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The implementation of a new teacher evaluation model: a qualitative case study of how teachers make sense of the Marzano Evaluation Model

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW TEACHER EVALUATION MODEL: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF HOW TEACHERS MAKE SENSE OF THE MARZANO TEACHER EVALUATION MODEL

by

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my dissertation and the entirety of this process to my family. Without their support and sacrifice I would not have been able to accomplish any of this. Through the long Saturday classes, the days and nights spent researching and writing, and the long hours spent working towards the final dissertation my family has been by my side. First to my wife Paula, your support through this process has been nothing short of amazing, you have sacrificed more than I have to reach this point, and I am forever grateful for your love and friendship. I love you with all my heart, and I look forward to being able to spend more time doing the things we love to do as a family. To my children Matthew and Emily, your understanding and patience with daddy being busy all the time cannot be measured, you have been supportive and loving. When you call me "Dr. Daddy" for now on it will be for real.

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Abstract

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The Implementation of a New Teacher Evaluation Model: A Qualitative Case Study of How Teachers Make Sense of the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model
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The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers understood and changed their instructional practice in response to new teacher evaluation requirements. The strategy of inquiry was a single case study, representative of a large suburban high school adapting to the changes required under the provisions of Achieve NJ (Yin, 2009). The theoretical framework of sensemaking and sensegiving guided the analysis of how teachers processed the changes to their evaluation system and the role the context played in the implementation of the MTEM (Weick, 1995, Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Data in the form of archival documents, participant interviews and field notes from observations which produced themes around the implementation of the MTEM.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers perceive only incremental shifts in their instructional practice, that they perceive significant barriers to implementation, that a compliance orientation exists towards the MTEM, also that contextual messages influence teacher's perceptions of the MTEM, and that school leadership acts as capacity builders. In this setting change is framed by a teacher's experience, and providing support that is context specific, especially for veteran teachers, is critical to the implementation process. Teacher's resistance to change is also influenced by the context, and supportive leadership designed to mitigate resistance must take into account the contextual factors impacting change.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents (continued)

Table of Contents (Continued)

Table of Contents (Continued)

Table of Contents (Continued)

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2011 New Jersey Governor Chris Christie stated: "We want tenure to become something good teachers earn; that will protect good teachers from political firings or personal relationship firings. It will not protect bad teachers who stay in front of the classroom" (Calefati, 2011a). On April 11, 2011 Christie unveiled seven education reform bills aimed at changing teacher tenure in the state, and on August 6, 2012 he signed the "Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability Act for the Children of New Jersey (TEACH NJ) (TEACH NJ, 2011). TEACH NJ defined structures and requirements for a new teacher evaluation system in New Jersey; linking tenure decisions to teacher evaluation. The law had far reaching effects for New Jersey's teachers, establishing in code four distinct effectiveness ratings: ineffective, partially effective, effective and highly effective.

Perhaps the most revolutionary change to teacher evaluation in the state of New Jersey was the law's provision that multiple measures of student growth would be included in a teacher's evaluation (Burke, 2011). This legislative provision mirrors a Christie administration task force report in March of 2011 that called for multiple measures of student learning and flexible options to measure a teacher's impact on student achievement (Calefati, 2011b). While measures of student learning from standardized assessments became a mandated element in teacher evaluation, lawmakers were careful not to allow them to become the only way in which teachers could be evaluated, including a line in the law that stated standardized assessments "shall not be the predominant factor in the overall evaluation of a teacher" (TEACH NJ, 2011, p.3).

Federal Influence on Teacher Evaluation

Under the Republican administration of George W. Bush the federal government enacted accountability standards for teachers. Bush administration Secretary of Education Rod Paige called for a shift in the focus on teacher credentialing away from pedagogical knowledge towards subject specific knowledge (Paige, 2002). In 2001 Congress once again reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), intensifying federal influence over teacher workforce policy by requiring the development and implementation of standards and assessments designed to judge educational quality (Superfine, Gottlieb & Smylie, 2012). NCLB also set the highly qualified teacher provision, requiring that teachers demonstrate (a) that they possess a bachelor's degree, (b) that they are fully certified or licensed in their subject or (c) could demonstrate subject matter competency in the core academic areas by the 2006-2007 school year (Paige, 2002, U.S. Department of Education, 2004). NCLB left a great deal of flexibility to the states to determine compliance with these criteria, flexibility that the states often did not take full advantage of (USDOE, 2004). Nevertheless, NCLB (2001) ushered in a new era of federal influence over teacher workforce policy (Superfine et al, 2012).

