman and Dr. Robert Millward for providing excellent feedback and making my study relevant with all of the changes occurring in the field of education and teacher evaluation.

My most memorable moments during this process occurred when having my morning cup of coffee at Starbucks and meeting an amazing friend Joni Boussalham the Manager. Her ongoing encouragement and friendship pushed me for the past 5 years through completion and developed a lifelong friendship. To Jacie Maslyk and Amy Burch, thank you for your friendship and your continuous support through completion.

In addition I could not be where I am at today without the support and encouragement of Rick MacMurdo. You are amazing. I could not thank you more for your constant support and motivation. When I was down you made sure that I stayed focused and made sure I saw my commitment through until completion.

I would like to thank my parents James and Rosemary and my sister Diane; you have always inspired me to achieve the unthinkable and not give up. As a child you always encouraged me to do my best and reach for my goal. THANK YOU…

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Teacher quality is critical to school improvement. Decades of research has concluded that the biggest factor influencing a student's educational experience is the effectiveness of their teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Rockoff, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kane 2005.) In order to establish effective teacher supervision and ensure teacher quality in the classroom, principals must take an active role in the evaluation process. The leadership role of school principals has transformed significantly (Wohlstetter, Datnow, & Park, 2008) with increasing demands for accountability over the last 15 years. Principals can no longer focus only on school management tasks, but must serve as instructional leaders working to improve teaching and learning. As instructional leaders, the supervision and evaluation of teachers is a primary responsibility (Fisicaro, 2010). Supervision and evaluation by building principals is one element needed to improve education, but transforming teacher evaluation as a means for improving student learning is a challenge.

Improving education continues to be at the forefront in the minds of policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004; Franklin, 2014; Manigiante, 2011). Most states are in the process of implementing policies that base teacher ratings on student learning. Sweeping changes have impacted school districts with the signing of House Bill 1901 (Act 82 of 2012), which required the Secretary of Education to establish a new rating system for evaluating teachers and principals in Pennsylvania. The new rating system includes 50 percent of evaluations based on measures of student performance including student test scores. These are comprehensive changes compared to the various protocols used by school districts across the state prior to Act 82.

There is strong consensus among researchers that student performance data can only be used to assess teaching performance. Little, Goe, and Bell (2009) argued that an effective evaluation system would combine several approaches of teacher evaluation in order to gain the most complete understanding of teaching. Policy changes in many states are requiring a comprehensive approach to teacher evaluation including multiple measures of teacher effectiveness. Implementing a new rating system presents challenges for teachers, but also for principals responsible for observing and evaluating teachers.

The United States Department of Education's (USDOE) 2010 Race to the Top (RTTT) competition called on school districts to develop evaluation systems that included measures of student growth, bringing attention to teacher effectiveness. When the program was announced in July 2009, the USDOE asserted that states and districts "will offer models for others to follow and will spread the best reform ideas across their States, and across the country" (USDOE, 2009). In response over the last 5 years, states have designed and implemented models for evaluating teachers based on available research, including Pennsylvania. "Many states have developed new systems quickly, while also re-aligning curriculum and other practices to the Common Core, leaving much of the coordination of evaluations to principals" (Wiener, 2013).

Traditionally, the most widely-used teacher evaluation system has been classroom observation by the principal (Brandt, Mathers, Oliva, Brown-Sims, & Hess, 2007; Mathers, Oliva, & Laine, 2008). Truly effective observation depends on the skills of the observer and whether they know how to identify good teaching when they see it (Research in Action, 2011). It is also imperative that observers have had rigorous training in the use of evaluation tools, as well as ongoing professional development to ensure successful implementation of evaluative practices.

Some principals may not be equipped to evaluate teacher performance and serve as instructional leaders, if they are not aware of the demands of the Common Core (Dewing, Perini, & Silver, 2012). In his examination of teacher evaluation, Fisicaro (2010) argued that evaluation should be a partnership between principals and teachers and differentiated as needed. It is the responsibility of building principals to implement a comprehensive evaluation system that takes into account ongoing observation practices and relevant data to improve teacher quality.

History of Education Reform

Education reform movements over the past decades have focused on teacher quality and evaluation practices. A Nation At Risk (1983) called for substantial changes to assist schools in improving the quality of education and gained attention by raising standards for students and teachers, raising course requirements for graduation, increasing student assessments, and tightening teacher certification requirements. In the report, the National Commission of Excellence in Education reinforced that teachers should meet high educational standards and recommended that salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system. While changes were implemented, teacher quality continued to be a focus of educational reform.

In 1996, another report, *What Matters Most: Teaching and America's Future*, concluded that reform of public education was based on three principles: (a) the importance of teacher quality to improve student learning; (b) recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers; and (c) creating the conditions in which teachers can teach, and teach well. (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future; Executive Summary). The commission recommended that common standards serve as a foundation for teachers and students. The group encouraged action in the following areas: (a) adopt professional teaching standards for teachers, (b) develop

accreditation for all schools, (c) close poor performing schools, and (d) tighten teacher licensing procedures (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996). Additionally, the Commission called for changes in teacher preparation and professional development. Institutions of higher education were urged to develop programs for mentoring and professional development programs that would include schools to support new teachers in yearlong internships (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996).

When the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002 was instituted, the goal was to again, reform the educational system in the United States. By the year 2006, all states were required to ensure that teachers were "highly qualified". In addition, this law gave the federal government more authority over holding states and districts accountable for student achievement (NCLB, 2002). The role of the teacher is essential to student achievement and school improvement. For schools to improve, teachers must be at the core of any reform effort (Fullan, 2001.) Research suggests that the key to improving student learning relates directly to classroom practices of the teacher (Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy 2009). Implementation of NCLB increased accountability not only for teachers, but on building principals to ensure effective instruction in the classroom.

In 2007, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) began the discussion of a common set of standards. By 2009, the group created the Common Core State Standards Initiative, developing college and career-ready standards. This group of state leaders, including governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, worked to ensure that the standards were rigorous and called for deep learning of content areas. This change in standards represents another reform

movement that impacted teacher evaluation. Under the Common Core State Standards, teachers would be responsible for providing effective instruction to students.

Race to the Top (RTTT) a $4.35 billion United States Department of Education contest, was created to spur innovation and reforms in state and local district K-12 education. Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, states were awarded points for satisfying certain educational policies, such as performance-based standards for teachers and principals, complying with the Common Core State Standards, lifting caps on charter schools, turning around the lowest-performing schools, and building data systems. This reform combined with its many predecessors, contributed to the push for rigorous systems to evaluate teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher evaluation in Pennsylvania has changed. It is no longer based solely on classroom observation. Evaluation of teacher effectiveness now encompasses a variety of data sources. School principals are responsible for analyzing all of this information and working in collaboration with teachers to increase teacher quality, and ultimately student achievement. Principals are of particular interest because they are often responsible for initiating, implementing, and maintaining teacher effectiveness plans.

As the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania is explored, school districts, schools, and district administrators will be able to understand the importance of principal leadership in this process. In addition, college and university principal preparation programs will become better equipped to train aspiring principals for the field. While some research exists on teacher evaluation systems, less is known about the specific perspectives of principals involved in the improvement of teacher effectiveness within schools. This study seeks to delve deeper

into the descriptions of those perspectives by exploring the work of elementary principals implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the perceptions that elementary principals have on the Teacher Evaluation System in western Pennsylvania. The intent is to gain a greater understanding from principals who have been implementing the system in their elementary schools. The Teacher Effectiveness System, established in 2013 by the Secretary of Education, evaluates teacher performance through classroom observations, building data, teacher-specific data, and other elective data. Principals in Pennsylvania must use multiple sources of data, as dictated by Act 82 to evaluate teachers on an annual basis, such as observation data, building level data, and teacher specific data.

This study will explore how elementary principals perceive the teacher evaluation model, particularly in this era of high-stakes accountability. While there are many aspects of teacher evaluation and observation, this study will focus solely on the perceptions of school principals in Western Pennsylvania. Knowledge gained from interviewing building principals can lead to better practices. In addition, the study may contribute to the identification of effective management and organizational strategies, as well as insights gained from overcoming potential obstacles in the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System. This study was designed to add to the research regarding teacher evaluation practices as perceived by building principals. In addition, by analyzing this topic through the lens of systems theory and Fullan's Theory of Change, this study will address a current gap in the literature.

Questions to Be Researched

The questions that this study will focus on are:

1. What is the perceived influence of Act 82 of 2012 and the Teacher Effectiveness System on the role of elementary principals?

2. What are the perceptions of elementary principals regarding the Teacher Effectiveness System with regards to the inclusion of building level data, teacher-specific data, elective data, and classroom observations?

3. What are the perceptions of elementary principals with regards to the observation components within the Danielson Framework: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities?

4. What underlying themes about the teacher evaluation system emerge from interviews with Pennsylvania elementary principals?

Definition of Terms

Act 82 of 2012- Also known as House Bill 190, this law required the Secretary of Education to establish a new system to measure the effectiveness of teacher and principals, with 50 percent of evaluations to be based on multiple measures of student performance.

Elementary Principal- For the purposes of this study, an elementary principal is defined as a school leader responsible for students in any configuration that includes primary level students including, K-2, K-5, K-6, etc.

Instructional leadership- includes three domains: (1) defining the school mission, (2) managing the instructional program, and (3) promoting a positive learning climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, 2011, Maslyk, 2012).

Intermediate Unit- In Pennsylvania, Intermediate units are educational organizations that serve as a liaison between the Pennsylvania Department of Education and local school districts. They provide services to school districts including staffing, professional development, technical assistance, and pupil services.

Keystone Exams- A standards-based assessment administered to secondary students in Pennsylvania. As of 2015, these end-of-course exams are given in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)- the federal law adopted in 2001 mandating major changes in K-12 education. Increasing the federal role in education, NCLB increased accountability for states, school districts, and teachers (No Child Left Behind: Resources, 2007).

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)- The state assessment in math, science, reading and writing (more recently combined under the PA Core Standards as English Language Arts) used to measure proficiency towards the standards. (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2010).

Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS)- is a statistical analysis of assessment data and demonstrates student growth. The data is provided to schools as a multiple measure of student achievement. (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2007)

School Performance Profile (SPP)- The School Performance Profile is a school score based upon multiple data points, which include: state assessments, college readiness tests, and industry standards-based assessments. The score also includes progress towards closing achievement gaps and student growth over time. Other factors taken into consideration are graduation, promotion, and attendance rates. This score is a part of the building level data within the Teacher Effectiveness System (Pennsylvania Department of Education).

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)- one component of Pennsylvania's Teacher Effectiveness System that accounts for 20 to 35 percent of a classroom teacher's evaluation. The SLO process documents performance targets selected by the teacher and monitored over time to measure student mastery or growth in a standard (PDE, 2014).

Teacher evaluation- the process of annually monitoring teacher performance. The evaluation is the culminating document that is based on observations, discussions, and reflections of performance (Marshall, 2005).

Significance of the Study

Within the last five years, research focusing on teacher effectiveness and evaluation has increased, resulting in a variety of findings associated with teacher evaluation and the need for principal leadership in this process. There is little research on the topic of evaluations in the age of the Common Core Standards (Kendall, Alpert, & Odum, 2011). This study will provide insight into how principals perceive evaluation in an attempt to improve teacher effectiveness models. The study might also reveal shortcomings in the assessment system as well as the need for increased principal training in the areas of supervision and evaluation. Increased knowledge of system theory could enhance leadership skills for existing building principals.

Evaluation cannot simply be a satisfactory or unsatisfactory measure. There is room for improvement, both in state policy and local practice. Pennsylvania has a unique perspective, having experience with both value-added measures and Danielson's Framework for Teaching (FFT). Education policymakers in Pennsylvania designed a teacher evaluation system that builds on the existing research base, which emphasizes multiple, rigorous measures coupled with ongoing feedback to teachers, making it a relevant topic to explore at this time.

The Teacher Effectiveness Evaluation System for professional employees holding instructional certificates was implemented on July 1, 2013. The system includes four main components: teacher observation and practice, building level data, teacher-specific data, and elective data. Per the Rules and Regulations published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, "the Pennsylvania Department of Education shall publish a list of approved practice models for assessing the four domains annually" (June 2013, p. 3343). The models approved for teacher valuation through 2019 include the Danielson Framework for Teaching (2007, 2011, and 2013) and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model. The FFT is the predominant model for observation and practice and will be described in more detail in the next section.

Teacher Observation and Practice

The Danielson Framework for Teaching includes four domains of teacher effectiveness: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Evidence within these four domains is associated with improving student achievement. Planning and preparation includes selecting standards-based lesson goals and designing effective instruction and assessment. Establishing a culture for learning and appropriate classroom management techniques that maximize instructional time describes the classroom environment domain. The **i**nstruction domain includes the use of research-based strategies to engage students in meaningful learning, as well as utilizing assessment results to make decisions about student needs. Professional responsibilities encompass using systems for managing student data and communicating with student families. Table 1 provides a glimpse of two of the components within the instruction domain and the expectations for each level of proficiency, as measured by the Teacher Effectiveness System.

Table 1. Instruction Domain of the Danielson Framework

Component	1. Unsatisfactory	2. Needs Improvement or Progressing	3. Proficient	4. Distinguished
3a: Communicating with students	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are unclear or confusing to students. Teacher's use of language contains errors or is inappropriate to students' cultures or levels of development	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clarified after initial confusion; teacher's use of language is correct but may not be completely appropriate to students' cultures or levels of development.	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clear to students. Communications are appropriate to students' cultures and levels of development.	Expectations for learning, directions and procedures, and explanations of content are clear to students. Teacher's oral and written communication is clear and expressive, appropriate to students' cultures and levels of development, and anticipates possible student misconceptions.
3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques	Teacher's questions are low-level or inappropriate, eliciting limited student participation, and recitation rather than discussion.	Some of the teacher's questions elicit a thoughtful response, but most are low-level, posed in rapid succession. Teacher's attempts to engage all students in the discussions are only partially successful.	Most of the teacher's questions elicit a thoughtful response, and the teacher allows sufficient time for students to answer. The students are engaged and participate in the discussion, with the teacher stepping aside when appropriate.	Questions reflect high expectations and are culturally and developmentally appropriate. Students formulate many of the high-level questions and ensure that all voices are heard.

Building Level Data

Building level data consists of multiple indicators of student achievement and academic growth. These factors are combined to form the School Performance Profile (SPP). The SPP is generated annually and published in the fall. The score (out of 100) takes into account student

achievement on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and the Keystone Exams. The PSSA is a standardized test administered each spring to students in grades 3-8. All students are assessment in math and English language arts. Students in grades 4 and 8 are also assessed in science. These scores are reported as proficiency levels: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The Keystone Exams began development in 2011 as end-of-course assessments. They are designed to measure student understanding in various secondary subject areas including, Algebra I, Biology, and Literature. Additional assessments will be added in the future in the areas of chemistry, history, and civics. These assessments are administered in grades 9-12 and reflect the content of the Common Core Standards.

The SPP also considers the ability of the school to close the achievement gap for all students, as well as for those who have historically underperformed on standardized tests. Within the TES, the building level score accounts for 15% of a teacher's total rating. The SPP serves several purposes in addition to comprising the building level score with the TES. It provides information used in determining eligibility status for Title I schools. The SPP also informs the public about the academic performance of public schools. School districts are also able to use this data to set goals, plan and allocate resources, and improve student achievement.

Teacher Specific Data

Teacher specific data includes information that is directly tied to individual teachers. This measure includes student performance on the PSSA, as well as Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) data, which accounts for another 15% of the evaluation. PVAAS is a statistical analysis of PSSA assessment data, and provides districts and schools with progress data. This method provides schools with information to ensure they are meeting the academic needs of individual students, as well as cohorts of students. Using a growth measure, like

PVAAS, allows educators to determine whether students are making one year of growth in one year's time.

Elective Data

The elective data makes up the remaining 20% of the TES. Elective data potentially includes district assessments, standardized test scores or other valid measures, as approved by school administration. In Pennsylvania, these are selected by teachers and approved by building principals as a part of the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) process. Within each SLO, teachers develop performance measures that assess students learning. Goals are set to measure student growth or mastery over a set period of time. The SLO portion of the TES is being implemented beginning in January of 2015, which will add to the importance of this research due to its timely nature.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education shared the following info-graphic as a visual model of the TES. Figure 2 provides a graphic representation of the overall model. The pie chart shows the percentage for each component of the system, as well as a description of what makes up each component within the system.

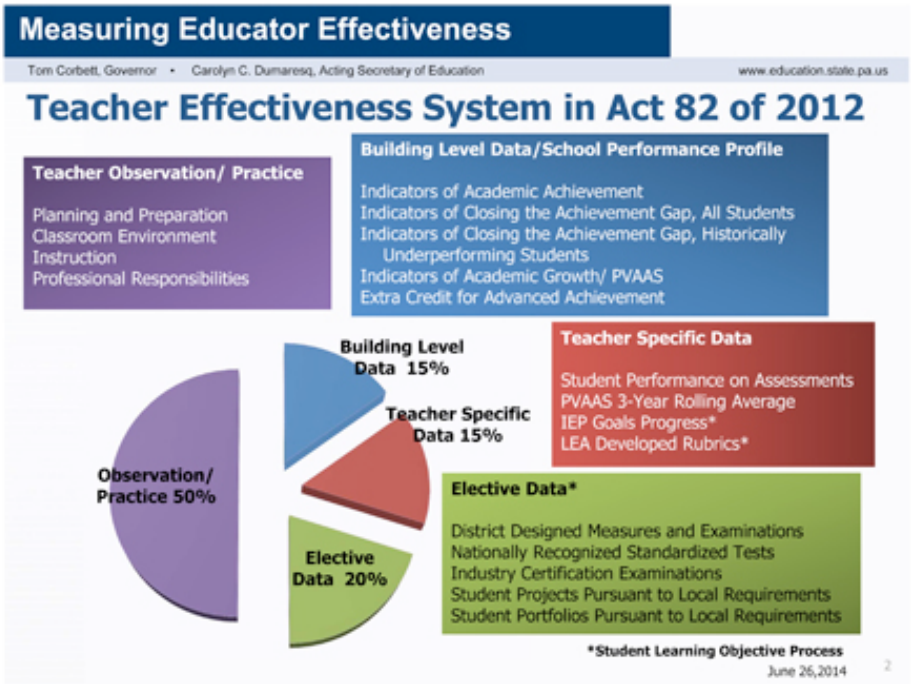

Figure 1. Teacher effectiveness system in Act 82 of 2012.

There are several differences between the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania and the evaluation process that was previously used. Prior to 2013, the model that was used did not address teacher evaluation or effectiveness in a systematic way. Aside from teacher observation, other component parts were not included. Under the previous evaluation model, teachers were simply rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on classroom observation only. Multiple measures were not taken into consideration. Evaluation did not include assessment data at the teacher level or school level. Within the "old" system, teachers did not receive feedback from principals for professional growth. Teachers were not given a voice in the teacher evaluation process at all. Their experience was passive, rather than active. They received their rating form, signed it, and placed it in a file. Within the TES, teachers have ongoing communication with their supervisors, not only through a pre-conference, observation, and post conference, but also through the development of the Student Learning Outcomes. With the observation being the only source of data, the model was not really as system at all. The School

Performance Profile and Student Learning Outcomes, both components of the new Teacher Effectiveness System, did not exist prior to 2012, thus making the new system multi-faceted. The system now provides a more comprehensive look at teacher effectiveness in Pennsylvania.

Results from this study will allow school districts and principals to better understand the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. This knowledge will also impact educators in other states who are in various stages of implementing evaluation systems in response to Common Core State Standards. This data can also inform superintendents and school boards as they create and monitor policies that govern teacher evaluation. The potential benefit of this research is that it could be used to clarify teacher evaluation practices and recommend ways to improve those systems.