As a result of the federal governments continued push into teacher workforce policy New Jersey adopted new teacher evaluation policies as a condition for eligibility for federal subsidies (Superfine et al, 2012). The passage of TEACH NJ changed the landscape of teacher evaluation in New Jersey, codifying elements of President Obama's Race to the Top (RttT) competitive grant program, aligning state law with the requirements of the federal program to subsidize education reform (Calefati, 2011b,

McGuinn, 2012a, USDOE, 2009). RttT outlines priorities that would lay the ground work for education reform in the United States (Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012). RttT provides funding for the development of common assessments, improvement in teacher training, evaluation and retention, as well as new student accountability systems, providing the impedes for the reform of teacher evaluation systems in the United States (McGuinn, 2012a, Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012). The ultimate goal of federal reform is to improve student achievement by increasing teacher effectiveness (USDOE, 2009). Teachers in New Jersey schools are now experiencing change on an unprecedented level due to the implementation of these new policies (Anderson, 2011).

Achieve NJ

On March 6, 2013 the New Jersey State Board of Education, with input from the Christie administration, introduced Achieve NJ, establishing New Jersey's official teacher evaluation policy in compliance with TEACH NJ (Calefati, 2011c). Achieve NJ established multiple measures of performance to evaluate teachers, including scores on instruments designed to measure teacher practice and multiple measures of student achievement (New Jersey Department of Education, 2014a). In order to comply with the new law districts were required to adopt an evaluation model that met state board of education guidelines and provided teachers the opportunity for growth after evaluation feedback (TEACH NJ, 2011). School districts in New Jersey either developed their own evaluation tools or adopted a commercially made model from researchers such as Charlotte Danielson, Robert Marzano or James Stronge (NJDOE, 2014a).

Achieve NJ requires that teachers be rated numerically one through four in teacher practice. This numerical number is averaged with student achievement data such

as the student growth objective (SGO) or student growth percentile (SGP) in order to arrive at a teacher's final summative number (NJDOE, 2014a). SGO's represent the most common and simple approach to evaluating the influence of teachers on student achievement, goals are set on multiple measures of previous achievement, and current student achievement is considered to be a function of the effectiveness of the teacher (Goldschmidt, Choi, & Beaudoin, 2012, Morgan & Lacireno-Paquet, 2013). SGO's measure student achievement relative to academic goals set at the beginning of the year (Marion et al, 2012). In New Jersey teachers have complete control over the SGO process; they set their own growth objectives, create their own pre and post assessments, and self-report their own achievement data (NJDOE, 2014a).

New Jersey has adopted the SGP as a partial indicator of teacher quality and SGP's based on the PARCC assessments will factor into the scores of teachers whose subjects require an end of year assessment. This study is concerned with secondary teachers, and only teachers of English language arts and mathematics will have SGP's factored into their evaluations (NJDOE, 2014a). The SGP is a model that compares current student achievement to other students with similar past test scores by assigning percentile ranks (Walsh & Isenberg, 2013). SGP's use state approved standardized assessments to compare students in peer groups, or groups of students who historically had achieved similar results, and the changes in their achievement relative to that group. The SGP, despite claims by the New Jersey Education Commissioner's office, does not account for student backgrounds, special education classification or socio-economic status (Baker & Oluwole, 2013, Walsh & Isenberg, 2013).

A final summative score is arrived at by combining the teacher practice score, SGO and SGP (where applicable) scores and is applied to the requirements under state statute (TEACH NJ) to categorize teachers in one of the aforementioned categories. Teachers who were rated partially effective or ineffective the previous school year are placed on a corrective action plan (CAP) (NJDOE, 2014a). A CAP is the first step towards the loss of tenure for teachers. It outlines professional development as well as supervisor and teacher activities that will help the teacher improve their practice. In the event that the teacher is found partially effective or ineffective for two straight years the teacher may have tenure charges filed against them (TEACH NJ, 2011).

The policy is not without controversy though; educators in New Jersey have criticized Achieve NJ because of perceived problems with evaluation instruments and the validity of the SGO process (McGlone, 2014). While Achieve NJ has helped the state qualify for federal subsidies and has drawn praise from groups like the Thomas B. Fordham Institute and the National Council on Teacher Quality for its efforts at evaluation reform, the state's teachers are resistant to Achieve NJ because they view it as a threat to their livelihoods (NJDOE, 2014a, McGlone, 2014, National Council on Teacher Quality, 2014, NJEA, 2014, Smarick, 2014).

Problem Statement

The Federal RttT initiative placed educator accountability on the national policy agenda, and Governor Chris Christie has made teacher accountability his number one policy agenda at the state level (Anderson, 2011, McGuinn, 2012a). At their core these new policies are an attempt to induce educators to change their behaviors in order to effectively educate New Jersey's students (Spillane, Diamond, Burch, Hallet, Jita, &

Zoltners, 2002). The prior experiences of teachers, the organizational context, and the number of year's teachers have been on the job all interact to help teachers make sense of what Achieve NJ is asking of them. Teachers will make instructional shifts that may manifest themselves differently depending on their interpretation of the new evaluation system (Spillane et al, 2002a). These shifts are evaluated by multiple supervisors and administrators, each with their own understanding of the instructional model.

Marzano, Frontier, and Livingston (2011) believe "the purpose of supervision should be the enhancement of a teacher's pedagogical skills, with the ultimate goal of enhancing student achievement" (p.2). The Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (MTEM) is designed on this premise: encouraging conversations between evaluators and teachers about instructional practice (Marzano et al, 2011). In 2013 the Port Royal Regional School District (PRRSD), a pseudonym for the district that will serve as the setting for this study, adopted the MTEM in order to comply with the demands of the new law. The MTEM is a standards based evaluation model that identifies the cause and effect relationship between a teacher's instructional practice and student achievement (Marzano et al, 2011).

The MTEM represents a new instructional model for the teaching staff of the PRRSD. Despite the model's emphasis on professional growth teachers have resisted its implementation, focusing on compliance rather than growth (Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Ramirez, Clouse, & White-Davis 2014). Teachers see the evaluation indicators as subjective; they feel that they are evaluated on criteria not appropriate to their context, and that artificial quotas have been placed on the highest-level ratings (Firestone et al, 2013). Resistance to the evaluation model has led to uncertainty and inconsistency in its

application as teachers are more concerned with their numerical score rather than the improvement of their practice. Teachers also do not shift their pedagogy; instead they rely on traditional teaching techniques such as direct instruction to help students operate on higher levels of cognitive demand (Toth, 2015).

As teachers are presented with new concepts from the instructional model they seek to understand them in terms of their past practice (Coburn, 2001, Fowler, 2013). Consequently, a misalignment between the intent of the instructional model and teacher practice may be occurring in this setting; teachers may make sense of the model and implement its requirements differently in the context of their own classrooms (Spillane, Reiser, & Gomez, 2006). In order for the PRRSD to design professional development that will improve teacher practice, district leaders must understand the contextual factors that influence teacher sensemaking about evaluation (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002, Spillane et al, 2006). This understanding may allow school leaders to recognize and ameliorate different interpretations of the instructional model in order to promote student achievement (Marzano, 2007).

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how teachers understood and changed their instructional practice in response to imposed teacher evaluation requirements in a high school district (Fowler, 2013, Spillane et al, 2002b, Weick, 1995). The implementation of teacher evaluation policy has been studied from different perspectives. The two most popular perspectives, teacher evaluation and its impact on student achievement (Baker et al, 2010, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013, Garret & Steinberg, 2014, Goldhaber, Goldschmidt & Tseng, 2013, Kane & Stager, 2012), and

principal leadership and teacher evaluation (Halverston, Kelly & Kimball, 2004, Halverston & Clifford, 2006, Hill, Charlambous, & Craft, 2012, Murphy, Hallinger & Heck, 2013, Ovando & Ramirez, 2007) have received considerable attention during the past decade. Teacher evaluation in the accountability era has been examined from the policy implementation perspective, (Ramirez, et al, 2014, Ramirez, Lamphere, Smith, Brown, & Pierceall-Herman, 2011) and from the perspective of how principals have experienced and reacted to the policy implementation process (Milanowski & Heneman, 2001, 2003).

In contrast this study approached evaluation from the perspective of the teacher; this was done in order to describe and understand how teachers made sense of the evaluation model by analyzing the contextual factors from which they interact (Halverston & Clifford, 2006, Kezar, 2012, Marzano et al, 2011). Teachers experience evaluation in their local context, therefore a thorough examination of how they understand the model and change their practice in this setting is critical to understanding how the MTEM influences a teacher's instructional practice (Flores, 2012, Halverston et al, 2004, Spillane et al, 2002a). By examining how teachers changed their practice under the MTEM I will be able to increase the utility of feedback in this setting, moving teachers away from their focus on numerical scores and towards a focus on growth (Milanowski & Heneman III, 2003, Ramirez et al, 2014, Spillane et al, 2002a, Toth, 2015). Finally, this study was designed to illuminate teacher's perceptions and experiences with the MTEM, which may help me lead effective professional development towards the improvement of teacher practice and increased teacher efficacy (Flores, 2012, Conley & Glassman, 2006).