Wiener (2013) stated that "school principals are the make-or-break actors in both teacher evaluations and the transition to the Common Core" (p. 11). This study will explore the perception of principals who are implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. By examining the structures, practices, and people who are engaged in teacher evaluation, this study adds to the research connecting school leadership and teacher evaluation, emphasizing its impact through systems thinking.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations to this study. In an effort to provide an in-depth description of the evaluation system, the researcher chose to limit the amount of participants in the study. By focusing on elementary schools, the initial pool of participants was limited. It was further limited to elementary schools in western Pennsylvania where principals are fully implementing the TES. The leaders of these schools had to serve as a principal in the same

school for at least three years. An attempt was made to obtain a diverse sample of principals, representing different genders, races, and cultures.

Summary

In response to the Common Core, states are putting policies in place that increase teacher effectiveness, including more rigorous teacher evaluations (Wiener, 2013). School principals are being called on to lead teacher evaluation initiatives. In Pennsylvania, the Teacher Evaluation System is in its early stages of implementation. In order for educators to understand this responsibility, it is important for educational research to further explore the perceptions of principals implementing rigorous evaluation systems. By exploring the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of teacher evaluation systems, schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education can focus their attention on promoting successful evaluation practices across Pennsylvania and throughout the country.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Recent literature has established teacher evaluation as the foundation to improve teaching and learning (Johnson, 2011; Kachur, et al., 2009; Keruskin, 2005). Studies have highlighted a strong need for reform in teacher evaluation (Measures of Effective Teaching Project, 2010; National Council on Teacher Quality, 2009). This is happening at a critical time when teacher evaluations are changing, bringing more formality and accountability to education than ever before. Significant shifts began in the area of teacher evaluation with the Race to the Top (RTTT) competition. This U.S. Department of Education (USDE) competitive grant program was originally authorized and funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The USDE awarded approximately $4 billion to twelve States during the first two phases of this competition. One stipulation to receiving grant money was to address teacher effectiveness, specifically by improving teacher evaluations. While the topic of teacher evaluation is not a new one, this funding brought the topic into the forefront of the minds of educators.

This study explores the changes to teacher supervision and evaluation in western Pennsylvania through the eyes of elementary principals. In order to obtain a deeper understanding, it is important to have a background in educational supervision and teacher evaluation. It is also relevant to consider major educational reform movements that have changed the course of the development of evaluation tools and systems.

Within this review of literature, the purpose of teacher supervision and evaluation will be presented, as well as a summary of the history of this topic over the last 300 years. The Teacher Effectiveness System (TES) in Pennsylvania will be defined, including the role of the principal

in this system. Systems thinking will serve as the theoretical framework for the study. Research on effective evaluation systems will be shared, including relevant studies that have attempted to identify valuable components within those systems that influence teaching and learning. Existing limitations to teacher evaluation will also be explored.

Change is a constant in education, although some element of evaluation has remained a critical component of the educational system. Approaches to teacher evaluation vary across states and districts in both scope and purpose (Mathers, Oliva, & Laine, 2008). New systems have been created to meet the demands set by recent school reforms, resulting in a critical look at supervision and evaluation. The purpose of evaluating teachers has been emphasized particularly within the last 6 years and will be detailed in the following section.

Purpose of Supervision and Evaluation

Since 2009, almost two-thirds of states have changed their teacher evaluation systems (Ruffini, Makkonen, Tejwani, & Diaz, 2014). Wiener (2013) articulated the urgency in changing teacher evaluation systems by stating, "putting them (teacher evaluation systems) into place quickly, simultaneously, and with integrity is a hugely demanding and complex endeavor" (p. 1). As states move to design new evaluation systems, it is important to remember the purpose of supervision and evaluation. Marzano (2012) presented two purposes of teacher evaluation: measuring teachers and developing teachers. New evaluation systems are attempting to do both, using data to measure effectiveness while also using feedback, reflection, and professional development to cultivate teacher growth. Danielson (2011) defined two related purposes: to ensure teacher quality and to promote professional development. Zepeda (2003) agreed that the purpose of supervision is to build the capacity of teachers, promoting growth and development, and problem solving. It is through strategies like these that teaching and learning has the

potential to improve.

Defining Effective Supervision and Evaluation

Continuous improvement and refinement of teaching should be a primary focus for administrators. Ensuring teacher quality through supervision and evaluation requires a consistent definition of effective teaching and a shared understanding of what that looks like in classrooms. Darling-Hammond (2012) described the criteria for an effective teacher evaluation system and suggested seven points: (a) standards-based; (b) multi-faceted; (c) knowledgeable, trained evaluators; (d) feedback connected to professional development; (e) encourage collaboration; (f) include teachers; and (g) stakeholder oversight. It is important to consider each element and the role that it plays within a comprehensive system. Teacher evaluation should be rooted in professional teaching standards. Standards provide for a common language that can support the development of teachers, whether novice or expert. Evaluations should take into consideration evidence from many sources. It is important that teacher practice, student learning, and professional contributions are integrated within the evaluation process.

Darling-Hammond (2012) also called for further differentiation of teacher evaluation with a tiered system that included a continuum of tools and supports throughout a teacher's career. She advocated for performance-assessments for teachers, similar to the samples submitted for National Board Certification. A comprehensive evaluation system should encompass a complete picture of what teachers do in their classrooms, as well as the results of the instructional practices.

In order for the system to be effective, evaluators must be knowledgeable about instruction, as well as possess the appropriate training to implement the evaluation system. When effective principals get into classrooms, they engage teachers in dialogue about

instructional strategies, assessment practices, and professional development. They understand how to support teacher growth by providing productive feedback; feedback connected to both teacher goals and school goals. When feedback is linked with professional development, it is more applicable to classroom improvements. Professional learning may be individualized, but should also include collaboration building a professional learning community where teachers are actively involved.

Teachers have been historically passive in the evaluation process. Any new evaluation system should include full engagement and participation from both parties. Duke and Stiggins (1986) indicated that successful evaluation systems should include active participation from teachers. In successful systems, teachers and administrators oversee the system together. This means that teachers are involved in developing, implementing, and monitoring the system to ensure that it is meaningful for all participants. Expert teachers can be a part of the process, sharing their knowledge with others, and providing assistance to peers (Darling-Hammond, 2012). In some systems, teachers participate on a panel to oversee the evaluation process and are involved in peer review. Some systems utilize teachers as a support prior to grievances and litigation procedures. States and districts vary in the amount of teacher input and participation that exists within the supervision and evaluation system.

Marshall (2009) studied teacher evaluation over a period of time and articulated that accurate evaluations require frequent visits to classrooms and should draw on multiple data sources, not on a singular observation. Traditional evaluation systems don't often include critical components such as; providing constructive feedback, validating best practices, and recommendations for teacher training (Marshall, 2005). Carefully crafted systems can address both teacher support and accountability within one system (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Pease,

1983, Stronge, 1997). Designing a comprehensive system to address teacher supervision and evaluation can be challenging. Recent research has been conducted to analyze the design and implementation of new teacher evaluation systems.

Nolan and Hoover (2011) concluded that effective teacher evaluation requires several important components. The researchers outlined the need for the system to focus on the broad responsibilities of teachers while incorporating multiple sources of data in the process. The study also found that community participation in designing the evaluation model and providing training for evaluators should also be included.

In a study that focused on the supervisory process of classroom walkthroughs, Yasher (2013) also stressed the need for multiple sources of data in the evaluation process. He stated that effective principals use multiple tools to help build efficiency in their organizations. Yasher believed that this could best be accomplished through frequent observations and working cooperatively with teachers. Through ongoing dialogue, principals could ensure that effective classroom practices were being implemented, resulting in increased student achievement.

In an Arizona study of principal perceptions of teacher evaluation, researchers found that time constraints were a limitation to the implementation of a new statewide system, but that online resources alleviated some of those time concerns (Ruffini, Makkonen, Tejwani, and Diaz, 2014). Ruffini et al. also revealed positive perceptions from participants including less subjectivity, increased accuracy, and the value of observations when paired with principal feedback. Their study also reported an increase in reflective practices, interest in instructional improvements, and collaboration. The importance of systems thinking was an underlying theme as the challenges of time, training, and technology were identified within the need for fidelity of system implementation. Systems thinking will be described later in this chapter.

Spina, Buckley, and Puchner (2014) studied the changing teacher evaluation practices in Illinois to determine the utility of their new model. Participants expressed several advantages to the system including a decreased emphasis on tenure, an increase in accountability for student growth, and a focus on professional development and improved instruction. A lack of teacher training, trust between administrators and teachers, and union interference were cited as potential barriers to successful implementation. Participants also expressed a concern with the student achievement component and the need for data to be collected and computed in a fair and equitable way.

Effective supervision practices are critical to the improvement of educational programs (Wiles and Bondi, 1996). Frase (2005) advocated that educators focus on student learning as the primary purpose of teacher supervision. Building teacher capacity can develop as principals create opportunities for dialogue through professional learning communities (Leithwood et al, 2004). Over time, this can happen with teamwork from principals and teachers.

As states work to implement comprehensive evaluation systems, they must consider the characteristics of effective systems. It is clear that principals can be an integral part of the teacher evaluation system. The active role of the principal should be discussed when exploring the topic of teacher evaluation.

The role of the principal

Principals play a critical role in teacher supervision and evaluation. The role of the principal within the realm of supervision and evaluation should be supportive and collaborative, providing feedback and opportunities for ongoing professional growth. Blasé and Blasé (2000) indicated that principals who had a positive impact on student achievement were found to talk with teachers and promote professional development, provide feedback, model effective

instructions, solicit opinions, and support collaboration (Blasé and Blasé, 2000). With the importance of principal involvement in the process, research points to several characteristics that should be considered.

Through their research, Stiggins and Duke (1988) identified that teachers want certain types of support from principals. Being more visible in classrooms and providing more constructive feedback were found to be positive characteristics for principals, as perceived by teachers under their supervision. Actively observing in classrooms and conversations about instruction should be an integral piece of supervision and evaluation. Sergiovanni (2008) asserted that effective supervision gives the principal time to monitor teaching and learning, while helping teachers develop their craft of teaching, and building motivation. While the principal's role is central to supervision and evaluation, they are not required to take on the sole responsibility on their own. In another study on teacher evaluation, Donaldson, Marnik, MacKenzie, and Ackerman (2009) advocated for principals to work collaboratively with teachers in tasks surrounding student assessments and classroom instruction.

The role of the principal in the TES is one that includes instructional leadership. Defined by the National Staff Development Council (2002), instructional leadership requires the development of a culture that supports student achievement, the use of ongoing data collection to monitor progress, and the ability to hold people accountable. By observing teachers in the classroom, building capacity for analyzing student data, and providing staff development, instructional leaders focus on helping teachers improve classroom instruction. In order for principals to lead and implement the use of TES in their schools, they will likely need to employ characteristics within an instructional leadership model. Principals will need to focus on their supervisory practices while supporting the needs of their teachers.

An effective plan to supervise and evaluate teachers can positively impact different aspects of the educational setting. Darling-Hammond (1990) argued principals that decision-making, communication, and trust are critical components to effective supervision and evaluation practices. In order to fully understand teacher supervision and evaluation, it is important to consider all aspects of the topic, including the shortcomings that may exist.

Limitations of Teacher Supervision and Evaluation

Within the literature on supervision and evaluation, there are several limitations that need to be addressed. Inherent flaws exist in the present approach to teacher evaluations (Franklin, 2014). Some flaws are specific to the individual principal, while other limitations are regarding the overall system. Research suggested that evaluation procedures are often ineffective (Danielson and McGreal, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2012; Franklin, 2014; Sheppard, 2013). Considering limitations at both levels will be important for educators engaging in the process. At the individual evaluator level, there are several areas of concern to consider.

Systems are only as effective as those implementing it. Inadequacies with principal preparation are cited frequently as principals often lack training in evaluating teachers (Loup et al. 1996). Across the country, less than one out of 10 state policies required evaluators to be trained (Brandt et al. 2007). With little or no training, principals may lack the skills or confidence to implement teacher evaluations successfully. In turn, evaluations are often subjective and can be affected by human error or rater inconsistencies (Sheppard, 2013). Standardized training and inter-rater reliability need attention as states consider improvements to the evaluators' role in teacher evaluation systems.

Fisicaro (2010) reported that administrators are not providing teachers with the necessary feedback to improve schools. Marshall (1996) agreed stating that, "the basic problem is that

teacher evaluation combines two conflicting tasks: improving instruction and judging performance" (p. 338). In addition, evaluation systems are often time intensive and take away from other important tasks performed by principals (Kersten & Israel, 2005). Essentially principals have attempted to implement poorly structured systems with little buy-in or training resulting evaluations that lack value.

Teachers are often cautious about the supervisory process. They can become defensive about supervisory practices as they are generally driven by the supervisor's need and not the need of the teacher (Acheson & Gall, 2003). Evaluation is often the responsibility of the administrator to complete with or without teacher participation. Meaningful supervision is ongoing and requires teacher involvement. Stiggins and Duke (1988) suggested that most teachers believe that supervision is superficial and that it does not occur often enough.

Teacher supervision models have been under heavy scrutiny, especially the past quarter century. Danielson and McGreal (2000) outlined several reasons for this heavy scrutiny: (a) shared values about teaching are missing; (b) principals are inconsistent in evaluating performance; (c) communication is usually initiated by the supervisor; (d) there is little differentiation between new and experienced teachers. Standards and values need to be clearly communicated between principals and teachers. Supervision and evaluation is not effective without this shared understanding. Dialogue needs to occur on an ongoing basis between both parties. In turn, principals must maintain consistent communication and uniform procedures with all teachers. Evaluation practices should be standardized to some extent, so that the process is fair and equitable for all teachers while also differentiating the experience based on teacher needs.

Frase (1992) concurred that teacher supervision models lack value to teachers, as quality

feedback is not consistent. Marshall (2005) stated that if that teacher supervision models are to be effective, they must be restructured. She advocated that more teaching time be observed in each classroom with a focus on student learning. It is clear that current processes are ineffective and new systems have the potential to address these concerns.

Danielson and McGreal (2000) also pointed out that many of the supervision models used in public schools were developed in the early 1970s. These antiquated models do not meet the needs of contemporary teachers and principals because there has been significant research regarding the teaching and learning process. Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (2009) explained that the improvement of teaching should be a continuous process, "not merely a ritual observation that principals make once or twice a year" (p.2). A comprehensive evaluation system will provide an inclusive picture of a teacher's role in the classroom. Darling-Hammond (1990) agreed that it is no longer adequate for teachers to concentrate on a set, prescribed supervisory process, but instead must become a component of classroom life for teachers and administrators to grow professionally.

To ensure the effectiveness of these new teacher evaluation systems, it is important to reflect on an ongoing basis, determining the successes and barriers to implementation and the sustainability of the system. In order to fully understand teacher supervision and evaluation, it is important to look at the way these educational tenets have developed over the last three hundred years.

A History of Supervision and Evaluation

Supervision and evaluation practices have been studied and documented since the 1700s. Early in history, teachers were considered servants of their community so local government officials and clergy were called upon to supervise teaching practices (Marzano, Frontier, &

Livingston, 2011). At this time, there was very little regulation over education, so procedures were inconsistent. Despite variations in supervision and evaluation, teachers continued to provide instruction to students with little feedback or oversight.

School systems grew more complex in the 1800s and teachers began to increase their content knowledge and develop areas of expertise. Teacher pedagogy became more intricate and clergy were no longer able to serve as effective supervisors (Tracy, 1995). It was then that teachers were called upon to take leadership roles within the school, becoming the first principals. Still an informal concept, teacher supervision continued to grow and develop, with teaching peers conducting observations and providing constructive criticism.

The 1900s brought about two critical schools of thought with regards to teacher supervision. The work of John Dewey and Frederick Taylor laid the foundation for modern evaluation systems. Dewey (1938) argued that schools should be organized to support democracy and promote citizenship. His student-centered approach differed from Taylor's (1911) more scientific and systematic views. Taylor's emphasis on efficiency was embraced by business and later had an impact on education. Both educators provided the groundwork not only for teacher supervision and evaluation, but also curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices as well.

In the 1920s and 1930s, "business age supervision" ushered in a more bureaucratic supervision model (Wiles & Bondi, 1996). Educational supervisors put a strong emphasis on goals and objectives in teacher supervision. However, later in this era, supervision became unproductive in its role. Wiles and Bondi (1996) reported that because teachers felt that the supervisor's role was one of inspection and authority; teachers began referring to the supervisors as "snoopervisors", resulting in distrust and an uncooperative relationship.

During the 1940s, human relations supervision emerged. The method was described as being more cooperative and democratic than the regulated oversight of previous decades. Schools moved away from traditional supervisory practices of inspection and control to developing more of a personal connection with teachers (Glickman, 2004). Administrators began working with teachers in a collegial manner working to improve instruction and guide teachers in improving student achievement. While this decade saw improvements in the evaluation system, a more formal procedure was beginning to develop in schools. As teacher evaluation has changed over time, clinical observation became more dominant (Kersten & Israel, 2005), and established its roots in the next decade.

In the 1950's, Morris Cogan attempted to find new ways to supervise interns in the Masters of Arts program at Harvard University. Interns and their supervisors began working together to improve the system of supervision by extending meeting times and shifting to a more systematic process. Planning, observation, and analysis became the formal sequence of meetings between groups. This model became the beginnings of clinical supervision (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986).

Cogan (1972) defined clinical supervision as the rationale and practice designed to improve classroom practice and the overall performance of the teacher. "When supervision is direct, centered in the classroom, focused on teachers' issues, aimed primarily at helping teachers understand and improve their teaching, and collaborative, the term clinical supervision is often used" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007, p 230). With the goal of improving instruction and working closely with teachers, the clinical supervision model should be explained further.

Cogan's original clinical supervision sequence contained multiple steps beginning with the establishment of a relationship between the teacher and the supervisor. Planning for the

observation with the teacher was followed by observing the instruction. The teaching and learning process was analyzed by the supervisor along with a strategy for the conference. The actual conference was held, followed by renewed planning for future instruction. Over time, the clinical supervision process was reviewed and revised and soon became adopted by public schools to use with classroom teachers. While many of these steps still exist, the original model was refined and revised by researchers and educators in an effort to create a clear and cohesive model.

Goldhammer (1969) narrowed Cogan's sequence to a five-step process including; (a) pre-observation process; (b) observation; (c) analysis and strategy; (d) supervision conference; and (e) post-conference analysis. Pre-observation is the first step in the clinical supervision process. Goldhammer cautioned principals as they attempt to build a relationship with the teacher in this first step, recommending that they refrain from criticizing the teacher's lesson plan for the observation. In addition, he advised that they try not to revamp the lesson by introducing new goals and objectives. In general, the principal should approach the pre-observation on the teacher's terms, not the supervisor's.

The next step in the clinical supervision model is the formal classroom observation. The goal is to directly observe the teaching and learning. Next, the supervisor summarizes the lesson which will serve as the springboard to meaningful dialogue between the two parties. Goldhammer (1969) suggested that the supervisor take notes to document what is happening in the classroom refraining from writing about his/her feelings or opinions. Conducting the observation and collecting the information allows the supervisor to get a firsthand look at teaching and learning.

The third stage in the clinical model is analysis and strategy. The supervisor then reflects

on the lesson and looks for categories within the teaching that occurred during the observation. After analyzing the notes and identifying patterns, the supervisor must decide which topics to discuss during the conference. Limiting the topics to no more than three, allows the teacher to comprehend the feedback and hone in on the most important aspects of instruction.