Research Design

For this study I used a qualitative research design in order to understand how teachers made sense of the MTEM in different stages of their career (Creswell, 2014). The strategy of inquiry was a single case study, representative of a large suburban high school adapting to the changes to teacher evaluation required under the provisions of the new policy (Yin, 2009). A single case study is an appropriate strategy of inquiry as I was attempting to understand the real life experiences of teachers who implemented a new teacher evaluation model in a specific context (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013, Yin, 2009). This case study may contribute to the literature on similar cases allowing readers interested in the topic to draw their own generalizations about teacher evaluation (Stake, 1978). In this context the case study methodology allowed me to study the interaction between how teachers make meaning of evaluation, and the role that context plays in the sensemaking process (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Through examination of material culture such as the district evaluation handbook, correspondence from the local teachers association and correspondence from central office, observation of professional development sessions and extensive interviews with teachers this case study illuminated how teachers created their own meaning about the components of a new evaluation model and changed their instructional practice (Fowler, 2013, Spillane et al, 2002b). The MTEM implemented in the PRRSD, in compliance with new teacher evaluation policies, relies heavily on a teacher's reflective practice as a component of effective instruction (Marzano, Boogren, Heflebower, Kanold-McIntyre, 2012). The ability of teachers to reflect on their understanding of the model and describe

how they have changed their practice will allow district and school leadership to plan professional development to support teachers within the model.

The PRRSD and Palmetto High School (PHS), a pseudonym for the school setting for the study, are part of the same organizational entity. While messages from the district level potentially influence how the model is understood at the school level, in this case the unit of analysis was limited to PHS in order to capture the perspectives of what happens within the walls of a representative secondary school (Fowler, 2013, Hamilton & Corbiett-Whittier, 2013, Yin, 2009). While supervisors and administrator actions at both the district and school level may influence instructional practice and evaluation, this study is concerned with how teachers interpret those actions and connect them with their prior experiences, therefore this study was bound by the perceptions of teachers on those practices (Hamilton & Corbiett-Whittier, 2013, Yin, 2009)

PHS was chosen as the site for this research study because its teachers are representative of other educators facing evaluation mandates in a typical suburban high school in New Jersey (Yin, 2009). PHS is one of 443 secondary schools in the state of New Jersey, and the PRRSD is one of 474 districts in New Jersey that operate high schools, and one of 65 school districts in the state that operate more than one high school (NJDOE, 2012). PHS, like the other 443 secondary schools in New Jersey, is complying with the requirements of Achieve NJ by implementing new evaluation policies and therefore is representative of the experiences of teachers across the state in similar settings (Yin, 2009).

Yin (2009) maintains that the rationale for studying a representative case is that "the lessons learned from these cases are assumed to be informative about the experience

of the average person or institution" (p. 47). The objective for this case was to capture the real life experience of teachers in the secondary school setting with the intention of understanding and interpreting these experiences through the eyes of teachers experiencing changes in the way they are evaluated (Aalito & Heilmann, 2010, Yin, 2009). Educators across the country are involved in evaluation reform, and PHS represents a setting where evaluation leadership is distributed with multiple observers providing feedback to teachers (Lee, Hallinger, Walker, 2010). This study provides a snapshot of how teachers in one secondary school, facing similar circumstances as others across the state, perceived the changes to their instructional practice as a result of a new evaluation model (Hamilton & Corbiett-Whittier, 2013, Yin, 2009).

Research Questions

In order to describe the contextual factors that influenced how teachers make sense of a new evaluation model and change their instructional practice, one central research question was used to guide the exploration of this concept (Creswell, 2007, 2014). This central question seeks to focus the study and provide a broad base from which to begin the research process (Creswell, 2014). The three sub questions explored the relevant themes associated with the interaction of subtopics such as the setting, the participants, and the implementation of a new teacher evaluation model in the PRRSD (Creswell, 2007). These sub-questions, while further narrowing the focus of the study, also created a basis for open ended questioning within the interview protocol (Creswell, 2014). The primary research question and three sub-questions are as follows:

> How do teachers in different stages of their careers describe the instructional changes they have made in response to the implementation of the MTEM?

- What barriers do teachers in different stages of their careers identify that undermine effective professional growth under the MTEM?
- What messages do teachers in different stages of their careers receive and respond to from their peers and district leadership about the MTEM?
- How do teacher perceptions of distributed instructional leadership influence how I will lead the instructional shifts required under the MTEM?

Leadership Identity

My leadership identity has been shaped by my belief that school leaders need to be first and foremost instructional leaders. In order to lead in the current environment, where teacher pedagogy has become a national policy agenda, I believe that it is important to understand the context in which one intends to lead. This can only be accomplished through a rich understanding of the experiences of teachers. Those responsible for the creation of policies such as Achieve NJ do not take into consideration the voice of those primarily responsible for its implementation, classroom teachers, leading to two separate visions of what happens in schools (Fowler, 2013). As the instructional leader in the building I am primarily responsible for ensuring teacher growth as they process and implement mandated change.

In order to gain the trust and respect of my teachers I must demonstrate expertise in pedagogy, and while it is impossible to be a content expert in every subject, it is critical that teachers see me as a source of instructional advice. At the same time, I feel that it is important to respect the autonomy of classroom teachers and provide feedback that is non-threatening and encourages them to take risks (Blasé & Blasé, 2000). Building relationships with teachers based on the premise that my goal is to improve teacher

practice will help me gain the trust of my staff. I believe that trust is a critical component to leading in any context. Considering that as a leader I do not have direct contact with students, I feel that building capacity in my teachers is the most efficient way to positively impact student outcomes.

Since the passage of TEACH NJ and the implementation of Achieve NJ my leadership has evolved. In the past building administrators in my school district delegated responsibility for teacher observations to academic supervisors. With the number of observations under Achieve NJ increasing significantly my role has changed, where I was once required to do two to three observations a year, I now do up to thirty. As a result I have adopted the mindset that I am an instructional leader, espousing this to teachers in order to build their confidence in the feedback I offer them. This study provided another outlet to explore my own identity as an instructional leader through dialogue with teachers about their instructional practice.

Summary

This qualitative research case study was primarily concerned with the instructional changes that teachers have made in response to a new teacher evaluation model. The actions teachers take and their ability to successfully navigate change is influenced by both the sum of their experiences and their career stage (Fullan, 2007). This research study explored one overall research question; how do teachers in different stages of their careers describe the instructional changes they have made in response to the implementation of the MTEM? The three sub questions proposed for this study focus on teacher's perceptions of the barriers towards professional learning under the new instructional model, their perceptions of leadership and their interaction with the

organizational environment. The findings from this study will allow district leadership to differentiate professional development in order to better support teachers at different phases of their career.

Interviews with teachers at different stages of their career, observations of professional development sessions, and material culture from both the local education association and the PRRSD all informed how these themes were generated. Data was analyzed by coding interview transcripts, material culture, and field notes from observations to aid in the development of themes. Data was interpreted through the theoretical lens of sensemaking and sensegiving, which aided in the development of themes around the research questions (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, Weick, 1995). The themes discussed in the literature review of accountability, teacher evaluation, the MTEM, and distributed instructional leadership all illuminate the context in which teachers work. This case study described the changes teachers made to their practice since the implementation of the MTEM. The findings of this study also illuminate the challenges leaders face when implementing high stakes change that challenges the professional identity of teachers. Exploring the connection between the contextual factors that influence the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems may help leaders in similar contexts design professional development that supports institutionalization of the instructional shifts required of teachers in the accountability era.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Federal Accountability Era in Education

The Measures of Effective Teaching Project (MET), commissioned by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to research effective teacher evaluation practices to influence policymakers, recently completed a three-year study on effective teacher evaluation practices (Firestone, 2014). The MET project recommended in part that effective evaluation should include classroom observation instruments that measure discrete teaching indicators and describe multiple levels of performance (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013, p. 3). Federal education policy directed at the teacher workforce has pushed this research agenda through the Race to the Top (RttT) competitive grant program, which in part outlines indicators for educator effectiveness based on feedback and growth (Superfine et al, 2012).

Well known researchers in instructional design and learning theory such as Charlotte Danielson, Robert Marzano, and James Stronge have created and marketed their own standards based teacher evaluation systems. These externally driven new teacher accountability standards have put added pressure on teachers; they ask a lot in terms of preparation, but give back little in terms of time to master the new requirements (Fullan, 2007). The research questions within this study address how teachers internalize these pressures, make sense of the instructional shifts required of them, and change their instructional practice in response them.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The increasing federal role in education policy is intentional. At first the government sought merely to provide opportunities to historically

disadvantaged students, and while the federal government has been successful in this right, it has also created cumbersome bureaucratic requirements (Hill, 2000). In 2001 Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the NCLB act, further intensifying federal influence over education by tying funding to the development and implementation of standards and assessments designed to judge educational quality (Superfine et al, 2012). NCLB did what ESEA would not explicitly do-it provided the federal government with the means to force states to reform through financial incentives, or the threat of withholding of financial assistance (Manna, 2006).