The next stage of the model is the actual conference. Acheson and Gall (2003) suggested that supervisors address various points during this meeting. Objective feedback should be provided to the teacher in a manner that is not judgmental, nor evaluative. Guiding teachers to reflect on the lesson helps to generate dialogue, discussing the goals, objectives, and instructional strategies used in the lesson. Lastly, the conference gives the teacher an opportunity to consider options for practicing and comparing methods. This step can include peer observations or other professional growth activities. Holland and Garman (2001) found that clinical supervision is still the dominant model in school systems today, although additional models have evolved over time.

In the 1970s, the business world brought a supervision model to the attention of companies across the country. Hewlett Packard executives introduced Management by Wandering Around (MBWA). The company wanted managers to engage employees in increased communications about their work. This approach to leadership, encourages interaction between supervisors and employees while out in the organization. It also allows supervisors to observe what is occurring first hand around the workplace at least 50% of the time (Peters & Waterman, 1988). This approach is believed to increase involvement within the organization and create a more positive work environment (Frase & Hetzel, 2002). This business model eventually found its way into the school system. Frase and Hetzel (2002) asserted that caring, openness, and trust were critical values that could be fostered through MBWA. Creating a

greater sense of collegiality and trust are reasons why this method is still used in schools today.

Throughout the 1980's, there was a call for increased accountability and evaluation of schools and programs in response to A Nation at Risk (1983) report. This landmark report was a significant challenge to education and called for substantial improvements to teacher training and overall effectiveness (Spina, Buckley, & Puchner, 2014). The Commission identified a lack of training, skills, and knowledge on the part of teachers and called for colleges and universities to strengthen teacher preparation programs. With its publication, the report threatened public education and forced educators to take a closer look at policies and practices. Teacher preparation programs and school administrators needed to address deficits in content knowledge and improve teaching practices. The principal's role as instructional leaders began to develop as they worked with teachers to meet increasing demands for teacher effectiveness.

In the1990s, as teachers began learning about differentiating instruction in their classroom, differentiated supervision was also explored. This teacher-driven supervisory approach places teachers in different kinds of supervisory modes: evaluative or developmental (Glatthorn, 1997). The first evaluative option is an intensive evaluation, used to make decisions about employment, renewing contracts, and granting tenure. The second evaluative option is the standard option, which applies to the vast majority of teachers. The supervisors in these cases conduct the minimum number of formal observations set by district and state polices (Glatthorn, 1997) for teachers who have already demonstrated instructional competence.

The developmental options within this model are used to give teachers a choice in the type of supervision that they receive in order to meet their individual needs (Glatthorn, 1997). The intensive development option provides on-going support for non-tenured teachers and for teachers who may be experiencing difficulty. The second option in Glatthorn's developmental

supervision model is cooperative development. Collaboration and collegiality are the primary focus in this option. Peer observations, collaboration on instructional units, and action research projects were common activities for teacher. This type of self-directed development plan allows teachers to set their own professional growth plan, using the supervisor as a resource. Differentiated supervision offered teachers more ownership over their professional growth.

In the 2000s, models were offered that built on the need for differentiation while also responding to the increasing calls for accountability. Teacher quality became critical at this time with the passing of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, better known as No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The law increased accountability for states and school districts (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). It also created a trend of more oversight from state and federal governments, as well as local regulation over evaluation practices (Hazi & Arredondo Rucinski, 2009). In response, many states began to implement standards-based education systems, developing content standards and designing curriculum that were aligned to these standards. Unfortunately, these standards were not very clear and lacked necessary rigor to move the educational system forward (USDE, 2008). Standardization also carried over into teacher supervision and evaluation with more uniform models being developed and revised to reflect this new movement in education.

A three track supervisory model proposed by Danielson and McGreal (2000) included different tracks for teachers based on experience and need. Track I was used for novice or beginning teachers with a goal to collect data to make a decision about retaining the teacher permanently. Track II focused on professional development track with the purpose to provide support professional growth through curriculum development and dialogue through professional learning groups (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Track III was dedicated for teachers needing

more intensive assistance. The goal of this track was not to move teachers closer to dismissal, but to assist in returning their competencies back to a level that meets expectations and provide a structured, supportive, and focused plan (Danielson & McGreal, 2000).

Danielson went on to develop the Framework for Teaching (FFT), a research-based model grounded in a constructivist view of teaching and learning. The FFT is organized according to four domains and includes 22 components of instruction that are aligned to the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards. The domains and components are shown in Table 1. Brandt, Mathers, Oliva, Brown-Sims, and Hess (2007) cited the FFT as the most commonly cited teacher evaluation model. The FFT has gone through several revisions (1996, 2007, 2011) and was re-issued in 2013 to reflect the demands of the Common Core State Standards. The framework provides a common language for educators engaging in dialogue about teaching and learning. The enhanced version of the framework includes deeper descriptions of components and more specific language within the rubrics. It also includes resources for observers to provide more precise feedback to teachers within the evaluation process. The framework also provides specific examples that demonstrate what teaching and learning look like at each level of performance.

Table 2. Framework for Teaching

Domain	Component
Domain 1: Planning and Preparation	1a: Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy 1b: Demonstrating knowledge of student 1c: Selecting instructional goals 1d: Demonstrating knowledge of resources 1e: Designing coherent instruction 1f: Assessing student learning
Domain 2: The Classroom Environment	2a: Creating an environment of respect and rapport 2b: Establishing a culture of learning 2c: Managing classroom procedures 2d: Managing student behavior 2e: Organizing physical space
Domain 3: Instruction	3a: Communicating with students 3b: Using questioning and discussion techniques 3c: Engaging students in learning 3d: Using assessment in instruction 3e: Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness
Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities	4a: Reflecting on teaching 4b: Maintaining accurate records 4c: Communicating with families 4d: Participating in a professional community 4e: Growing and developing professionally 4f: Showing professionalism

Many researchers have explored the connection between teacher quality and student achievement. Teacher effectiveness can have an impact on student achievement (Sergiovanni, 2008). Models of supervision and evaluation need to account for the role in teacher effectiveness has on student learning.

Several studies have explored the use of the FFT. Kimball, White, Milanowski, and Borman (2004) analyzed the relationship between teachers' scores on the Framework for Teaching (FFT) and students' scores on standardized tests. This study from a school site in Nevada revealed that teacher evaluation correlated somewhat with student gains on the Terra Nova. Similar results were also cited on local and state assessments. Milanowski (2004) continued this line of research in Cincinnati as well. He found similar results with states tests in both math and reading related to teacher evaluation scores.

With the FFT being widely used, a larger scale study was completed in Los Angeles. Gallagher (2004) studied FFT scores analyzing students' achievement in literacy, math, and English Language Arts. This study found that both composite scores and scores in literacy on the SAT-9 were positively related. As teacher evaluation scores improved, so did student achievement on standardized tests.

Expanding the potential use of the FFT, Heneman, Kimball, Milanowski, and Odden (2006) examined validity, acceptability, and usability of teacher evaluation measures. The group surveyed four different school districts in four different locations. Their work revealed evaluation scores related to student achievement, particularly when schools used trained observers. In addition to trained observers, having multiple observers also related to achievement gains. The importance of evaluator training will be discussed in later chapters.

With a focus on classroom instruction, Sartain, Stoelinga, and Brown (2009) interviewed principals and teachers in the Chicago Public School system. Their findings revealed predominantly positive feedback on the use of the FFT in their schools. Participant responses focused on improved relationships between principals and teachers, more clearly communicated expectations, increased reflection, and an increase in overall instruction. Instructional leadership, an important characteristic for school principals, will be addressed later in the study.

The call for accountability brought out additional evaluation systems during this time period. TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP) was developed by Lowell Miliken at the Miliken Family Foundation. This group is now a part of the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). This system maintained four core elements in its framework with teacher evaluation redefined as "instructionally focused accountability" (Daly & Kim, 2010). This system also included other alternative methods, not commonly used in teacher evaluation. TAP utilized many educators as instructional leaders conducting observations, not solely the principal, allowing for support to come in many forms. The element of performance-based compensation was also a part of the TAP system. Teachers who demonstrate high quality instruction are rewarded for their work. In addition, teachers were recognized when their students demonstrate achievement. This system utilized a "value-added" component (Daly & Kim, 2010) which included a measure of school performance as well as the individual teacher's contribution to student achievement as a piece of their overall evaluation.

Increased accountability also meant that classroom instruction needed to be observed more frequently. The classroom walkthrough became popular during this time, as it allowed principals to develop a better sense of what was happening in the classroom while holding teachers accountable for meeting standards. Walkthroughs are defined as a short and frequent

informal classroom observation that enables administrators to examine the instructional practices surrounding the learning process (Bushman, 2006; David, 2007; Granada & Vriesenga, 2008; Johnson 2011, Larson, 2007; Skretta, 2008; Zepeda, 2008). By conducting walkthroughs, principal are able to observe teaching and learning in the classroom. Classroom walkthroughs are the opportunity for administrators to collect observational data, and gain insight to the instructional practices connected with student learning (Cervone & Martinez-Miller, 2007; Granada & Vriesenga, 2008; Kachur, et al.,2009; Munoz & Davis, 2007). A multitude of walkthrough models have been adopted by school districts to serve as a tool for supervision and evaluation. With another shift in school reforms and governmental mandates, walkthroughs would be set aside for a greater push for formality and evaluation systems that incorporate multiple measures.

Later in this decade the Race to the Top was announced, with the first awards being provided in 2010. States proposed reform strategies in order to receive part of the $4.35 billion available. Within the states' proposals, each was required to adopt standards and assessments that would prepare students for college, career, and beyond. They also needed to establish building data systems that would measure both student achievement and growth. The RTTT stipulated that teacher effectiveness be determined through multiple observational assessments, in additional to those student growth measures. Information obtained from a combination of evaluation measures can be used to identify both effective and ineffective teachers and target areas of improvement (Mangiante, 2011). Since money was attached to these potential changes, many states submitted applications to vie for the funding.

Additional changes added complications to the "Race" with the development of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Initiated by the Council of Chief State School Officers

(CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA), these standards outlined what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade in preparation for college and careers. The increased rigor and depth of knowledge required by the standards put more pressure on schools and teachers to help students to meet the standards. The CCSS also required shifts in content and curriculum that changes classroom practices and adjustments in instruction. In response to the CCSS states put policies in place to increase teacher effectiveness, including more rigorous teacher evaluations (Wiener, 2013). Currently, schools and districts are faced with the shift to the Common Core State Standards while also being asked to revamp their entire evaluation system. Prior to 2012, there hasn't been much of a connection between district standards and the evaluations of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Wiener (2013) cautioned districts to ensure that these two initiatives are not looked at as separate and competing ideas, but "part of a coherent whole" (p.7).

With the demands of the RTTT and the CCSS, states attempted to develop comprehensive systems for improving teacher effectiveness, including the revamping of supervision and evaluation models. The concept of multiple measures means that principals are no longer able to simply conduct one annual observation to evaluate teachers. Researchers studying teacher evaluation advocated for multiple measures including the differentiation of evaluation and connecting evaluations to student outcomes (Toch & Rothman, 2008; Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006; Heneman et al. 2006). Using multiple indicators to evaluate teachers enable administrators to analyze a range of components that contribute to effective teaching (Shakman, Riordan, Sánchez, DeMeo Cook, Fournier, & Brett, 2012). Growing research is considering the use of multiple measures in teacher evaluation systems.

In a study of teacher evaluation across five states, researchers found multiple measures

being used including observations, self-assessments, peer review, teacher artifacts, and professional growth plans (Shakman, et al. 2012). The states, Delaware, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas were at different stages of implementation, yet each had made progress towards developing a comprehensive evaluation plan. The INTASC teaching standards were used as each state's system was explored. The INTASC standards are professional learning practices organized into four domains: student learning, content knowledge of the teacher, classroom practices, and professional accountability (Shakman, et al. 2012).

The use of standardized tests enables schools to measure the impact that instruction is having on student performance (Fisicaro, 2010). Test scores alone cannot measure teacher effectiveness, but should serve as a part of a multi-measure system of teacher evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 1984). Results include student achievement measures, as well as growth measures, in addition to school achievement data.

Growth measures and the concept of value added models are increasingly become a component of teacher evaluation systems. Since end-of-year test scores do not show how much students learned over the course of the year, value added measures are one potential way to show student growth. An increasing number of researchers are investigating whether value-added measures are a viable option to be included in teacher evaluation systems.

A RAND study analyzed value-added measures with regards to teacher effectiveness (Lockwood, McCaffrey, Hamilton, Stecher, Le, & Martinez, 2006). The researchers focused on math achievement in the middle grades and found differences based on various assessments. The overall findings cautioned administrators when interpreting results from value-added measures. The study went on to say that the current research base is insufficient to support the use of value added measures when it comes to decisions about individual teachers or schools.

Researchers Heneman, Milanowski, Kimball, and Odden (2006) examined the relationship between teacher evaluation scores on the FFT and the achievement of their students. They attempted to correlate the evaluation scores with value-added data in math and reading. The study found a positive relationship between teacher evaluation scores and student achievement. The researchers added to their study by interviewing and surveying principals and teachers. This component revealed that the FFT model was accepted by educators and found to be accurate and fair.

Jacob and Lefgren (2007) investigated value added measures at the elementary level using both math and reading scores. They found a strong relationship between principals' evaluations and the value-added ratings of teachers. They also found that both principals' evaluations and the value-added ratings were predictors as to which teachers would be in the top and bottom 20 percent the following year in terms of their students' test scores.

Koretz (2008) studied the potential value added by the teacher and argued that systems would need to measure how much a group of students have learned in a year, as well as the rates at which those particular students learn. Since students learn at varying rates, depending on subject matter, systems should take these differences into account.

Kane, Taylor, Tyler, and Wootten (2011) examined the Cincinnati Public Schools' Teacher Evaluation System. Using the FFT as a foundation, the study attempted to identify a relationship between teachers' evaluation ratings and student achievement growth in math and reading. Data showed that as a teacher's overall classroom practice increased on the FFT, student scores also increased in both subjects.

The Measures of Effective Teaching Project (2012) examined the FFT by studying the relationship between the framework and student outcomes. This large-scale study, funded by the

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation focused on teachers from six districts across the country. The study analyzed test scores of well over 40,000 students with results indicating that positive ratings on the FFT can be associated with student achievement gains in both reading and math. The alignment between observation scores using the FFT and student achievement gains provides evidence that the framework identifies instructional practices shown to improve student learning (MET, 2012). In response to accountability pressures, many states are incorporating some aspect of value added measures into their evaluation systems. Since this is a complex undertaking, care should be given as to the inclusion of value added data in evaluation systems (David, 2010).

As states respond to educational reforms, relevant research should be taken into consideration. Changes regarding teacher evaluation have prompted states to rethink their approach. Each state was able to develop their own system, while keeping in mind the requirements set forth by the RTTT and the CCSS. Pennsylvania is one state that took many of the recommendations of the CCSSO in the development of their system.

Teacher Evaluation in Pennsylvania

Teacher evaluation has gone through many changes in Pennsylvania. After receiving $800,000 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the goal was to develop an evaluation system that took into account student achievement. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) piloted the Framework for Teaching with three school districts and an Intermediate Unit. This early work in 2011 made for a smooth transition when Act 82 took hold in 2012.

Pennsylvania was also ahead of the game with their response to the Common Core State Standards and the recommendations put forth by the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSSO). The CCSSO suggested the creation of professional support networks for school

leaders to increase professional learning and develop an understanding of the Common Core. This was developed and filtered through local Intermediate Units. The work of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit provided a solid foundation for principals in Allegheny County. The CCSSO encouraged states to use existing tools rather than taking time and money to develop their own. Pennsylvania, with existing data from the Gates Foundation pilot program, was able to move forward with adopting the FFT. This framework, along with other components, created the structure for the Teacher Effectiveness System (TES) in Pennsylvania.

Teacher Effectiveness System

The Teacher Effectiveness System (TES) in Pennsylvania represents a change in teacher evaluation in the state. While the system dictates a framework and essential components that must be included in the teacher evaluation process, it provides some flexibility allowing school districts to incorporate their own measures of student achievement to gauge teacher effectiveness. The new system goes beyond measuring teachers as satisfactory or unsatisfactory by rating performance into four ranges: distinguished, proficient, needs improvement or failing. Unlike evaluation models of the past, which relied solely on classroom observation, this new system incorporates multiple measures of student achievement.

The TES is comprised of four major components: teacher observation and practice, building level data, teacher specific data, and elective data. Each component has an assigned percentage that contributes to the overall teacher rating. Teacher observation and practice makes up 50% of the evaluation, emphasizing the importance of classroom instruction. The FFT is used as the observation model, assessing planning and preparation, classroom environment, instructional delivery, and professional responsibilities. Fifteen percent of the teacher evaluation comes from building level data. This school-wide measure comes from the School Performance

Profile (SPP) and includes student achievement data and the school's progress towards closing academic achievement gaps.

The portion of the system that focuses on teacher specific data accounts for 15% of the teacher rating. PSSA scores and PVAAS data contribute to teacher specific data. The remaining 20% of the rating is comprised of elective data. The data for this component will come from the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) designed by the teacher, in cooperation with the principal. The following section will describe the SLOs in greater detail.

Student Learning Outcomes

Many states plan to use the student learning outcomes (SLOs) to measure teacher impact on student learning. These measures are another opportunity to stress the importance of rigorous standards and the need for a connection between our assessments and the shift to the CCSS (Weiner, 2013). Whether through SLOs, performance tasks, portfolios or other assessments, states should enforce the expectation that student learning data for measuring teacher effectiveness should include student-generated work samples, not merely multiple choice questions. Currently, the decisions regarding SLO development, contents, and implementation are left to the Local Education Agencies (LEA).

In Pennsylvania, SLOs are being implemented and included as 20% of a teacher's evaluation. While there may be variations in the implementation from district to district, everyone must follow a common general procedure. A grade, subject area, and class or classes are selected as a focus group. Standards are chosen for a unit of instruction over a set period of time. Performance measures are determined as a means to verify if the standards have been met. One to five measures may be chosen, from tests and quizzes, essays and experiments, to performance-based tasks, presentations, projects, or research papers. While teachers are free to

develop these measures on their own, the collaborative development of an SLO is encouraged.

For each performance measure a performance indicator must also be assigned. This indicator determines the level of success on each performance measure to be considered proficient. In some cases, the performance measures are existing assessments (DIBELS, 4Sight, Study Island). In other cases, these may be assessments that teachers create individually or as a department or grade-level team (mid-terms, curriculum-based assessments, etc.). The SLO must also include a pre-determined timeline for when the data will be collected and a method for summarizing and reporting the data to the principal. Once the proposed SLO is complete, the teacher and administrator review it and sign off, agreeing to move forward with the plan. The teacher then provides the instruction to students and collects all necessary data to determine whether students have met the standards. Once the performance measures have been administered, the teacher summarizes the data and determines whether the performance indicators have been met. As a culmination of the process, the teacher and principal meet to review the performance data and assign a rating based on the percentage of indicators that were met.

The SLO process has three process components: designing, building, and reviewing. The goal is for teachers and principals to work together through each step. The process facilitates a conversation about expectations between educators and school leaders. It is the shared dialogue that will prompt increased collaboration and reflection on teaching and learning. This collaborative component differs greatly from the evaluation model once used in Pennsylvania.

As states like Pennsylvania are instituting new evaluation systems, principals will need to have a deeper understanding of effective supervision and evaluation processes. Most principals are learning how to observe teaching and provide productive feedback. Teachers, meanwhile,

are learning to accept constructive feedback. Together, principals and teachers are working on collaborating across classrooms around student work, performance data, and instructional planning (Weiner, 2013). Principals will be central to the implementation and follow through of the TES system in Pennsylvania, which makes their input in this study vital.

Throughout the discussion of effective teacher evaluation, the history of teacher evaluation, and the evaluation plans across the country and in Pennsylvania, the central idea of a system is present. A systems thinking approach ensures that all components are aligned to a common goal, which is why the systems thinking serves as part of the framework for this study.

Theoretical Framework

When studying any one topic in depth, it is important to look through a lens to further frame the issue. For this study, several theories could be applied to explore the topic of teacher evaluation. In an effort to use theory triangulation, the researcher chose to incorporate two theories for this study: system thinking and Fullans's Theory of Change. The following sections describe these concepts and their alignment with this research.

Fullan's Theory of Change

Recent educational reforms including the RTTT and the shift to the Common Core State Standards have brought about great change to schools and district across the country. These large-scale initiatives have prompted changes to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and evaluation. When discussing the RTTT and the CCSS, Fullan (2011) called for a theory of action that creates a mindset that generates a focus from the collective group to transform the system. "Change theory or change knowledge can be very powerful in informing education reform strategies and, in turn, getting results" (Fullan, 2006, p. 3). He emphasized that the key to any successful system-wide reform is to allow educators and students to be the driving force. In

addition, school leader must be a catalyst in order for the change to be lasting (Fullan, 2010). One way that school leaders can attempt to reduce resistance to change is by being proactive (Lunenburg, 2011) and having a system in place to support the shift. Wagner (2001) also discussed an action theory for school change emphasizing the need for leaders to develop ownership over the change. He urged school leaders to engage stakeholders and work towards commitment to the change rather than merely compliance with the reform.

Fullan (2011) also pointed out that educational change involves many levels, classroom, school, and district, with each of these levels including a number of stakeholders such as students, parents and teachers. Addressing needs at only one level or focusing on one component of change at a time will yield only partial implementation, requiring a more systemic solution. Systemic change requires looking beyond one element and considering the system as a whole (Wolicki, 2011). This systems approach is one that requires leadership and capacity building, in this case on the part of the principal. The Theory of Change can thus be supported by systems thinking which will be discussed in the next section.

Systems Thinking

Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, and Kleiner (2000) define systems thinking as "the ability to understand interactions and relationships in complex, dynamic systems" (p. 239). Since teacher evaluation is a large-scale system that impacts districts across the United States, it would be appropriate to consider systems thinking. This theoretical framework is important to this study, as it builds understanding on how teacher effectiveness systems can improve teacher evaluation. Senge (2006) took the original concepts of system theory in science and ecology and translated those into education. Senge (2006) described "learning organizations" where people use their capabilities to enhance the organization as a

whole, while working towards a long-term goal. He discussed the importance of leadership, a shared vision, team learning, and dialogue. Senge later added the concept of systems thinking, further emphasizing the importance of the "whole" not just the individual parts. It is a framework for "seeing interrelationships and identifying patterns of change" (Senge, 1990, p. 23).

A Systems Thinking model maintains a focus on the learning organization. In order for a learning organization to successfully move along the path of school improvement, several components must be present within the system. Lunenberg (2011) reflected on the work of Senge and highlighted seven important considerations for school leaders within a systems thinking approach; (a) continuous learning opportunities; (b) promote inquiry and dialogue; (c) encourage collaboration and team learning; (d) create systems to capture and share learning; (e) empower people towards a collective vision; (f) connect the organization to its environment, and (g) provide strategic leadership for learning. These considerations will be explained in the following sections, in addition to their alignment with the TES.

Educators need opportunities to reflect on what they are learning from school reforms. Ensuring that the learning is ongoing is one way to determine whether new initiatives, like teacher evaluation systems, are successful or not successful. Engaging in questioning and shared dialogue is another part of systems thinking that connects to the TES, as this new system has feedback built into the steps of the evaluation process. Lunenberg (2011) advocated for systems to encourage collaboration and team learning. Principals can support this function by including cross level groups and teams when initiating change. With the TES stemming from a mandate, it may be difficult for principals to employ this component into the evaluation process.

Using systems thinking incorporates meaningful methods for capturing and sharing learning. While technology is not a mandated component of the TES, there are methods for sharing knowledge and improving instruction that can be embedded in the evaluation process. These technology components will be discussed further in Chapter 4. In a broad sense, all educators have a collective vision, to improve student learning. A systems thinking approach empowers people to follow that vision. The TES gives teachers a voice in the evaluation process, one that was rarely heard within previous models. Connecting the school to its environment occurs often with the use of technology. Through technology tools, some districts are connecting to resources that allow educators to grow professionally by connecting with others outside the school walls. The last component is strategic leadership. This means that principals and schools leaders think about ways to move their organizations forward and share information with others. Within the TES, principals have the opportunity to utilize systems thinking to ease the transition to this new system. As LEAs, school districts can lead strategically by incorporating many of the aforementioned components into their practice.

Thornton, Peltier, & Perreault (2004) further emphasized the importance of a systems thinking approach in education. They discussed that education leaders often struggle to grasp the interconnectedness of components within a larger system. This lack of understanding results in little or no progress. The TES is a large-scale system with several individual components. Principals must have a strong understanding of not only each component, but also of the way that each component relates to the others.

In her study, Wolicki (2011) explored the work of two school districts through the lens of systems thinking. She examined how changes were made to the organizational, cultural, and social systems in conjunction to school reform. The research revealed the need for strong

leadership with clearly aligned processes for any school change to be successful. Her study also emphasized the importance of communication and ongoing dialogue throughout the school system for a large-scale change to be sustained.

These concepts can be easily translated to the teacher evaluation system. A leader, usually the principal, must provide guidance and facilitate the development of a shared vision for effective teaching and learning. Team learning occurs as teachers and principals work collaboratively through the evaluation process. The importance of ongoing dialogue between educators is critical to a successful relationship. Research studies support the importance of principals and teachers teaming in the evaluation process.

One quantitative study (Clark, 1996) compared teacher perceptions about evaluation procedures and the effectiveness of the evaluation tools, surveying teachers in South Dakota. The study revealed the importance of teacher participation in planning and implementation. The results indicated when teachers were involved in the evaluation process they described a more positive outlook and expressed fewer concerns. Teacher involvement in the system promotes dialogue as well as collaboration and teaming, both components of systems thinking.

Another study by Range, Scherz, and Holt (2011) surveyed principals in Wyoming to assess their perceptions of supervision and evaluation with the goal to identify how principals supervise, evaluate, and improve teacher performance. The study identified three common themes including; a lack of time, frustration with evaluation tools, and teachers' unwillingness to change. These findings revealed concerns as feedback reflected some barriers to effective evaluation systems. The study emphasized the importance of connecting teacher evaluation processes to the goal of developing teacher skills. This study highlighted the need for systems thinking. Without continuous learning opportunities and the creation of a system to support

teacher development, this study revealed the shortcomings of teacher evaluation. The themes uncovered within this research might have been different had the leadership empowered teachers toward a collective vision, another critical component within systems thinking.

Murphy, Hallinger, and Heck (2013) question whether teacher evaluation is able to bring improvements to schools. Their analysis of research found that administrators are more likely to improve instructional quality in their schools if they focused time on facilitating teacher development, as opposed to evaluating teachers. Bryk et al. (2010) agreed, stating that schools should create systems that allow teachers the opportunity to develop and refine their skills. Danielson called for an approach that can be the "vehicle for teacher growth and development by providing opportunities for professional conversation around agreed-upon standards of practice" (p. 39, 2010/2011). The implementation of TES in Pennsylvania attempts to address these criticisms. With an emphasis on a systematic approach to teacher evaluation, many of the limitations found within the research can be addressed. The TES has embedded opportunities for ongoing dialogue that allows teachers to receive feedback while also including their perspective. The system includes opportunities for professional growth, collaboration, and teaming that was not present in the previous evaluation model. Within this study, systems thinking serve as a foundation for the examination of the TES.

In conclusion, the literature review indicates that supervision has undergone many changes and continues to change with the demand that is placed on schools. Pressures to improve teacher effectiveness continue to be felt in schools across the country. It is important to study teacher evaluations, determining the reasons for evaluating teachers, and determining principals' perceptions of current methods of teacher evaluations (Sheppard, 2013). The results from this study could be used to identify ways to makes teacher evaluation systems more useful

and meaningful to teachers and administrators.

Summary

The review of literature presents a case that effective teacher evaluation systems are a critical component to schools and districts. The system in Pennsylvania is comprehensive, as it takes into account a research-based framework for teaching, as well as other multiple measures to determine teacher effectiveness. The research shows that effective teacher evaluation requires an active role on the part of the principal. While research on teacher evaluation is extensive, few studies have been conducted on the perceptions of administrators in Pennsylvania regarding the newly implemented Teacher Effectiveness System. By exploring this topic, this study will fill a gap in the research. Insight into the evaluation practices of elementary principals employing the TES could identify possible trends in successful system implementation. The next chapter will describe the methods for this study as well as the procedures that were used to gather information from the elementary schools implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology and procedures used to explore the perceptions of principals in western Pennsylvania who have been implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in their elementary schools. This study will focus on the experiences of elementary principals engaging in the process of supervision and evaluation under the regulations of Act 82. A brief review of qualitative research and interview design will be presented. The following sections of this chapter include a discussion of the sample selection and data collection, and the strategies used to analyze the data.

Qualitative Research

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of elementary principals regarding the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania, a qualitative approach will be used. This is an appropriate method since the goal of this study is to explore the interworking of this system within several elementary schools. Qualitative research is used because of the need to present a detailed view of the topic, while studying individuals in their natural setting (Creswell, 1998). This study will describe the perceptions of elementary principals in an effort to explore the supervision and evaluation practices in Pennsylvania schools.

In an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of the participants, this study lends itself to qualitative research. In determining this approach, qualitative research was reviewed. A basic interpretive approach was used in this study as "the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is

descriptive" (Merriam, 2002, p. 6). Through this approach the researcher will be able to gain an understanding on how elementary principals implemented TES in Pennsylvania.

Purposive sampling was used to select elementary principals for this study. According to Nardi (2006), purposive sampling is appropriate when there is a specific reason to select a sample based on certain characteristics. Participant schools and principals in this study had to meet the following criteria:

1. The principals are currently implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System in their school.

2. The participants had to serve a minimum of three years as an elementary principal in their current school. Three years would allow the principal to prove themselves as a school leader and develop an understanding of classroom observation, supervision, and evaluation that a new principal may not. "Early exits" by principals are those that leave in less than 3 years (Cuban, 2010). To ensure that the study included committed principals who have established themselves as school leaders, the three year minimum was set. Significant change in the form of implementing specific innovations can be expected to take a minimum of 2 to 3 years (Fullan, 2001).

3. Participant schools had to be located in Allegheny County. The researcher limited the study to schools in Allegheny County to ensure that principals received similar training and support. Principals serving within the county would have attended similar training on Act 82 and the TES through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU). Multiple training sessions were offered to school leaders beginning in the spring of 2012 and ongoing throughout the 2013-2014 school year. These two-day trainings were provided by AIU staff in conjunction with PDE. The AIU also provided site-based training with school district leadership teams. The AIU regularly

pushes out information to school principals to ensure that they are up-to-date with critical changes. They also make resources available to principals through their wikispace. Since this level of training and support is not provided in all counties, the researcher chose to focus on only those schools served by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

4. Participant schools had to be of average size (300-400 students total). Schools within this range of student enrollment would yield a similar amount of faculty. The researcher wanted to ensure that principals were supervising a similar number of teachers. Interviewing principals with too few teachers or too many would likely produce outliers in the data.

Interviewing is one way to explore the experiences of people is which is why it was selected for this study. A semi-structured interview was selected allowing the researcher to use a flexible structure and an open-ended format (Merriam, 1998, Yin, 2009). Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to vary questions as the situation demands (Lichtman, 2006). Gathering similar information from multiple principals, the researcher will be able to obtain an in-depth look (Berg, 2004) at the supervision and evaluation practices of the participants

This qualitative study will focus on elementary principals in Pennsylvania who are implementing the TES. Interviewing is an appropriate technique when past events are being studied and "when conducting case studies of a few selected individuals" (Merriam, 1998, p. 72). Since only a limited number of elementary schools will be explored in this study, interviewing is preferable over other methods. It is important to establish validity in qualitative research, with several approaches to consider. The following section provides information regarding the steps to increase the validity in this study.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, theories were taken from the field of biological science and education. Since the topic of teacher evaluation encompasses entire school systems, Systems Thinking was used. A study by Blossing, Jarl, and Anderson (2013) argued that theoretical frameworks often lack clarity and do not provide a strong connection between institutional and organizational perspectives. By connecting Systems Thinking with Fullan's Theory of Change (2006), the study can present a comprehensive approach to studying this topic. Change theory is particularly useful when investigating topics involving school reform initiatives (Fullan, 2006), making this model more applicable to this study.

The two theories being used serve as the foundation for the guiding questions that will be used within the principal interviews. Since the TES is a substantial change for principals, several questions are tied to the perceived impact of these changes. Changes in priorities, procedures, and methods of evaluation are a part of this school reform. With principals playing a key role in the TES, their leadership is what Fullan calls for within his theory. This research will determine whether principals identify components of the Change Theory within the interviews. Table 2 demonstrates this alignment, including that of Systems Thinking.

A Systems Thinking approach is one that is relatively new in educational research (Senge, 2006). School reforms can have a major impact on schools, principals, and teachers. With Act 82 and the development of the TES in Pennsylvania, many characteristics of systems thinking are present. This research will determine if principals perceive the importance of a systems approach through the interview process. With each question linked to one of the theories, it is the researcher's intent to connect Fullan's Theory of Change and Systems Thinking to the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania.

In order to check the accuracy of qualitative research, several methods may be applied. Creswell (1998) described these procedures as: triangulation, rich and thick description, member checks, clarifying researcher bias, peer review, negative case analysis, external audits, and observation. For the purposes of this study, the researcher will clarify researcher bias and use member checks to verify the data. Using multiple methods will enable the researcher to collect information and triangulate the data to confirm findings.

Questions to Be Researched

The questions that this study will focus on are:

1. What is the perceived influence of Act 82 of 2012 and the Teacher Effectiveness System on the role of elementary principals?
2. What are the perceptions of elementary principals regarding the Teacher Effectiveness System with regards to the inclusion of building level data, teacher-specific data, elective data, and classroom observations?
3. What are the perceptions of elementary principals with regards to the observation components within the Danielson Framework: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities?
4. What underlying themes about the teacher evaluation system emerge from interviews with Pennsylvania elementary principals?

Participants

Participants in this study will be elementary principals currently implementing the Teacher Effectiveness System Pennsylvania. An elementary school, for the purpose of this study, is defined as any public school providing an education to students in any of the following grade configurations: K-3, K-5, K-6.

This qualitative study used purposeful sampling. As a first step a list of elementary schools in Allegheny County was obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) website. This search revealed a total of 254 schools. This pool was reduced further as 151 of those were public elementary schools. To further refine the pool, the researcher looked for schools of average size with 300-400 students, narrowing the field to 64 schools.

The next step was to determine whether the current principal had 3 years of experience leading the building. Those serving a minimum of three years presumably had applied leadership skills that impacted the educational environment at their school site (Gieselmann, Fiene & Wagner, 2007) and the knowledge to implement a large-scale evaluation system. Of the 64 principals remaining, 29 were either new to their building or had less than 3 years of experience and therefore were eliminated from the pool, leaving 35 eligible schools and principals.

Further analysis was needed to determine the number of principals who were still in their position. Upon informal research of school district websites, the researcher identified three potential participants who retired and ten others who were promoted to central office level positions, eliminating another 13 potential participants. The overall process resulted in 22 potential participants, with ten agreeing to participate in the study.

Setting

This study will be conducted within several different school districts in western Pennsylvania, with each district within one hour from Pittsburgh. The exploration of supervision and evaluation practices will take place in locations preferable to the participants. The opportunity to conduct the interviews within the principals' buildings is optimal, as it will contribute to the comfort and openness of the participants.

Instrumentation

As a result of the literature review, a semi-structured interview guide was constructed by the researcher to advance the understanding of principal perceptions about supervision and evaluation within the new implementation of the TES. Initial questions addressed the implications of Act 82 and the shift to a new teacher evaluation system. A series of questions then zeroed in on the evaluation process in each individual school district. Several questions took system theory into consideration, prompting the principals to evaluate the system components. Within the TES, principals will be asked about how they perceive the changes pertaining to the School Performance Profile, Student Learning Outcomes, and value-added measures. With the Danielson Framework for Teaching serving as a primary component of the system and a prominent topic within the literature, participants will also be asked to consider each domain of the FFT and its comprehensiveness. With the current technologies available to school districts, participants will also discuss the use of digital tools within the overall system of teacher evaluation.

Guiding questions for the interviews will be field tested by several principals who are not involved in the study. When conducting a pilot test, it is recommended that the researcher gather participants of similar interests as those who will participate in the actual study (Turner, 2010). For this reason, elementary principals who did not meet the necessary criteria for participation, but who are also facing the same implementation of TES, will be asked to participate in the field test. The purpose of the field test is to give the researcher opportunities to improve the guiding questions before the actual participant interviews. Pilot tests assist the researcher in determining if there are any weaknesses or limitations within the interview design (Kvale, 2007).

Each pilot interview will be conducted over the telephone and last between 40-60 minutes. Field test participants may provide feedback regarding phrasing of the questions, the order of the questions, and areas that may be unclear. Questions may be modified after each field test to improve question structure and gain deeper responses from the participants. The current interview guide contains 10 open-ended questions and can be found in the Appendix.

Guiding questions for the interviews also align with the research questions for this study. Aside from the opening demographic questions and final summarizing questions, each subsection of questions connected to one of the research questions. This is alignment is demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3 Alignment of Guiding and Research Questions

Guiding questions	Research question	Applicable theory
1. Describe how Act 82 of 2012 has changed your priorities as a principal.	RQ1	Change theory
2. In what ways does the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System require a shift in your responsibilities?	RQ1	Change theory
3. Describe your observation schedule for tenured and non-tenured teachers.	RQ1	Systems thinking
3a. Describe your perception of supervision.		Systems thinking
4. How much time is spent implementing the observation and evaluation process with a teacher, compared to the previous evaluation model?	RQ1	Systems thinking
5. Describe the positive and negative features of the Teacher Evaluation System.	RQ2	Systems thinking
6. How would you characterize the School Performance Profile as a measure of teacher effectiveness?	RQ2	Systems thinking

7. Describe the development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in your district.	RQ2	Systems thinking
a. In what ways has this impacted the teachers in your building?	RQ2	Change theory
8. Describe the impact of PVAAS score in relation to teacher effectiveness.	RQ2	Change theory
9. Describe your process for evaluating each component of the Danielson Framework. a. Planning and preparation b. Classroom environment c. Instruction d. Professionalism e. Describe the factors that aren't included in the Framework that should be.	RQ3	Systems thinking
10. Did your district implement a technology component to facilitate the Teacher Effectiveness System? a. If so, which technology tool? b. How is it meeting your needs? c. If not, is your district looking to adopt a digital product to assist with this process?	RQ4	Systems thinking
11. Describe the value of the training that you received regarding the Danielson Framework and the TES.		Systems thinking

Procedures

In the fall of 2014, an initial review of existing school data was conducted. A list of elementary schools was obtained from the Department of Education website, as well as the names of the principals of those schools. This began the process of participant selection as described earlier in this chapter.