NCLB (2001) required that schools maintain adequate yearly progress in historically disadvantaged subgroups of students, and more importantly for this study it also set the highly qualified provision for classroom teachers (NCLB, 2001). NCLB (2001) extended federal reach into an area it had traditionally left to the states, creating specific requirements for teacher licensure and practice across the country (Superfine et al, 2012). The federal government had little power to require compliance with NCLB (2001). Economic pressure through funding and grants enticed states to carry out federal policy, leaving states with little choice but to enact teacher accountability requirements under NCLB (Manna, 2006, McGuinn, 2012a). NCLB was a departure from ESEA. While ESEA focused on marginalized populations, NCLB extended federal mandates to include all students (Groen, 2012).

The 2010 re-authorization of NCLB. The 2010 re-authorization of NCLB further aligned federal policies as the 2010 version of the bill codified many components of the 2009 RttT federal grant program (USDOE, 2010). President Barack Obama called the 2010 re-authorization an "outline for a re-envisioned federal role in education" (USDOE,

2010, p. 2). The law prioritized developing "college- and career-ready students," "great teachers and leaders in every school," creating "equity and opportunity for all students," "raising the bar and reward excellence," and "promoting innovation and rewarding excellence" (USDOE, 2010, p. 3-6). Importantly, for the context of this study, the law also focuses on creating great teachers and leaders in America's schools.

The 2010 version of NCLB calls for the creation of state level data systems on all educators, as well as an alignment between highly qualified status and a teacher's determination of effectiveness (USDOE, 2010). The re-authorization also required states receiving federal funds to develop fair and meaningful teacher evaluation systems, and create ongoing job-embedded professional development to support effective teaching (USDOE, 2010, p. 15). The development of Achieve NJ mirrors many of the components of the 2010 re-authorization, including the development of a teacher rating system and teacher participation through the School Improvement Panel (ScIP) to drive professional development in schools (NJDOE, 2014a). The federal education agenda, extended through the re-authorization of NCLB in 2010, has had a widespread impact on the instructional practice of teachers through evaluation. NCLB has impacted teacher practice in other ways as well, the focus on testing and accountability has only intensified since the re-authorization of NCLB in 2010.

NCLB's impact on teacher practice. While controversy over NCLB's extension of federal influence into education is prominent in the literature, researchers agree that NCLB has changed teacher workforce policy (Dee, Jacob, & Schwartz, 2013, Groen, 2012, Pennington, 2007, Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008, Selwyn, 2007). These influences are varied; NCLB has redefined the curriculum, focusing less on the social sciences and arts

in favor of ELA and mathematics (Dee et al, 2013, Groen, 2012). In many cases NCLB has created a narrow and scripted curriculum that emphasizes test preparation (Pennington, 2007, Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008, Selwyn, 2007). These influences create many layers of frustration for teachers; they are frustrated with the environment NCLB has fostered because of the consequences for failing to improve student achievement despite factors they feel are out of their control (Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008). The emphasis on teacher quality tied to high stakes assessment, and the potential that teachers may receive less resources based on how their students score on high stakes assessments is a source of contention for teachers (Pennington, 2007).

Teachers who oppose NCLB or speak out against it are often labeled in the media as caring little for America's most vulnerable populations (Goldstein, 2011). While critics of vocal teachers often label them as self-serving, a debate exists about determining whether a teacher is highly qualified or not (Goldstein, 2011). Schoen & Fusarelli (2008) are concerned with the emphasis on content knowledge to determine highly qualified status. Schools can justify shifting resources away from developing teacher skills towards other testing priorities because a large majority of teachers are considered highly qualified (Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008, p.191). NCLB leaves the determination of highly qualified status to the states, creating inconsistency in its application from state to state and de-emphasizing the teacher's pedagogical skills in favor of an emphasis on their college record or score on a national teaching exam (Selwyn, 2007). There is another side to the debate on the definition of what makes a highly qualified teacher. There are those in the education community who feel that a teacher's content knowledge has a place in determining a teacher's credentials.

Porter-Magee (2004) defends the emphasis on a teacher's content knowledge, citing past research that content knowledge has a greater impact on student achievement than a teachers pedagogical skills. The flexibility under NCLB to allow states to determine highly qualified status should be taken advantage of in order to promote standards that require that teachers demonstrate both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge (Porter-Magee, 2004). Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2004) argue that research shows that "knowledge of teaching is as important as content knowledge" (p. 173). Critics of NCLB who espouse that it has led to a culture of teaching to the test (Dee et al, 2013, Jennings & Bearak, 2014) discount the fact that instructional practice focused on higher order thinking skills can lead to higher student achievement (Castleberry, 2007, Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2004). As the states and the federal government continue to determine highly qualified teacher status, educators are caught in the middle of the debate as they are evaluated on both their instructional practice and how their students achieve.