In March of 2015, the initial protocol for this study will be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects at Indiana University of

Pennsylvania. Upon approval from the IRB, potential participants will be contacted by phone. During these calls, the study will be explained and participant questions will be answered. Potential participants will then be sent a letter of introduction and the informed consent form (Appendix). Once all of the informed consent forms are received, individual participants will be contacted to schedule a date, time, and location for a one-hour interview. All interviews will be transcribed by the researcher and reviewed by the participants before being analyzed.

Data Collection

The goal of the data collection is to gather information about supervisory procedures used by principals and learn how each participant perceives supervision and evaluation practices. The data collection phase will be conducted over several months in spring of 2015. The interview transcriptions will be analyzed manually by the researcher. The goal of this step is to look for trends and themes, as well as techniques associated with supervision. Relevant quotes will be highlighted and noted by the researcher. Coding categories will be generated by examining the themes found within the interview transcripts.

Existing data was also extracted from various public websites. School district websites provided information regarding each school and school district. Additional information was collected on the schools through other public data bases and clearinghouses. Demographic data about each school and pertinent district information will be presented in a table once all of the participants have been confirmed.

Interviews

The primary data collection method for this study is face-to-face interviews. Each interview will be scheduled for 60 minutes and will be conducted in a location chosen by the participant. Prior to the interview, the researcher will review the purpose of the study with each

participant and obtain the signed consent form. The researcher will answer any outstanding questions related to the study.

Interviews with each principal will allow the researcher to explore the perceptions of the participants, obtaining their story. One advantage to interviewing is adaptability (Gall, Borg, and Gall, 2003). Interviewers have the ability to follow up a on a participant's response to obtain additional information or to clarify vague answers. Building trust and rapport with the participants will make it possible to obtain information that might not be revealed through other methods (Gall et al., 2003).

The conversations from each interview will be typed into word documents by the researcher. Within one week of the interview, the researcher will email the interview transcript to each participant for review. Participants will be given the opportunity to review and verify the accuracy of the documentation from the interviews. A transcription of each interview will be e-mailed to each respondent seeking clarification of the accuracy of the interview. All interviews will be recorded, allowing the researcher to take notes and guide the participants to discuss areas in more depth. After each interview, the researcher will review the recordings as well as the notes taken during the interview. Interviews will be transcribed and as themes and categories emerge, they will be coded. Clustering themes and categories will be an on-going process, repeated as needed throughout the process by the researcher.

Summary

Chapter three presented an overview of the methodology. It provided a rationale for the research design for this case study on teacher evaluation. This chapter provided a brief history of qualitative research and an argument for why this is an appropriate method for this study. The chapter describes the qualitative research proposed to explore principal perceptions of teacher

evaluation in this era of school reform. It described the participants, setting, and interview procedures used in this qualitative study. Through data analysis of the interviews, the researcher will gain a deeper understanding of how elementary principals are implementing the TES in Pennsylvania. In Chapter Four the presentation of results will be presented.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the relevant data from individual interviews with building principals and the emerging themes that developed. The interviews with the participants are classified according to Fullan's Change Theory and Senge's Systems Thinking in an effort to gain an understanding of how these theories may influence the practices of elementary principals as they implement the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. The presence of significant themes may suggest that these theories are relevant to this study but also that researchers should consider the implications that data-driven practices, instructional leadership, professional development, and the use of technology may have on the supervision and evaluation of teachers in Pennsylvania.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions that elementary principals have on the Teacher Evaluation System in (TES) western Pennsylvania. The TES was implemented in 2014 and presented a plethora of challenges for school leaders and teachers. These changes to teacher supervision and evaluation are being led by principals which is why their perspectives are particularly critical to this study.

This study explored how elementary principals perceive the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania as mandated by Act 82, particularly in this era of high-stakes accountability. While there are many aspects of teacher evaluation and observation, this study focused solely on the perceptions of school principals in Pennsylvania. Knowledge gained from the experience of building principals can lead to increased implementation of effective practices by other school leaders in Pennsylvania and across the country. In addition, the study may

contribute to the identification of effective supervision management and systemic organizational strategies, as well as insights gained from overcoming potential obstacles in the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System. The researcher used the following questions to guide the research:

1. What is the perceived influence of Act 82 of 2012 and the Teacher Effectiveness System on the role of elementary principals?
2. What are the perceptions of elementary principals regarding the Teacher Effectiveness System with regards to the inclusion of building level data, teacher-specific data, elective data, and classroom observations?
3. What are the perceptions of elementary principals with regards to the observation components within the Danielson Framework: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities?
4. What underlying themes about the teacher evaluation system emerge from interviews with Pennsylvania elementary principals?

Data Analysis

Data were gathered through qualitative methods in this study. Through interviews, the researcher explored the perceptions of principals in ten elementary school principals. The interviews were conducted after general data was collected on each school. The researcher used public websites to identify demographic information about each school, school district, and community in an effort to better understand the perspective of each participant.

The researcher analyzed data as it was being collected, looking for patterns and identifying possible themes. Merriam (2009) recommended to qualitative researchers, "the right way to analyze data in a qualitative study is to do it simultaneously with data collection" (p.

162). Categorizing, describing, and synthesizing occurred repeatedly through the data collection and analysis process. During this time, the researcher attempted to make sense out of what was revealed and organized the data into groups of information, as suggested by Creswell (2007).

The researcher followed several steps through the process of analyzing the data. Recordings from each interview were reviewed multiple times to ensure the accuracy of the information. Transcripts for each interview were reviewed by the researcher before being returned and verified by each participant. Once the participants validated the transcripts, the researcher documented the themes found throughout the data. All transcripts were reread and coded using the themes and categories that emerged. The researcher maintained a file for each participant with the transcriptions from each interview and the researcher's interview notes.

From these analyses, four primary categories emerged: instructional leadership, data-driven practices, professional development, and the use of technology in the implementation of the evaluation system. Many of these strands were also found within the literature review. Each category will be explained later in this chapter.

Data Sites

This study focused on ten elementary principals in Western Pennsylvania. It was important to consider the general information about each school and the background information pertaining to each participant. The following sections present information regarding district size, number of schools in the district, student demographics, and economic information. Information regarding number of teachers and student enrollment information also serve as a foundation for this analysis. A variety of schools and districts are represented in this study. While the researcher attempted to limit school size to an average range (300-400 students) this was expanded slightly (300-475) to increase the potential amount of participants.

School A is in a district comprised of two townships within one square mile area with a population of approximately 13,000 people. The district's three buildings serve 1200 students. School A is a K-6 building with 52% percent of the student population considered economically disadvantaged and qualified for free and reduced lunch. The student demographics for these 35-42 students included 76% Caucasian, 12% African American, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 10% Multi-Racial. A compilation of this data is included in the next section represented in Tables 3 and 4.

School B is in a district serving five communities north of Pittsburgh with a population of about 9,000 residents. This elementary building has 30 full time teachers employed serving 306 students in grades 3-5. The student demographics include 92% Caucasian, 3% African American, 3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic and 1% Multi-Racial. Sixteen percent of the population of School B is considered economically disadvantaged.

School C is in a district serving three communities with approximately 15,000 residents. District enrollment is approximately 1300 students in grades K-12. There are 32 full time teachers employed at the school. A K-6 building, School C serves approximately 335 students. The student demographics include 84% Caucasian, 11% African American, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 3% Multi-Racial. Thirty-seven percent of the student population are considered economically disadvantaged.

School D is in a district serving eleven communities. District enrollment is approximately 2200 students in grades K-12. There are 38 full time teachers employed in the school and approximately 402 students in grades K-5. The student demographics in School D include 90% Caucasian, 2% African American, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 6%

Multi-Racial. Economically disadvantaged students made up approximately 13% of the total student population at School D.

School E is in a district comprised of four townships over a twenty-two square mile area with a population of approximately 20,000 people. The district's three buildings serve 1200 students. There are 47 full time teachers employed in the school. School E serves over 460 students in grades 3-5 with approximately 54% percent of the student population considered economically disadvantaged and qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The student demographics include 86% Caucasian, 6% African American, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 6% Multi-Racial.

School F is in a district that spans a forty-eight square mile area with a population of approximately 46,000 people. The district's twelve school buildings serve 8000 students from four townships. There are 24 full time teachers employed in the K-5 building with 2% percent of the student population considered economically disadvantaged and qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The school has 430 students currently enrolled. The student demographics of the school include 89% Caucasian, 1% African American, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Hispanic.

School G is in a district made up of two townships and five boroughs. 4600 students are educated within the district's six school buildings. There are 45 full time teachers employed in the school. School G is a K-5 building serving 467 students. 42% percent of the student population considered low income and qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The student demographics included 80% Caucasian, 10% African American, 6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, and 1% Multi-Racial.

School H is in a district comprised of two townships and one borough over a thirty-one square mile area. The district's seven school buildings serve 3700 students. There are 17 full time teachers employed in School F. It is a K-5 building with approximately 320 students enrolled. School H reported 7% percent of the student population considered low income and qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The student demographics include 76% Caucasian, 6% African American, 12% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Hispanic, and 3% Multi-Racial.

School I is in a large suburban school district in the south hills of Pittsburgh. The municipality serves over 33,000 residents with 5300 being school-age children. School I is one of seven elementary schools in the district with 24 full time teachers currently employed. There are currently 419 students enrolled with approximately 10% of the student population considered economically disadvantaged. The student demographics include 90% Caucasian, 1% African American, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% Hispanic.

School J is also in a large school district south of Pittsburgh. The K-4 building includes 42 teachers. Of the 444 students, very few students are considered low income, with only 1% qualifying as economically disadvantaged. Demographics for School J include 93% Caucasian, 1% African American, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Hispanic.

Table 4 School Information

Schools	School Configuration	Enrollment	Economically Disadvantaged
School A	K-6	342	52%
School B	3-5	306	16%
School C	K-6	335	37%
School D	K-5	402	13%
School E	3-5	460	54%
School F	K-5	430	2%
School G	K-5	467	42%
School H	K-4	320	7%
School I	K-5	419	10%
School J	K-4	444	1%

Table 5 Student Demographics

Schools	African American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Caucasian	Hispanic	Multi-Racial
School A	12	1	76	1	10
School B	3	1	92	1	1
School C	11	1	84	0	3
School D	2	1	90	1	3
School E	6	1	86	1	3
School F	1	9	89	1	0
School G	10	6	80	1	1
School H	6	12	76	3	3
School I	1	5	90	3	0
School J	1	5	93	1	0

Note: all values are presented as percentages

In addition to the collection of general school information, the researcher also noted basic information regarding each participant. This data was collected by reviewing school district websites and other public data sources. The information was confirmed at the face-to-face interviews with each participant.

Demographic Information

Four demographic categories were documented concerning the subjects' (1) gender, (2) ethnicity, (3) highest level of education obtained, and (4) total overall years as an administrator. All of the participants in this study were Caucasian with an even mix of females and males. Each participant earned their Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and principal certification. Half of the participants also earned their doctoral degrees for a total of five participants. All of the principals were experienced in their positions with a range of 7 to 27 years as a school administrator.

Findings

Various findings were revealed through the analysis of the interview data. This process explored how principals perceived the TES in Pennsylvania. In addition, the analysis also explored the implementation of the system and the ways that Fullan's Change Theory and System Thinking were present.

An examination of the data focused on the participant responses and how they might transfer to an understanding of the needs of all principals implementing a new evaluation system. The results identified the relevance of both Change Theory and Systems Thinking when it comes to large-scale change around teacher evaluation. In addition, the study identified importance of four primary categories: data-driven practices, instructional leadership, professional development, and the use of technology. These themes are discussed within each research question in the sections that follow.

Research Question 1

The first research question for this study focused on the perceived influence of Act 82 of 2012 and the TES on the role of elementary principals. Since the passing of Act 82, policies and

procedures for teacher evaluation in Pennsylvania have changed dramatically. The TES has changed requirements for both principals and teachers. Participants in the study agreed that Act 82 and the TES has influenced their role as school principals through their day to day responsibilities, time devoted to teacher evaluation, and the leadership required to facilitate the changes. Principal C exclaimed, "It's not my perception. This is the reality in Pennsylvania. This is the way that every public school principal must now evaluate teachers. There's not a ton of flexibility. This new system has impacted the whole supervision and evaluation process!" Since the TES became mandatory as of January 2015, districts, schools, and principals are still in the initial implementation phase of a new and challenging shift.

Many participants spoke about the adjustments in practice as a result of the changes to teacher supervision and evaluation. Principal H identified the impact for her, both at the surface and at a deeper level. "We are no longer using satisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings. The new descriptors through Danielson's Model are more specific and require more attention to the ratings." The inclusion of the Framework for Teaching (FFT) moved Pennsylvania schools away from general ratings of satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The TES now rates teachers at four different levels: failing, needs improvement, proficient, and distinguished.

When asked about the specific rating categories, Principal H discussed the simplicity of satisfactory and unsatisfactory ratings. "Most teachers were satisfactory under the old system. Very few were rated unsatisfactory, unless they did something really egregious. The new system provides more separation between categories and allows teachers to be commended for going above and beyond expectations." This new differentiation among rating categories is what requires increased time and attention on the part of the evaluators.

While there are more requirements in place within the TES than in the previous system, principals reported varying perceptions when it came to their priorities. Principal J summed this up well. "It hasn't changed my priorities, but rather my practice. Student success and therefore student achievement have always been at the top of my list of priorities, but the way that we implement that via accountability has become more focused." Principal A echoed that sentiment, but added that this new system has required a "more formal, very diagnostic and strategic approach" to supervision. Multiple principals (C, G, and I) reported that the TES has become a high priority that requires a large amount of time. "The facets of Act 82 are time consuming and become confusing when bringing in all of these goals into a streamlined system that a school administrator can oversee effectively" reported Principal G. These participants expressed that the multiple components included in the system can be a lot to manage, especially when the level of their other job responsibilities remained the same.

While most principals demonstrated acceptance of the change and understanding the need for a new system, some expressed concerns. Principal D stated, "I believe that it has forced me to make paperwork (the documentation involved within the TES) a priority rather than other more important responsibilities." She discussed the importance of being visible in her building, communicating with students, teachers, and parents, and having time to lead instructional initiatives. "Focusing on improving instruction through team meetings, professional development, and teacher conferences . . . I can make a bigger impact" stated Principal F. She reported that implementation of the TES has taken her away from these building responsibilities that she values.

Within Research Question 1, the study also investigated the extent to which Act 82 shifted principal responsibilities. Principal A found that increased time devoted to teacher

observations has taken time away from "operational matters that demand my attention." He explained that when disruptions occur and students and/or parents need his attention he is not always available to do that. "I lack the behavioral resources (guidance counselor, social worker, instructional aides, etc.) so I often spend hours each day addressing mental health and pupil services things. The increased time needed to complete the TES responsibilities is a conflict for me." It is this type of conflict that principals struggled with as they attempt to be instructional leaders, but feel that their work is shifting to be more managerial.

Principals B and C spoke about time away from other job responsibilities in order to complete all of the necessary documentation, as well. "The pre and post conference require lots of writing back and forth between principals and teachers in our online system," explained Principal C. (Both principals are using the PA-ETEP system which will be described later in this chapter.) "Writing up the observation is really time-consuming, but rich discussions do occur between the principal and teacher through this process" clarified Principal B. The comprehensive and cyclical nature of the observations requires best practices on the part of the principals. Principal B spoke in more depth about exactly what those best practices look like.

> In the past, typically, we talked about providing teachers with a pat on the back moment and an area they'd like to try differently or improve in the future. Within the new system, I follow up our discussion with a walkthrough to see if it was being implemented of to check their portfolio for evidence of growth and intentional initiative in this area. I have transformed my observations to be more authentic and connected, as opposed to snapshots in time that are recorded and filed away.

It is this positive perspective that focuses on the importance of instructional leadership. Talking about professional practice and creating a process that is more meaningful also connects

to systems thinking. As principals promote dialogue with teachers, it creates a common language among educators and also prompts teachers to reflect on their practice. Systems that encourage collaboration among teams and with leaders are successful in their reform (Fullan, 2001).

A similar study by Murray (2014) found that principals felt stressed and overwhelmed with the additional time needed to complete the new evaluation requirements. She cautioned that the frustration that principals and teachers have may impact the fidelity of implementing the TES. Range, Schers, and Holt (2011) found similar results in their study of Wyoming school districts implementing a teacher evaluation system. As the implementation of the TES continues across the state, it will be important to consider this factor in future research.

Some participants did state that their responsibilities have not shifted at all. Both Principals B and I reported that they have not allowed the TES to change their priorities or responsibilities as a school leader. It is clear that the TES has added requirements, but these principals are adamant about not letting the demands of the system alter their daily practice. Principal J summed up the shift effectively in that, "the greatest shift has been one of framing the evaluation system as a means to help teachers see that their identity is not completely defined as a number." Aiding in teacher understanding and including them as partners in thus system is supported through Fullan's Change Theory.

Change theory connects with the implementation of the TES, as it challenges the status quo and involves new ways of doing things. This shift in supervision and evaluation has impacted a large number of people and its success depends on those implementing it. Fullan discussed how leaders can and cannot implement reform with teachers.

> A common administrative and legislative delusion and conceit is that reform can be imposed, even forced, on teachers without any regard for their values or inclusion of their voice. Historically, this pattern of forced implementation has enjoyed little or no success. Reviewing the impact of numerous innovations in education over many decades, McLaughlin (1990) concludes that "you cannot mandate what matters to effective practice" (Fullan, 2001, p. 128).

With the TES as a mandated reform, this makes meaningful and lasting change difficult. Fullan suggested that it is difficult to successfully implement a system that is imposed on educators with little or no input. In fact, the mandated implementation of TES goes again the tenets of change theory, making effective reform difficult for educational leaders called on to fulfill this responsibility.

Fullan encouraged leaders to consider four factors that are integral to the implementation of successful reform. The factors are: 1) need, 2) clarity, 3) complexity, and 4) quality and practicality. It is important to consider these factors within the change theory, as it relates to the TES.

Fullan (2011) also explained that many innovations are implemented without consideration for whether they are needs of those in the organization. In the case of the TES, the need for a new evaluation system was not identified by those within the organization. Set as an outside mandate, educators working within the districts and schools across Pennsylvania are now faced with implementing a system that may not have been a priority for their organization.

A vision for change, including the primary goals of the initiative must be communicated clearly to teachers prior to implementation. Fullan (1991) cautioned that without clarity, the change will not be accomplished. The TES was discussed with stakeholders prior to 2012,

however well-defined goals and expectations were not clear to educators prior to implementation. This was evident during the interviews with principals, as they shared their frustrations with implementation and communications with PDE.

Change can be complex, requiring the alignment of key ideas and involvement from skilled leaders. Fullan (2001) defined complexity as the strategies, skills and materials needed for the successful implementation of any initiative. Senge (1990) added that complexity impacts the entire organization, not only the teachers in the organization. As reflected in conversations with participants, many school districts have orchestrated the necessary alignment of this complex system, through the inclusion of technology tools and professional development offerings.

Connected to the idea of change impacting the entire organization, it is important to consider the quality and practicality of the reform. Fullan (2001) emphasized the importance of district support in sustaining large scale change. Individual schools may implement successful initiatives in the short-term, but sustaining initiatives over long periods of time is impossible without vision, communication, and assistance from district leadership. This concept also connects with Systems Thinking, in that providing strategic leadership for learning and empowering people toward a collective vision are pillars of Senge's model.

Datnow and Stringfield (2000) conducted a longitudinal study of the implementation of 16 reform programs in over 300 schools. They found that strong district support positively impacted reform implementation. Schools that sustained reforms over time had support from the district and state levels including money, time, and staff, which allowed the initiative to persevere through periods of transition. The current period of transition with the implementation of the TES also requires these supports. Principals reported receiving varying amounts of

support from the state and their local districts which may impact the effectiveness of their implementation.

The concept of quality around any initiative, according to Fullan (2001) includes the degree of attention directed towards the initiative, the amount of resources allocated, and the reasonableness of the timeline for implementation. PDE began the process of rolling out the TES at least one year prior to implementation. While some professional development resources were offered to districts, nothing was offered with regards to material resources, technology, or funding to support this mandate. This need for resources is also a component within Systems Thinking. Effective educational systems support continuous learning opportunities that enable teachers to share learning and collaborate.

The third interview question addressed the observation schedule that principals follow for both tenured and non-tenured teachers. Responses were similar across all participants, in that, all tenured teachers must be observed at least once per year and non-tenured teachers at least once per semester. These are the minimum required in the state of Pennsylvania. Principal F was the only participant who observed non-tenured teachers more than the required amount. "I have to see the non-tenured and instructional I certificated teachers four times a year. We also do three walkthroughs, per teacher, per year." Principals reported a wide range of numbers, as to the amount of teachers they were required to supervise on an annual basis, from 23-45 teachers. Table 5 represents the number of teachers, both tenured and non-tenured that each participant was responsible for supervising.

Table 6 Participant supervision and evaluation responsibilities

Schools	Tenured Teachers	Non-Tenured Teachers	Total Teachers
School A	21	2	23
School B	25	0	25
School C	23	2	25
School D	32	8	40
School E	26	16	42
School F	31	4	35
School G	40	5	45
School H	22	8	30
School I	29	6	35
School J	25	7	32

Overall, the participants perceived the TES as having an impact of their role as an elementary principal. There was a general consensus that the system has merit, but that adjustments need to be made in order for the system to be an effective measure. Many spoke about the time consuming nature of the added components and the way it has shifted their responsibility to some degree. Principal E expressed concern multiple times in the interview. Her perceptions may be impacted, in part, by the larger number of teachers in her building to supervise and evaluate. With each principal responsible for varying amounts of tenured and non-tenured teachers, it was difficult to determine whether the number of teachers may influence a principals overall perception of teacher supervision and evaluation under this new system. Further study would be needed to correlate principal perceptions with school size or number of full time teaches employed.

In discussing their perceptions of supervision, principal responses focused on two aspects of systems thinking: (a) promote inquiry and dialogue; and (b) provide strategic leadership for learning. Promoting inquiry and dialogue applies to the TES due to the ongoing communication between teachers and principals throughout the evaluation process. Though principals described

this back and forth process as time consuming, they also acknowledged the need for each step of the process. Both the observation and SLO components of the TES all foster repeated dialogue between both parties. In the observation, dialogue occurs during both the pre and post observation conferences. Dialogue and inquiry combine as teachers work with grade level teams and administrators to design and implement SLOs, then analyze and interpret that data. These components of systems thinking are embedded in the TES.

Principals were also asked to discuss the amount of time spent implementing the observation and evaluation process until the TES compared to the previous model. Participants reported a range of 3 hours to 10 hours per teacher under the new system, as compared to 1-2 hours under the previous model. Principal H elaborated, "It is a ton more than in the last 20 that I've been an administrator. Multiple meetings with teachers, ongoing communication, and documentation . . . it's a lot."

Most principals described the process in their district to include a pre-conference observation conference, the actual observation, and post-observation conference. In addition to these face-to-face interactions with the teacher and principal, there is additional time and preparation required to complete the process. Principal F shared the process which includes approximately 30 minutes for the pre-conference, 45-60 minutes for the actual observation, 45 minutes for documenting and preparing for the post-conference, at least 30 minutes for the actual post-conference, and an additional 30 minutes for the reflection and evaluation form. Principal C shared a similar process and estimated, "Under the old model, this process would have taken about half as much time." Most principals shared a similar series of steps with the time frames varying somewhat.

Principal J explained the time constraints required supervising permanent and temporary teachers. "For those who are non-tenured, roughly 10 hours per teacher is required. Once tenured, that diminishes to 7 hours is they are being formally observed or about 4 hours if they are completing an "option project." These projects are offered to tenured teachers on a rotating basis, so that several teachers each year have the opportunity to complete and document a project as opposed to being observed. Teachers can develop a unit of study or do an action research project. These options are pre-approved and agreed upon within the district's collective bargaining agreement.

Principal I uses a 3-track system for teacher observation and evaluation. Track 1 is for non-tenured teachers. Track 2 is for tenured teachers being formally observed. Track 3 is for tenured teachers who are "not directly observed but working on an individual plan." This differentiation allows the principals to focus on a smaller number of teachers for the more formal clinical observation process and allows more experienced teachers the opportunity to work on a plan that is personal and built around teacher interest and motivation.

Four of the ten principals shared models of differentiated supervision which changed the amount of time they spent with teachers. Differentiated supervision is defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as an alternate method of supervisions which "recognizes the level of experience, the effectiveness, and professionalism of teachers as well as the intensity and time commitment to Formal Observation" (PDE, 2013). In differentiated supervision, professional employees develop an action plan for professional development unique to their needs and interests. As many school systems begin to experience the time-consuming and in-depth nature of the TES, many are exploring alternate supervision models. Two participants in

this study mentioned that their districts are also looking into differentiated supervision as an option.

The participants elaborated on the time spent conducting observations, the differences between the TES and the previous model, and the concept of differentiated supervision. These topics connect with several characteristics of systems thinking as discussed within each section. The strategies involving promoting dialogue, collaboration, and shared learning were prominent within the participants' responses. The concepts of continuous learning opportunities and empowering people toward a collective vision were not as obvious throughout the participant interviews.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 explored the perceptions of principals regarding the TES, specifically the inclusion of building level data, teacher-specific data, elective data, and classroom observations as an accurate measure of teacher effectiveness. Participants were asked to describe their perceptions of supervision in general. All principals discussed the need for a supervision model as a means to monitor teacher effectiveness. They viewed the system as a necessary part of their responsibilities as school principals. As seasoned administrators with a minimum of seven years of administrative experience, the participants demonstrated a strong understanding of the data sources as well as knowledge of the previous model. Some participants voiced strong opinions due to their experience with the previous model, noting that it was effective. Some participants questioned the need for additional components to be added to the system. Their overall perceptions were such that, evaluation is a necessary component and that they were obligated to follow this model as a requirement of their position.

The general perceptions of supervision were followed by a discussion of the positive and negative features of the TES. Overall, the principals reported that this was a much more comprehensive approach than models that were used in the past. Some felt that the TES promoted professional growth for teachers. Some principals were uncertain about the inclusion of the SPP and PVAAS information and its validity as a part of the TES because of the newness of those components. "The SPP and PVAAS scores remain to be seen, as well as the correlation of this data with SLOs and observations" explained Principal F. Principal G also expressed mixed perceptions about the TES. "I think that you are looking at more than just the observational piece of a teacher, but on the other hand, I think that the other quantitative pieces that I review do not provide a true picture of a teacher." He went on to say, "the value added model looks at a small number of standards measured, not all of what takes place in the classroom, which would provide a true comprehensive measure of a child's growth. Principal B stated, "I think we do need to hold teachers accountable for growth. I'm just not convinced yet that this system is the best way to do it." He spoke about the social and emotional growth that is evident in his students and the part that teachers play in that growth. His frustration with the system is in the reliance on academic data as the only source of data that is considered within the TES.

> Principal A spoke at length about his concerns with the TES as a measure of comprehensive effectiveness. I believe the observation side of the effectiveness model and the PVAAS component closely examine the teachers' true effectiveness. Not a lot has changed with the observation piece for me. We followed these procedures before. Some principals would probably have a hard time if they used Marzano or some other model, but Danielson is pretty comprehensive.

This principal did express concerns with other parts of the TES.

> The SLO and overall SPP pieces assist to focus teachers towards the importance of achievement but they do not rate that teacher's effectiveness. For example, any specialist, such a physical education, library, music, or art . . . PVAAS does not count for them. How much does their instruction really impact any of the SPP?

Currently, special subject teachers do not have PVAAS scores, as they do not administer standardized tests. Assessments in English language arts, math, and science are only attributed to those who directly instruct students in those subject areas. Principal I also expressed concerns about the teachers who are not directly responsible for tested subjects and what that means as far as their effectiveness. She spoke about the need for alternative measures for those teachers.

Principal C spoke about this topic as well, explaining that "The state is working towards including accurate measures and alternate data sources that would address the non-tested subjects. We also have to evaluate guidance counselors, intervention teachers, and nurses, but where do they fit in this process?" There is a lot of work going on at the state level determining how to measure effectiveness of teachers who don't give the PSSA or Keystone Exams. With recent changes in state leadership, additional changes to education policy and practice may continue to shift during 2015.

The SPP and SLOs are new components to educators in Pennsylvania. Many school districts have learned about these parts in the last year. With that newness come uncertainty and the resistance to change which was echoed in the conversations with the participants in this study.

Eight out of ten principals in this study overwhelmingly expressed concern about the SPP as a measure of teacher effectiveness. Principal I stated, "It's just not relevant. It is based upon

too many abstract factors which have no statistical alignment to anything." Principal C also discussed a concern similar to the alignment that Principal I mentioned. "It just seems like a lot of measures that don't necessarily connect." When asked to describe this further, she stated, "If I'm a 5th grade math teacher, the school SPP score is attributed to my evaluation. Within that score is the 3rd grade reading scores and the school-wide attendance percentages. I'm not sure that makes sense."

Principal E reported similarly, "I do not believe this is a true indicator of school performance for several reasons. The PSSA does not mirror the growth my school data supports." She also expressed concerns with what the SPP measures. There is not a measure that includes other school performance or the things that we do as a school to meet student needs to foster success." She spoke about her homework academy, food bank, 'Love in a Backpack programs' and counseling services. "These are critical school services that are overlooked." The response from this participant speaks directly to several strategies within systems thinking. Her frustration with the TES is reflected in the lack of connecting the organization to the environment. Effective systems reflect a clear connection between the vision for the organization and its relevance to the environment. When systems leave out this component their likelihood of success decreases (Fullan, 2001; Lunenberg, 2011).

Another principal expressed concern with SPP when it comes to ineffective teachers. "This process makes it more difficult to remove teachers. For instance, if you are not a teacher in grades 3-6 that contribute to the building score, you will benefit from the score, even if you didn't do anything. It is quite a perplexing and unfair process, in my opinion," stated Principal H. Based on participant responses, there is a potential lack of buy-in from school leaders. This disconnect may impact the implementation of the TES due to the vision and purpose not being

fully understood at the building level. Some participants expressed a clear understanding as reflected in Principal H's response. She discussed the SPP first, with respect to her own school score.

Our students are achieving at great levels. While we would love to have them all in the proficient or advanced range, we do have some students who are in learning support, some are reading below grade level due to specific learning disabilities, but their relative achievement is not where is should be. Many of them won't make a year's worth of growth in one school year, so our score isn't as high as it could be.

She goes on to talk about the measure in general terms. "The SPP does frustrate me to some degree as it is hard to place value in it, although I know it is the measure to which we are bound. All things considered, it is hard to look just at one measure of growth without considering the creativity of lessons, availability of programs, etc." The idea behind the TES is that it doesn't just consider one measure. Multiple data sources are considered. While the SPP may be a questionable component, according to the participants in this study, it is 15% of a teacher's evaluation. Student Learning Outcomes are another newly created component that principals must implement.

Student Learning Outcomes

The development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) was to be completed by all Pennsylvania public schools by January of 2015. Since the development process was a local decision, all districts were allowed to direct this component of the TES. For this reason, participants were asked to describe the SLO process in their district. Some districts provided extensive training and resources, while work by other districts was very limited, as reported by the participants. Principal F stated, "We have done a lot of preliminary work through our grade

level and departmental meetings on in-service days. Our district created a podcast which helped to train teachers. We also spent time looking at data and benchmark assessments to formulate applicable SLOs." Principal F and colleagues in her district took an instructional leadership approach, working alongside teachers to analyze data and develop relevant SLOs based on their data.

Principal B explained that his school also developed SLOs by grade level with teachers agreeing on a common goal. "This made it a little more manageable. Teams collaborated on their goals and their measures which made less for me to read and review as well." This principal was not as involved in the shared development of the SLO but did review and approve each plan. "As an instructional leader, I want the teachers to take ownership over the plan, knowing that I support their work."

Principal A described the process in his district which took a very uniform approach. "It was decided that the SLO would focus solely on literacy. It was carried out to all subjects and all grade levels. Each teacher is provided the same rubric to score the students. Each SLO has both a goal for growth and a goal for achievement." In this district, central office administration set the expectation for SLOs with very little teacher involvement or empowerment.

Principal E shared that her district administration provided a two-day in-service training and that, "at the end, most teachers developed at least a rough draft that had been seen by their building principals." When asked why drafts were not finalized and reviewed by all principals, she explained that the district did not have a formal review process with this being their first year of implementation. She also expressed concern that her district was "behind" in the process and not taking a proactive approach when it came to this initiative. Building principals were not

involved in the roll-out of the implementation, leaving concerns regarding the collective vision needed in a system thinking model.

Conversely, in Principal G's district a ½ day in-service was allotted to professional development to review the SLO process at the beginning of the year. "I was one of the principals who actually presented the information to the teachers. While it was understandable to the teachers for the most part, it was confusing as to the percentages that we were to develop with the teachers and what that means when we meet at the end of the year . . . which remains to be seen." Principal G's active role in developing the SLOs were evident in his discussion about working with teachers and meeting with them at the end of the year, demonstrating his instructional leadership style.

Some principals described a positive impact with the development of SLOs. Principal J described the SLOs as "slightly more effective than the previous model because it is more holistic, both internally, taking in multiple data sources and longitudinally, not just looking at one class of students." He discussed the opportunity for teachers to collect data on multiple classes of students in order to create a larger sample size for the performance measures. "For example, if I teach 4th grade math to three different sections, I can set my goal for 75 kids. If I only used one class of 25 students, then the odds are less in my favor." This addition to the TES gives some control to the teachers as they set goals and measures focusing on achievement for their students.

Principal C also described a very positive change with the teachers in her school. "This process was really good for our teachers. It pushed them to think critically about their own instruction and how they are assessing kids. The conversations that came out of the SLO development were data-driven and focused on student achievement, which is great!" This

response detailed the involvement from teachers in using data to drive their practices, while also identifying instructional leadership practices of the principal.

Principal G expressed,

> At this point, the effect of the SLOs has been minimal since this is the first year we are trying to figure out the parameters of the SLOs. It seems to me, if I were a teacher, I would not choose a standard that would be too difficult to achieve. I cannot imagine a teacher placing their job on the line by choosing an SLO that would put their job in any kind of jeopardy, in all honesty. It did push them to look at their assessments and collect and analyze data more than ever before.

Participants also described some negative effects of the SLO development process. The concern that this added component is "just another hoop to jump through" was the tone shared by several principals. Principal E conveyed that, "it has added to the workload, stress, and morale of the staff. SLOs are viewed as one more thing to do. The vagueness from PDE on the assignment has not been helpful for teachers or administrators." The lack of need and clarity reflected through the responses of some participants indicated that Change Theory was not considered in the implementation process of the TES.

Principal A also expressed a negative impact on his staff.

> Teachers are struggling with the parameters that have been put on them with the SLOs, showing growth on the pre and post tests and meeting certain proficiency levels. Also teacher of special subjects are stretching beyond their comfort zones to complete the SLO process. Teachers are focusing more on data which can be a challenge for those who haven't done that as a part of their general practice.

The theme of data-driven practices is evident here with the data collection and analysis required within the SLO process. The TES includes multiple data sources but the process also forces principals and teachers to continue to look at student progress. Developing an SLO requires that teachers select a standard and select multiple assessments to measure that standard. For teachers that are comfortable analyzing student data, this is a simple task. For many others, the collection and analysis requires assistance from the building principal.

Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System

PVVAS is a measure used to show student growth over time. A piece of the TES, PVAAS scores are determined annually and reported at three levels: district, school, and individual teacher. All reports are shown by color with dark blue demonstrating significant evidence of exceeding the standard for growth, light blue representing moderate evidence of growth, and green as a representation of meeting the standards. Lack of growth is identified in two colors, with yellow representing moderate evidence that standards of growth were not met and red representing significant evidence that growth was not met. Figure 3 shows this information from the PVAAS website. (PVAAS Core Team Workbook, 2011)

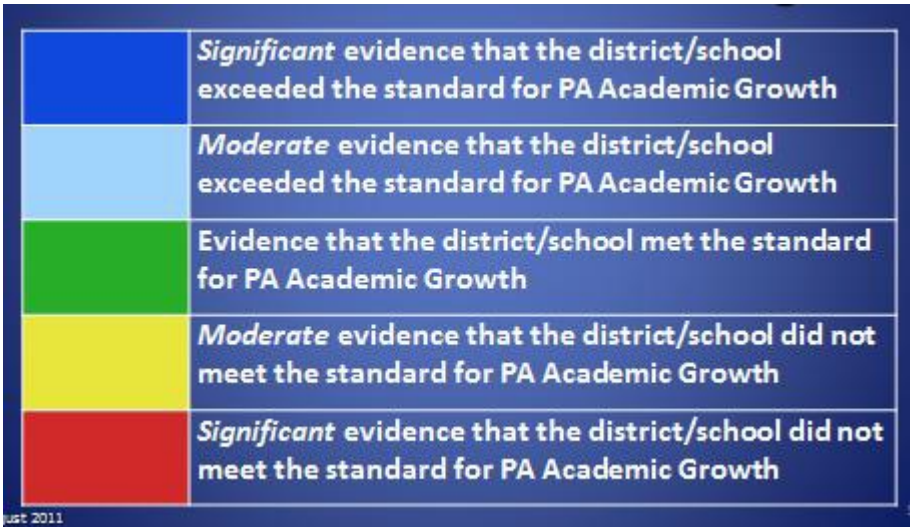

Figure 2. PVAAS Value-added Reports Math and Reading

In describing the impact of PVAAS scores on teacher effectiveness, principals had mixed opinions. Principal I stressed that PVAAS scores are "worth looking at for relevant staff, but are only one piece of the puzzle." She explained that these scores are reviewed by administration and shared with the teachers, but not emphasized. "Teachers use this information as a part of the data analysis process at the beginning of the year to see where there are areas of need in curriculum and instruction" stated Principal B. His school analyzes scores at data meetings as a springboard for curriculum development.

Principal A expressed a positive perception regarding the PVAAS. "I feel that the PVAAS component is a measure that should be included toward their effectiveness based on the statistical validity behind it. It has an impact to validate the growth of individual students and grade levels." In his building, this principal uses monthly grade level team meetings to review student data, similar to Principal B.

Principal G described the PVAAS scores in his building in depth.

> Our scores were in the green range for the most part, which increased our overall building score. The lack of growth of our advanced kids did cause us to not make the gains we would have liked to, so I met with each of the grade levels to discuss how growth would benefit our building SPP score more than the actual PSSA results themselves.

It is this type of approach that demonstrates both instructional leadership and data-drive practices, as a part of systems thinking.

Principal J stated, "I have found that PVAAS has a way of making teachers feel less effective. Where they used to feel they were successful, now they see themselves in comparison to others or to a metric. Unless they are on top, they think they're not good enough." Principal

E felt that the PVAAS score "discourages teachers since it is the only number they are rated on." The negative perspective of PVAAS scores discussed by the participants suggested the need for more professional development for teachers in the area of data-driven practices, as well as greater clarity in sharing knowledge about the evaluation system as whole, reflecting the need for Change Theory strategies.