Race to the Top (RttT). The Obama Administration has pushed federal influence further into teacher workforce policy through the RttT competitive grant program (McGuinn, 2012a). Faced with the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression (McGuinn, 2012a), the Obama administration sent Congress the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Congress passed the economic stimulus package dedicating $787 billion towards recovery, $80 billion of which would fund grants under RttT (Superfine et al, 2012). Using ARRA funding the federal government utilized the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) and the RttT grant program to support state efforts to align with the reauthorization of NCLB in 2010 (Superfine et al., 2012). New Jersey received funds under SFSF and RttT in part for a commitment to overhauling its teacher

evaluation system, aligning state policy with the national education reform movement (NJDOE, 2010, Superfine et al, 2012).

RttT prioritizes education reform in the United States, and represents greater federal influence on teacher workforce policy then any time in history, establishing national policy agenda for teacher effectiveness (Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012, Superfine, et al, 2012). As noted in Chapter 1 RttT is the driving force behind evaluation reform in the United States, providing the necessary funding to help states develop new assessments, improve teacher preparation, evaluation and retention, and create new student accountability systems (McGuinn, 2012a, Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012). Superfine et al (2012) noted that the grant program brings teacher evaluation to the forefront of federal education policy, but at the same times allows states flexibility to enact their own systems. McGuinn (2012a) also shares similar views, but is concerned with the long term impact of the grant program as states look for ways to "maximize their federal dollars though minimize federal control" (p. 152). Aligning state policy with the priorities of RttT has not proved to be challenging as states appear to be willing participants; RttT has become the blue print for reform in teacher accountability as many states have adopted their RttT grant applications as official policy (Kober & Retner, 2011).

Nevertheless, the nature of RttT complicates teacher accountability policy. Like NCLB it has little power to dictate policy, but it has tremendous power to influence it through grants and financial incentives (McGuinn, 2012a, Superfine et al, 2012). In order to qualify for RttT funding, states needed to ensure that no legal barriers existed in code preventing student achievement data or student growth from inclusion in teacher and

principal evaluation (USDOE, 2009). Other caveats include the transition to enhanced standards and quality assessments, as well as the creation of new data systems to improve instructional practice. While not explicitly stated, by default, the transition to enhanced standards is the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or a state version that closely matches them, and high quality assessments administered by the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Local districts are the ones who are inevitably tasked with handling the human resource and infrastructure issues that arise out of implementing new accountability policies, straining their already tight budgets. This has drawn the criticism of researchers who malign the private sector influence RttT promotes (Levine & Levine, 2012), the impossible promises states made in order to secure funds (Weiss, 2013), and problems of using high stakes assessment to assess teacher quality under the law (Aguilar & Richerme, 2015, Gottlieb, 2013).

Despite the issues outlined in the literature there is little evidence of public upheaval over RttT. Lewis and Young (2013) argue that there is little opposition in the public and political arena for increased accountability, and the Obama administration has been able to leverage financial policy to support improvements to teacher accountability. While Lewis and Young (2013) are able to pinpoint the political mood of the country in the RttT era, Deville and Chaloub-Deville (2011) are weary of the federal role in accountability policy. Their argument that the increased emphasis on assessment based accountability is leading to an intentional federal takeover of education discounts the influence that non-system actors have had on federal policy. They also fail to recognize that despite the obvious federal influence over accountability policy in the United States,

the success of accountability policy is still dependent upon what happens at the state and local level (Manna & Ryan, 2011).

The Common Core Standards (CCSS). The CCSS indirectly impact teacher evaluation policies as the standards influence instructional practice; therefore, they are a relevant topic of exploration to better understand the context of accountability policy (Youngs, 2013). The idea of national standards, which was never able to gain momentum in earlier years, began to move forward at the urging of two former state governors, James B. Hunt Jr. of North Carolina and Bob Wise of West Virginia (McDonnell, 2013). The governors were aided financially by corporations such as General Electric, actors on the political spectrum like the Center for American Progress and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, a prominent conservative think tank, as well as private foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Carnegie Foundation. The actual creation of the standards became a state led initiative created through the collaboration of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (CCSS Initiative, 2014). With support from the America's two largest teachers' unions, the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the framers of the CCSS elicited input from teachers on the design of the standards (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013). Their goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of their residence, graduate high school with the necessary skills in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to be successful in college or a post-secondary career.