The inclusion of PVAAS scores within the TES provides validation for school leaders and teachers. Scores also pinpoint areas of need for schools, highlighting deficiencies in tested subjects. Participants expressed a comfort level with data-driven practices and detailed the ways that PVAAS data is addressed in their schools. Leading teachers through this process demands a leader who understands assessment, as well as how to use assessment data to improve classroom instruction.

Research Question 3

Since the Danielson Framework is used to measure the largest part of a teacher's effectiveness through the observation process, it is important to obtain the perceptions around this topic. Principals were asked to describe their process for evaluating each part of the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT). The four domains of the FFT include planning and preparation, classroom environment, instructional delivery, and professional responsibilities. Each will be described in the following sections.

Planning and Preparation

The observation and data collection within the domain of planning and preparation were similar for most participants. All participants discussed reviewing lesson plans weekly. Some participants have plans submitted weekly, while others access an online portal where plans are collected and housed as a curriculum document. Principal C reported, "Teachers are required to

submit plans, but I don't always have time to review them thoroughly. When I'm going in to do a formal observation, I take more time to analyze what they've submitted and provide feedback."

Principals A and E both discussed the pre-observation questionnaire that is used within their online observation system. "Teachers complete the questions prior to the pre-observation conference. Then we discuss their plans for the lesson I'm going to observe," said Principal A. Individual principals shared additional components within this domain, as well. Principal J evaluated teachers on their active participation in monthly professional learning community (PLC) meetings. He tracked their attendance at meetings and also kept anecdotal notes on their involvement in discussion and contributing to the learning community.

Rather than documenting progress falling to the school leader, Principal G discussed the responsibility of the teacher, in that, "Teachers provide artifacts that support the components listed under this domain, which could mean unit plans, assessments they've created, and other evidence of their planning and preparation." Designing student assessments is a part of the planning and preparation domain. Reviewing these assessments and collecting them as evidence of teacher preparation was not a common practice among the participants.

Principal B also includes information gathered through team meetings and monthly school improvement meetings as a part of planning and preparation. Principal I explained, "I look at written plans, but also how well they executed they are. I especially look for established routines in the classrooms. Also, I talk to teachers about why they set up a lesson as they did." Conversations like these contribute to systems thinking through promoting dialogue, encouraging inquiry, and developing continuous learning opportunities. Designing coherent instruction that is well-executed is an important part of the teacher observation model, which

may also include the identification of relevant resources to ensure that a lesson is engaging for students.

Principal C further expanded upon the domain of planning and preparation.

> Effective preparation means that teachers take time to find relevant resources. A teacher that uses technology and social media to enhance their lessons . . . I know they've done their homework. The teachers who really excel in this area are those who plan collaboratively with their grade level colleagues but also with other teachers. An effective teacher plans integrate lesson that might include music or social studies or art. Collaboration and planning also needs to happen with special education teachers, gifted teachers, or other support staff.

Planning and preparation are critical components of effective teaching practice. The participants in this study detailed the indicators of proficiency within this domain. While formal lesson plans were the most common way to measure planning and preparation, participants also found other ways to document teacher performance in this area.

Classroom Environment

Classroom environment is the second domain in the Danielson Framework. This is something that all principals agreed, happens through first-hand observation. Principals spoke about importance of the way classrooms are organized, the extent to which they are student-centered, and the tone that is established by the teacher. Principals also look for interactions between teachers and students with regards to a respectful and nurturing classroom environment. Principal A summarized his expectations clearly. "It accounts for the safety of the classroom, the physical layout, and furniture placement. That can say more than you think about a teacher! It's also the communication style and behavioral expectations set by the teacher." Principal A

stated that he looks for these components during formal classroom observations, but also when the teacher is greeting students in the mornings or walking students through the halls, stressing that the environment goes beyond the physical classroom.

Acknowledging the impact the physical classroom can have on learning, Principal C noted, "When I observe in a classroom that has a place for students to gather in a comfortable way, I note that. When a classroom has a place for kids to explore books or other pertinent materials, that's evidence that the classroom environment is positive and enhancing the educational program." Principal D spoke about whether the classroom environment engages the children. "Are there bulletin boards or other displays of student work? Are there areas in the room that foster collaboration or creativity?" These reflections focus on the physical space, but classroom environment also consists of the culture for learning and the climate of respect developed by the teacher.

Principal I elaborated on what she looks for within this domain. "For me, it's more than what the room looks like. It's the relationship that the teacher has with the students. Do they connect with their kids? Are students comfortable and ready to learn?" Interactions between teachers and students as well as interactions among students are practices within the classroom environment domain.

Instructional Delivery

The third component of the framework is instructional delivery. All principals stated that this was the primary component of the observation framework, heavily weighing instructional delivery over the other areas. Principal C explained, "What happens in the classroom is what really counts. You can plan all you want, but if you can't execute the lesson, then there's a problem." When asked what she looks for in the lesson execution, she stated, student

engagement is the number one priority. Whether through discussion, hands-on learning, or technology, I want to see kids engaged."

Principal A explained his priorities within this domain. "As an observer, I look for evidence of best practices in lessons developed from the PA Core Standards. Assessment is also measured in this domain as a reinforcement of strong instruction." Principal F explained that data regarding instructional delivery was also collected through walkthroughs, formal, and informal observations.

Classroom walkthroughs allows principals to serve as instructional leaders as they engage in dialogue with the teachers about instructional strategies. The information gained during these visits can help to focus the conversation on teaching and learning. In order to improve student academic achievement, administrators need to shift their focus towards instructional practices within the classroom (Johnson, 2011).

The information collected through classroom observations and walkthroughs can be documented through an online tool or in a portfolio. Within the TES, it is recommended that teachers gather evidence to document their work and maintain it in a professional portfolio. Principal F's district requires portfolios and has set the expectation that it is not only the responsibility of the principal to document effectiveness but also each individual teacher as well. The delivery of instruction is one of the teachers' primary responsibilities. Principals regularly observe instructional delivery in the classroom through formal observations and walkthroughs. While principals are responsible for documenting the instructional component for each teacher, the teachers are also responsible for providing evidence in this domain as well.

Professional Responsibility

The fourth domain of the framework reflects the professionalism of the teacher. Professional responsibility of the teacher includes their ability to maintain accurate records, communicate appropriately with families, reflect on their professional practice, and participate in the professional community.

One participant responded, "Honestly, these are all default satisfactory unless there is an ongoing issue." This may be, in part, due to the time-consuming nature of the observation process. Other participants detailed how they collect information in this domain. Principal G reiterated the importance of teacher participation in the evaluation process. "Teachers must provide artifacts that support the components listed under this domain. In cases where I observed a teacher that has one or some of these components present, then I will make sure to place it in their observation document." Principal D noted that through the pre-conference and casual observation, she makes anecdotal notes to complete the data collection in this domain.

While all principals spoke about observing professionalism in the classrooms, many elaborated on other ways that this is measured. Principal I spoke about "their active participation on curriculum teams, how they interact with parents and colleagues, and what else they do for the school and the district." Several participants admitted to struggling with this domain, as some of the factors within professional responsibilities are difficult to capture and measure. Principal C explained, "I don't always know how teachers are contributing to the professional community or whether they are reflecting on their practice. These can be hard to categorize. I tell my teachers. Show me what you are doing to demonstrate this. Bring me your evidence!" Principal F also stated, "We document teachers' participation in committees and other areas that denote professionalism and teachers provide their own evidence online in their portfolio for

evaluation." Documenting this domain often requires a shared responsibility on the part of the principal and teacher, including collaboration and ongoing communication.

Additional Factors

When asked about factors that aren't in the framework but should be, 8 out of 10 principals felt that the framework covered the majority of necessary components. A few participants identified some areas that they believed should be a part of the framework. Principal E reiterated her concerns about schools and teachers who implement strategies and programs to meet student needs. "There needs to be a score for schools who provide supplemental services. Students cannot possibly focus on learning when their basic fundamental needs aren't being met, but we don't measure that." While this is an important service that schools provide, it may not be best aligned with the classroom observation domain. Within the larger TES, no measure exists that would account for the additional work that teachers and school do to meet the needs of their students. It is not a component of the SPP, which is the public school score that many schools are measured by.

Principal H relayed concerns around the inclusion of a piece that involves, "differentiating instruction and meeting the needs of struggling, on level, and challenging students." While this could arguably be documented under instructional delivery, Principal H felt that accommodations made for diverse learners should be its own category. Principal J was the only principal to specifically mention the weight of the framework within the TES. "I think all the components are here, but things such as developing trusting relationships with students, parents, and colleagues should carry a stronger weight." Principal F remarked,

> I feel that any additional factors, which aren't specifically in the model, would fit into at least one component. The components are all backed by research

and should reflect the necessary components. There is a lot of flexibility within the components to creatively fit various elements into the existing framework.

The FFT requires information be collected in four domains. This framework aligns with Systems Thinking in several ways. The overarching framework is a means to creating a system to capture and share learning. As principals and teachers engage in dialogue and collaboration, they are working towards to collective vision of the school or district. The FFT can be viewed as a continuous learning opportunity for teachers as they reflect on their practice and set goals to enhance their instruction.

Within research question 3, the participants were also asked about the training that they received regarding the Danielson Framework and TES. All participants received at least one 2-hour session on the overall system. These sessions were provided by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), or directly from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PaTTAN is an organization in Western Pennsylvania that works with the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and PDE to provide professional development and technical assistance through summer institutes, webinars, and on-site assistance. Through these providers, participants received training to prepare for the implementation of the TES. All participants agreed that the training was necessary, but some felt that the quality of some of the trainings were better than others. Half of the participants reported that their districts did a good job with additional support or professional development around teacher supervision and evaluation in addition to outside trainings. Two of the participants also expressed that some sort of ongoing training, coaching, or support during implementation would be beneficial beyond the initial session.

Since the Danielson Framework itself was not new to any principals, they did not speak about new training specific to their understanding of the framework but more about its role within the complete system of evaluation. Principal C stated, "The AIU offered multiple day-long sessions for principals at different times throughout the year. . . I think both last year and the year before." When asked about the value of this training, she responded, "The AIU always does a thorough job. They walk you through everything and also provide relevant examples. They answer participant questions and if they don't know the answer, they follow up with the state and find out." Three principals attended multiple day trainings either in the district or through the AIU or PATTAN. One principal went to PDE in Harrisburg for training, while the remaining participants attended a one-day training session within their own district.

Professional development and training are needed in order to implement new reforms. In order for the TES to be understood and implemented, training was needed. Participants discussed a range of development that they received as school leaders. Some also discussed the training that was provided to all staff within their districts. Professional development is an important strand within Systems Thinking, as providing strategic leadership and empowering people toward the collective vision can be accomplished through ins-service and other training.

Research Question 4

Within the exploration of the topic of teacher evaluation, several themes emerged. The themes of technology, instructional leadership, data-driven practices, and professional development were threaded throughout the interviews. The following sections will further discuss each theme, as they are related to the supervision and evaluation of teachers in Pennsylvania.

Technology

One theme that was uncovered through the interviews was the use of technology and online tools to assist with the observation and evaluation process. Participants were asked about the implementation of a technology tool to facilitate the TES within their districts. Principals reported using one specific tool: Pennsylvania Electronic Teacher Evaluation Portal (PA-ETEP). While not all schools are required to use a technology component to implement the TES, these tools were used by a number of participants and should be explored further.

PA-ETEP is a portal for educators designed to facilitate the new teacher evaluation process in Pennsylvania. It is currently being used by over 185 school districts across the state. The web-based tool guides teachers and principals through all steps of the observation process, allowing ongoing communication for both the teacher and supervisor. The system prompts the participants through various steps prior to the observation including the pre-observation questionnaire and pre-observation conference. Once the observation is scheduled, the principal documents evidence throughout the classroom visit and submit it through the PA-ETEP system. A post-observation questionnaire is also completed and both parties review the data collected.

Next, the teacher completes a self-assessment rubric which is submitted to the principal. This rubric is also completed by the principal, followed by a post-observation conference. After this information is authenticated, the observation is complete. This system also documents the SLO process, allowing teachers to upload documents for principals to review. PA-ETEP also has a walkthrough component so that principals can document these informal classroom visits as a part of the TES. The system houses and compiles all of this data including a final rating form which is reviewed and signed off on annually.

Principal C reported using the PA-ETEP system. She described mixed perceptions about the usefulness of the system for managing the supervision and evaluation process.

> It helps to keep me organized, like who is on which step in the process. But it also makes more work with regards to the steps. For example, a teacher has to submit a pre-conference questionnaire. I have to review it and respond in the system. Then we have to hold the actual pre-conference. After the observation is complete, I have to submit my written documentation to the teacher. They get the opportunity to include their evidence and/or respond to anything I wrote. Then I have the opportunity to respond to their responses. It's a long process.

Principal F explained that they are also piloting a system on a smaller level. Their district is providing feedback and development suggestions to tailor the product to meet their specific needs. Another principal using the same system reported, "It can sometimes be overwhelming to look through documents, goals and objectives for over 40 teachers. I have to sometimes keep separate data tracking documents to help keep me up to date for who I have observed and who still owes me documents, etc." He goes on to say, "The tech is cumbersome in the process of writing the observations . . . it seems very rigid and emotionless, which is the furthest thing that any classroom in a school resembles when instruction is occurring. It is very clinical and sterile in the way that observations are now written."

Principals also identified some downfalls to using technology through an online system. "I've had some issues with the program. I have lost part of documentation and complete observations. I have learned to use word to cut and paste everything. This can be frustrating and add more time to an already time-consuming process" explained Principal E.

Technology can be a useful tool when it is used to improve a task. School districts and building principals are exploring options when it comes to using technology to improve the supervision and evaluation of teachers. Some districts already using an online component to manage the process are finding both positive and negative impacts with its use. Technology tools to support supervision and evaluation should continue to be explored as more and more districts move further into the implementation of the TES.

Instructional Leadership

Another theme that emerged through this study was the evidence of instructional leadership. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) (2002) defined instructional leadership as sharing leadership responsibilities, establishing a culture that supports student achievement, using relevant data to monitor progress, and holding groups accountable. They emphasized that in order to improve classroom instruction, instructional leaders must focus on helping teachers and facilitating their professional growth.

Through the TES, principals have an opportunity to employ an instructional leadership approach. Many principals in this study discussed strategies that they incorporated in the implementation of the TES that directly connect to instructional leadership including; observing teachers, collecting data and using this information to improve instruction, providing professional development, and allotting time for professional dialogue and collaboration (NSDC, 2002). While many principals expressed an interest in tasks that support an instructional leadership style (team meetings, frequent walkthroughs, being visible in classrooms), they also communicated the lack of time to do those very tasks in part, because of the amount of time required to complete each piece of the TES.

The instructional leadership style has been researched thoroughly over the last 40 years (Blasé & Blasé, 1998; Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). As principals implement the TES, the strategies used by instructional leaders may assist in a successful process. In the ongoing dialogue within the classroom observation process, the SLO development, and review of relevant SPP and PVAAS data, many principals in this study took an instructional leadership approach. They attempted to work alongside their teachers, providing feedback and collaborating on ways to improve instruction. While other leadership styles may also be beneficial when implementing a new reform, components of instructional leadership were evident through the conversations with elementary principals in this study.

Data-driven Practices

This study supports current research regarding the importance of professional development and "the need for principals to be well-versed in data-driven practices" (Maslyk, 2012 p. 112). This is true more than ever, as principals must understand multiple sources of data and the impact on students and teachers. Within the TES, several data sources are used to measure teacher effectiveness including standardized tests, building level data, and growth data. Principals must demonstrate a strong understanding of each component and how they relate to one another.

The principals in this study were well-versed in relevant data included PSSA, PVAAS, and SPP. They demonstrated an understanding of the data within the TES and its component parts. As principals guided teachers through the new evaluation process, they needed to explain these data sources, and in some cases present to the school district on each component's role within the larger system. Blink (2013) explained that this is the role of the "data-driven

instructional leader." She advocated that effective school leaders need to know about instructional and intervention programs, in additional to diagnostic, benchmark, and standardized assessments. Data-savvy principals should understand data collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation. Blink (2013) emphasized reflection and translation of data as key understandings that principals must possess.

As school districts continue to address the changes that the TES has mandated, it is important to consider the knowledge and skills that principals need in order to lead this system in their schools. The level of understanding needed for principals to develop and monitor SLOs with teachers, analyze PSSA scores, and interpret growth data through PVAAS means that ongoing professional development will need to be provided for all involved.

Professional Development

Within Fullan's Change Theory, school reforms are only sustained with professional development. He asserted that staff development is a critical strategy to institutionalize efforts of school improvement (Fullan, 2011). In a number of studies, researchers identified the importance of ongoing training for administrators to assist them with the evaluation and supervision of teacher (Jerald, 2012; Murray, 2014; Sartain et al., 2011).

Within this study, principals reported varying amounts of professional development prior to the implementation of the TES in their schools. Some reported minimal training for a few hours, while others engaged in several days of training in order to roll out this new evaluation initiative. One principal reported being very actively involved in the process, presenting the staff development sessions for his district. Elmore (2000) posited that if schools are going to improve, then principals need to become more involved as instructional leaders. Helping teachers to improve includes the development and supervision of professional development by principals.

Discussion with the participants revealed that some educators may not have a thorough understanding of why and how the evaluation system changed. In addition, principals reported that teachers did not demonstrate an understanding of the components of the TES, causing further frustration for those attempting to implement the system. With any new initiative it is important to consider Fullan's four factors of need, clarity, complexity, and practicality. When members of the organization do not see evidence of these factors, successful change is not likely. With the implementation of the TES, the perceptions of many of the principals in this study were that these four factors were not well-defined.

Fullan (2008) identified three phases of the change process in educational organizations as adoption, implementation and institutionalization. Principals in this study are all within the adoption or early implementation phase of change. With many barriers to overcome, the final phase of institutionalization may be a long way off for Pennsylvania schools.

Summary

Chapter 4 reported on the findings from this qualitative study of Pennsylvania principals implementing the TES in their elementary schools. Each participant shared a unique perception of their experience, many similarities were also identified. These commonalities can provide insight to other school leaders striving for success in this age of accountability. Chapter 5 will provide a thorough discussion of findings and implications for future practice and research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Council on Teacher Quality (2012) reported that within the last 6 years, thirty-six states have changed their policies regarding teacher supervision and evaluation, including Pennsylvania. In response to current changes in teacher supervision and evaluation, it was worthwhile to explore the perceptions of elementary principals on the Teacher Effectiveness system. A qualitative approach was used to investigate principal insights into this new system, as well as explore possible connections to Change Theory and Systems Thinking. This chapter begins with a summary of the results. A discussion of the implications is followed by the conclusions. Finally, recommendations for future research are provided.

This study explored how Western Pennsylvania elementary principals perceived Act 82 of 2012 and the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System. Knowledge regarding the supervision and evaluation practices of principals can lead to an increase in effective leadership practices. This study may contribute to the identification of effective strategies in facilitating a school-wide change as well as highlight gaps in the overall implementation process of the TES.

The study examined the following questions:

1. What is the perceived influence of Act 82 of 2012 and the Teacher Effectiveness System on the role of elementary principals?
2. What are the perceptions of elementary principals regarding the Teacher Effectiveness System with regards to the inclusion of building level data, teacher-specific data, elective data, and classroom observations?
3. What are the perceptions of elementary principals with regards to the observation components within the Danielson Framework: planning and preparation, classroom

environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities?

4. What underlying themes about the teacher evaluation system emerge from interviews with Pennsylvania elementary principals?

Summary of Findings

Findings from this study add to the current research on teacher supervision and evaluation (Caldwell, 2012; Daly and Kim, 2010; Murray, 2014; Ruffini et al., 2014). With limited research on the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania specifically, this study provides insight into the implementation of this new system and builds the foundation for future research in this area. The findings are consistent with others within the emerging themes of professional development, technology, data-driven practices, and instructional leadership. (Fullan, 2011; Jerald, 2012; Sartain et al., 2011).

Since this study focused on the perceptions of ten elementary principals from western Pennsylvania, these findings may not be generalizable to other states, but do offer insight into the early implementation of teacher evaluation systems. There were several key findings drawn from the study of principals' perceptions of the TES. Through individual interviews with participants, each spoke openly about their perceptions related to supervising and evaluating teachers during a period of change to the system. Participants provided detailed responses to all interview questions, giving a comprehensive look in the process, how each component was implemented, and how it impacted their practice and the practices of their teachers.

The influence of educational mandates and the pressure from the Pennsylvania Core Standards were evident in speaking with all participants. They described the demands needed to meet increasing levels of rigor while implementing a new and time-intensive evaluation system. All of the principals identified numerous ways that data-driven practices were an integral part of

their responsibility as building principals. The use of multiple measures of data within the TES demonstrated the increased access to data and the demand for using data to guide instructional decision-making. Most principals expressed a need to lead this process and work alongside their teachers. With the accountability for schools, the need for data collection, interpretation, and analysis continue to be an important topic for educators. Future research might be conducted on principal preparation and best practices when it comes to data-driven decision making.

Teachers and administrators need to understand the components of any new system in order for the system to be effectively implemented. The lens of Fullans' Change Theory and Senge's Systems Thinking provided a critical look at the implementation of the TES. While many components of Systems Thinking were evident within the conversations with participants in this study, the factors suggested by Fullan were not present. The points within these theories should be considered as the TES is further implemented and school leaders execute the system within their school districts.

Administrators are beginning to collaborate more with teachers. With the demands of the Common Core Standards, there is an effort to ensure that the supervision and evaluation is a process that truly helps teachers to improve student achievement. Helping teachers to build their instructional repertoire in order to become more effective in the classroom and focusing are a part of the role of building principals. Supervision needs to be a collaborative effort that helps teachers grow professionally. While embedded opportunities exist for collaboration and collegiality within the TES, the early implementation of this system may have limited the participants' ability to maximize this component.

Change Theory

The study of the early implementation of the TES was also analyzed through the lens of

Fullan's Change Theory. In order for educational reforms to be successful, many factors must be considered. Through the interviews with elementary principals, there were some concerns with regards to the potential success of this initiative with regards to educational change. Change Theory considers whether a need for change is present, whether clarity exists, the level of complexity in the change, and the practicality of it. From the perspective of ten elementary principals, these factors were not clearly evident. While a need for change may have existed at the state and federal level, this was not present at the local level. Despite efforts from intermediate units and other educational organizations, the complexity of the TES system left many educators with a lack of clarity regarding both the need for change and the process for implementation. While participants in this study are implementing the system, several questioned the practicality of the change, particularly at a time where other changes are strongly impacting schools. Shifts to the PA Core Standards and changes in assessment practices, combined with an overhaul of the evaluation system continue to present challenges to principals and teachers.

The exploration of principal perceptions around this topic emphasized several components of Fullan's Change Theory, recognizing that school leaders must consider the need, clarity, complexity, quality, and practicality of a reform prior to implementation and that schools will work through several phases of change before the practice is institutionalized.

Systems Thinking

Senge's Systems Thinking described a framework for any learning organizations working towards a long-term goal. People within the organizations must use their capabilities to enhance the organization as a whole working in a systematic way. For educational organizations, Systems Thinking provided direction for school leaders implementing a change within the school

system.

Lunenburg (2011) further defined seven strategies within Systems Thinking; (a) continuous learning opportunities; (b) promote inquiry and dialogue; (c) encourage collaboration and team learning; (d) create systems to capture and share learning; (e) empower people towards a collective vision; (f) connect the organization to its environment, and (g) provide strategic leadership for learning. These strategies within the Systems Thinking model should be considered at several levels with regards to the TES; the system at the state level, the district level, and at the school level. The interviews with building principals provided some insight into each level to some degree.

Systems thinking at the state level were not perceived to be strong by the participants in this study. The concepts of creating a system to capture and share learning was managed through the creation of the TES, but the others strategies were not in place to support the overall system. As perceived by the participants, educators were not empowered towards this vision for supervision and evaluation, nor were they provided with any strategic leadership for learning. While the system itself promoted inquiry, dialogue, and collaboration, participants did not feel that these strategies were clearly articulated in communications or trainings received from the state.

At the district level, participants perceived varying levels of evidence of Systems Thinking. Most participants reported that districts were mindful regarding ongoing learning opportunities and a focus towards a collective vision. Strategic leadership was described by some participants, where others felt that it was the responsibility of the principals to provide this leadership.

At the building level, participants described their efforts to provide the necessary

leadership to fully implement the TES. They depicted their support to managing the system as critical to the success of the first year of implementation. Principals elaborated on the ongoing dialogue with teachers, as well as the structures within their buildings to promote inquiry and collaboration. Through team meetings and professional development offerings, participants attempted to empower their faculties and carry out a new system for supervision and evaluation.

Systems Thinking is a theory that can be applied to many aspects of education. It is evident that Systems Thinking should be a consideration when states and districts are implementing new evaluation systems. The use of this framework, along with other key findings will be discussed further as implications for states, districts, and principals are considered in the next section.

Implications

Teacher supervision and evaluation has been studied for hundreds of years, dating back to the 1700s (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011). Researchers have examined different methods of observation, evaluation tools, and supervision models. This study focused on the current implementation of the TES in Pennsylvania, however the study has implications for principals, school districts, and states across the country. Implications for policymakers and principals preparation programs should also be considered. The following sections will look at these areas and offer recommendations in response to the changes in teacher supervision and evaluation.

School Principals

The role of the school principal is a demanding one, particularly with the added responsibilities that come with a new reform. Implementing the TES and understanding all of its components impact principals in a number of ways. This study has several implications

practices of building principals who are implementing a new model for teacher supervision and evaluation.

Building principals should understand the importance of Change Theory and Systems Thinking in order to manage change effectively in their schools. While some requirements and responsibilities may stretch beyond the principal's control, there are several steps that can be taken with regards to a new initiative. Principals should communicate with teachers the reasons for the change including describing each component in a clear way. Principals should make every effort to set clear expectations for the teacher's role and what they will need to do. This can occur within professional development sessions or collaborative meetings with teachers. A vision for the change, combined with ongoing communication will assist principals in a successful implementation.

Principals should have a strong understanding of school data. This understanding must be developed through ongoing opportunities to review multiple sources of data and translate this information into meaningful results for teachers and students. Principals must be ready to lead data-driven meetings with teachers, providing them guidance in understanding data and what implications it has on their practice. They need to possess the skills to lead meaningful discussions about trends in school, class, and student level data.

School District

With the newness of the TES, districts will need to assess their implementation and reflect on future steps. Based on the responses in this study, some principals perceptions are that they are not able to focus on their role as school leader with the requirements of the TES. In order to maintain the focus on teacher growth and student learning, school districts will need to balance the data management process of the TES (Murray, 2014). It is important at the state

level, but more importantly at the local level, that school districts communicate why the evaluation process is changing and how those changes impact individuals (Popham, 2013). Without this clarity in purpose, the TES may not result in teacher growth.

School districts might also consider creating observation procedures that include the thorough training of educators and evaluators, including ongoing professional development opportunities. Trainings regarding the Danielson Framework for Teaching, district data management systems, and other tools used to complete the evaluation process should be planned by the district throughout the school year. Larger school districts might also look to create policies that support placement and retention of effective teachers in needy schools in an effort to increase student achievement.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the school districts to develop conditions that provide teachers and principals with sufficient support to carry out a system of teacher evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Support should be both organizational and instructional at all levels of the system, enabling continuous learning aligned professional learning opportunities

School districts should also investigate the use of technology or web-based tools that would assist principals in the implementation of the TES. Principals conveyed concerns about the consuming nature of the TES. Online tools like PA-ETEP and others should be considered as an effort to ease the implementation for teachers and administrators. With the purchase of a management tool, districts may also need to consider the technology equipment needed to facilitate its use. Principals completing observations and walkthroughs using a digital system will require laptops, tablets, or other mobile devices to use in the classrooms.

Lastly, school districts should consider the use of differentiated supervision models. This alternative allows districts to create different options for teachers at different points in their

careers. As school districts explore the possibility of these plans, they should also consider the constraints that collective bargaining agreements may have on their implementation.

States and Policymakers

With the TES being a state mandate, there are several implications that this study has for state departments of education and other policymaking organizations. With several new components impacting educators at once (PA Core Standards, SLOs, and SPP) states should carefully consider the timing and roll out of new mandates. This consideration should also include clear communication, opportunities for training, as well as feedback from those directly implementing the initiative.

Participants in this study expressed some concern regarding the PVAAS model and the SPP and their impact on teacher evaluations. States might look to refine value-added models to ensure that scores are reliable and valid measures of teacher effectiveness. In addition, states must ensure that training is provided to teachers and administrators to ensure that PVAAS data is understood and analyzed effectively.

At the state level, principal development should focus more on managing changes in education. In order to manage the multitude of transitions, states should work to build the knowledge and competencies that principals possess in this area. While this can also occur at the district level, state agencies and institutions of higher education should consider their role in the effective implementation of systems and how to better prepare education for large-scale reforms.

Principal Preparation Programs

Darling-Hammond (2012) advocated for stronger principal preparation, particularly with intensive training in evaluation and supervision (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Colleges and universities should evaluate their programs to ensure that principals are prepared for the demands

of school leadership. Programs should include courses on data-driven practices and models of effective leadership, including instructional leadership (Maslyk, 2012). Relevant coursework should include opportunities to analyze and make sense out of various data sources, intensive instruction around all components of the teacher evaluation system, and opportunities to engage in dialogue around teacher observation. As new principals enter the field, they will need to demonstrate an understanding of these components, particularly since the TES will become a large portion of their job responsibilities as a school principal.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations exist within any research study. Throughout this study, the researcher considered whether it was too early to analyze the TES. With full implementation occurring for most schools districts as of January 2015, one limitation of the study may be that this topic was explored too early to determine the true perceptions of elementary principals. More time may be needed to obtain a comprehensive picture of the entire TES system as described by the participants.

Another limitation of this study may be the number of participants. With ten principals agreeing to participate, perhaps the findings would be more generalizable with a larger sample size. With each participant only being interviewed once, the study may have limited the depth somewhat, as additional interviews or focus groups with the participants may have revealed more information pertinent to the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on this study, there are several directions that future research could take. Considerations should be made to expand the study and look at other research methods. Other studies could pursue the emerging themes that were evident within this research.

A follow up study could be conducted with the same participants after another year of implementation to determine the effectiveness of the system. This qualitative study could also be expanded to include all schools in Pennsylvania, including middle schools and high schools. Since the TES is a new model, a research base has not been established. Research could be pursued that would follow a group a principals throughout the year as they implement the TES. This idea could also be used to develop a longitudinal study that investigates the practices of a cohort of principals over several years. Beyond the principals' perspective, researchers could explore the role of state policy in mandating teacher evaluation systems and how state departments of education are supporting districts implementing new initiatives.

A quantitative approach could also be used to further explore perceptions on supervision and evaluation. A survey could be administered to teachers, principals, and superintendents to determine how these perceptions align regarding the TES. Colleges and universities could also be surveyed to determine the extent to which their programs are preparing principals to supervise and evaluate teachers. While student achievement data was not considered in this study, future research could analyze teacher observations and TES ratings with student performance.

Future research might also include the exploration of the themes revealed through this research: technology, instructional leadership, data-driven practices, and professional development. Research could be conducted regarding the online tools used to management teacher evaluation systems, which could be done qualitatively through interviews or case studies

or quantitatively through a large-scale survey. The alignment of various leadership models and the Danielson Framework for Teaching could be studied to determine whether instructional leadership is an effective model. Future studies might also evaluate observations model and investigate the ways that conducting observations vary among principals. With the demand for teachers to take an active role in the evaluation process, exploring how teaching artifacts are analyzed and collected should also be considered.

Conclusions

Teacher evaluation systems are engrained in ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and data-driven practices. While principals are inundated with a variety of managerial responsibilities, they must also take a leadership role in teacher supervision and evaluation. Principals are critical to leading the implementation of teacher evaluation systems, as they are in a position to support and lead initiatives that can improve teaching and learning.

Through this study, the researcher concluded that principals have mixed perceptions regarding the TES in Pennsylvania. In collecting data from ten elementary principals, it was interesting to explore the views of the participants as they related to their supervision and evaluation practices. The ten schools differed in geographic location, socioeconomic status, and educational programs, with all implementing the TES in slightly different ways. Overall, elementary school leaders perceive the TES to be a necessary, but time-consuming system.

Many commonalities were revealed throughout the study, indicating the need for further research. All principals spend time reviewing lesson plans and observing in classrooms as a part of the supervision and evaluation system. The principals in this study demonstrated a strong understanding of school data and had structures in place within their schools to analyze data through team meetings and in-service trainings. Some principals used aspects of instructional

leadership in their implementation of the TES, maintaining visibility in the classrooms, leading discussions around best practices, and supporting teachers in their professional growth.

This study affirmed the need for a systematic approach to effective school reform. The implementation of the TES and other evaluation systems would benefit from using Fullan's Change Theory and Senge's Systems Thinking. The strategies within these theories can assist principals and other school decision makers as they enact changes to their evaluation systems. This research contributes to the existing research and aims to help educators and decision makers in developing the meaningful implementation of teacher supervision and evaluation models.

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Appendix A

Teacher's Informed Consent Cover Letter

Dear Fellow Principal,

I am a student in the Doctoral Program in the Administrative and Policy Studies Program in the Department of Professional Studies in Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I am inviting you to participate in this study in an effort to gain a greater understanding of the perceptions of elementary principals with regards to the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania.

You are invited to participate in a study to explore how principals perceive the implementation of Act 82 of 2012 through the Teacher Effectiveness System. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision as to whether or not you would like to participate.

My study will be based on information collected through an interview with you. The tape-recorded interview will take approximately one hour and will focus on questions related to the changes in teacher evaluation in Pennsylvania elementary schools.
As a principal myself, I understand how busy a principal's day can be. By taking time to talk with me about your school, we can inform other educators about the Teacher Effectiveness System that exists in Pennsylvania schools.
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in the strictest of confidence. You will not be identified by name, school or district. In the event the findings in this study are published, pseudonyms will be used to conceal the identities of the participants. Participants may withdraw at any time by notifying the principal investigator via email at NCYQ@IUP.edu. If you withdraw from the study, all data pertaining to your involvement in the study will be destroyed.
Within the next week, I will contact you to answer any questions and determine if you are willing to participate in this study.

Thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact me by phone or email at the information provided below:

Cell Phone: (412) 999-6310
Work Phone: (412) 767-5343
Email: james_pragar@fcasd.edu

Your time and cooperation is very much appreciated. Thank you for considering my invitation to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

James P. Prager

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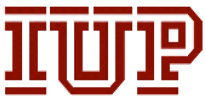
This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730)

Appendix B



Informed Consent Form

Title of the Study:

PERCEPTIONS OF PENNSYLVANIA ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS ON THE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS SYSTEM

Researcher:

Principal Investigator:
James P. Prager
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(412) 767-5343

Advisor:

Dr. Joseph Marcoline
Professor/Assistant Chairperson
Professional Studies in Education
303 Davis Hall
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Indiana, PA 15705
(724) 357-2419

Purpose of the Study:
The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the perceptions that elementary principals have on the Teacher Evaluation System in western Pennsylvania. The intent is to gain a greater understanding from principals who have been implementing the system in their elementary schools. The Teacher Effectiveness System, established in 2013 by the Secretary of Education, evaluates teacher performance through classroom observations, building data, teacher-specific data, and other elective data. Principals in Pennsylvania must use multiple sources of data, as dictated by Act 82 to evaluate teachers on an annual basis.

Procedures for the Study:
After your acceptance to participate in the study, I will arrange a meeting with you at a time and location of your convenience. At this meeting, you will participate in an interview focusing on your perceptions of the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. The interview will last

approximately 60 minutes in length. An audio recording device will be used to transcribe the interview after its completion. You will receive a copy of the transcript and be asked to review it to ensure accuracy and help to clear up any miscommunication.

Risks and Benefits:
There are no known risks to participate in this study.
The information gathered from participants will add to the knowledge of effective evaluation practices. The results from this study will add to the existing research, highlighting systems thinking and Fullan's Theory of Change and their alignment with the Teacher Effectiveness System in Pennsylvania. The study can benefit other states and school districts who are also developing evaluation systems in response to Act 82 of 2012 and may contribute to the identification of effective management and organizational strategies gained from overcoming potential obstacles in the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System.

Compensation:
There will be no compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:
The only people who will have access to my study will be my advisor and myself. All materials pertaining to the study will be locked in a cabinet in my home office. Upon compilation of the study or any reports pertaining to the study, pseudonyms will be used for all individual participants in the study. You will be able to review all transcripts prior to the printing of any of your information.

Additional communication, such as phone calls or emails, will be treated in the same manner with regard to confidentiality. In compliance with federal regulations, your informed consent document and all research data will be retained for a minimum of three years. All such materials will be locked in a cabinet in my home office.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time by notifying me at the provided contact information. Also, you may refuse to provide information any interview question you are not comfortable answering.

More Information:
Please contact me (NCYQ@IUP.edu. or (412) 767-5343
or my advisor, Dr. Joseph Marcoline (J.f.marcoline@IUP.edu or (724) 357-2419) for additional details pertaining to this study.

If you are in agreement with the terms stated above and are willing to participate in this study, please sign the consent form enclosed and either scan and email it to me or mail it directly to the address in this informed consent letter. A copy will be provided so that you may keep it for your records.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a participant in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdrawal at any time through personal conversation, written communication, phone call, or email. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)_____

Signature_____

Date_____

Phone number or location where you can be reached_____

Best days and times to reach you_____

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

_____ _____

Investigator's Signature **Date**

Appendix C

Principal Interview Questions

Guiding questions	Research question	Applicable theory
1. Describe how Act 82 of 2012 has changed your priorities as a principal.	RQ1	Change theory
2. In what ways does the implementation of the Teacher Effectiveness System require a shift in your responsibilities?	RQ1	Change theory
3. Describe your observation schedule for tenured and non-tenured teachers.	RQ1	Systems thinking
3a. Describe your perception of supervision.		Systems thinking
4. How much time is spent implementing the observation and evaluation process with a teacher, compared to the previous evaluation model?	RQ1	Systems thinking
5. Describe the positive and negative features of the Teacher Evaluation System.	RQ2	Systems thinking
6. How would you characterize the School Performance Profile as a measure of teacher effectiveness?	RQ2	Systems thinking
7. Describe the development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in your district.	RQ2	Systems thinking
a. In what ways has this impacted the teachers in your building?	RQ2	Change theory
8. Describe the impact of PVAAS score in relation to teacher effectiveness.	RQ2	Change theory
9. Describe your process for evaluating each component of the Danielson Framework. a. Planning and preparation b. Classroom environment c. Instruction d. Professionalism e. Describe the factors that aren't included in the Framework that should be.	RQ3	Systems thinking

10. Did your district implement a technology component to facilitate the Teacher Effectiveness System? a. If so, which technology tool? b. How is it meeting your needs? c. If not, is your district looking to adopt a digital product to assist with this process?	RQ4	Systems thinking
11. Describe the value of the training that you received regarding the Danielson Framework and the TES.		Systems thinking