An explanation of the CCSS. The CCSS are a set of learning progressions requiring key shifts in ELA and mathematics in order to prepare students to be college

and career ready (CCSS initiative, 2014, Neuman & Roskos, 2013). Under the CCSS students in ELA are expected to regularly work with complex text, read, write and speak with information grounded in textual evidence from expository text and literature, and develop content knowledge through non-fiction (CCSS Initiative, 2014). Students in mathematics will focus on the deeper exploration of fewer topics, understanding concepts, developing number fluency, and applying mathematical knowledge in real world situations across different grade levels. Standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects have also been released, and include the key strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language (CCSS initiative, 2014, Jenkins & Agamba, 2013). These standards are structured in ELA and mathematics as kindergarten through fifth grade and sixth through twelfth grade standards, the subject specific literacy standards are embedded in content areas from sixth grade through 12th grade (CCSS Initiative, 2014).

Critics of the CCSS. A major driver in the implementation of the CCSS was the concern over America's ranking compared to the rest of the world on international assessments (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013). The standards focus a student's ability to analyze and synthesize information in ELA and number fluency in mathematics, leaving states and local education agencies discretion over the content in the curriculum (CCSS Initiative, 2014, Rothman, 2012, Porter, McMaken, Hwang, & Yang, 2011). Tienken (2010) disputes that American students are falling behind though, citing the selective sampling strategies of other countries, influence over test questions, and opportunity to learn test material as reasons why American students may not be playing on a level playing field.

The CCSS have come under fire as of late despite the high level of local autonomy. Grassroots efforts to repeal the standards or significantly alter them in some Republican controlled states has emerged (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013, Perna, Klein, McLendon, 2014). Liberal critics have joined Tea-Party Republicans nationally claiming that the CCSS is a de-facto national curriculum that is prescriptive, emphasizes standardized testing, and takes away teacher autonomy (Westervelt, 2014). Questions also exist about the research behind the CCSS; Tienken (2011) maintains that the research base for the CCSS is based on questionable data and a lack of peer reviewed research. Instead, Tienken (2011) advocates for more locally controlled curriculum, citing Tramaglini's (2010) study that found that the more proximal the student is to the development of the curriculum, the better they perform on standardized assessments.

Other critics of the CCSS point to the influence of the private sector and politicians in education (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013, Tienken, 2013). Detert & Pollock (2008) in their study on market based interests in highly institutionalized organizations found that teachers do not resist accountability practices in general; teachers are weary of accountability to whom and for what reason (p.207). While the CCSS are a source of stress for teachers, the success of implementing the standards rests on the actions of school leaders and the support that is provided for teachers (Louis et al, 2005, Porter, Fusarelli, & Fusarelli, 2015). The implementation of the CCSS, like other new policy initiatives, will undergo a period where teachers and school leaders will have varied interpretations of what alignment to the standards should look like and how they are adopted in each individual setting (Angelozzi, 2014).

High stakes assessment. Beginning in the 2014/2015 school year students in New Jersey will take the Partnership for the Assessment of College and Career Readiness (PARCC) assessments. PARCC, along with Smarter Balanced, is one of two federally funded consortiums of states implementing assessments aligned to the Common Core Standards. Currently there are 13 states participating in the PARCC consortium, and most states participating have representatives on the governing board which oversees assessment design and implementation (PARCC, 2015). The PARCC assessment will eventually be factored into the evaluation of teachers in New Jersey, but in reality only 20% of teachers will be assessed with PARCC scores included, the rest will be assessed using teacher constructed growth indicators (Firestone, 2014, NJDOE, 2014a). The question of how much is still up for debate as Governor Christie has ordered a study into the effectiveness of these assessments, and as a direct result of educator concerns about their validity the State Board of Education has reduced the amount PARCC will count for the 2014/2015 school year from 30% to 10% in the evaluations of teachers in tested areas (NJDOE, 2014a, Executive Order No. 159, 2014).

PARCC's impact on instructional practice. The promise of the new generation of high stakes assessment brings hope that an alignment of standards, instruction and assessment results will come closer to being a reality in schools (Dougherty-Stahl & Schweid, 2013). To this end the PARCC Consortium has promised a performance based assessment approach, with few multiple choice questions and a focus on assessing student mastery of standards rather than content knowledge in mathematics and language arts (Dietel, 2011). Concerns exist, however, about equity of access to infrastructure needs such as bandwidth and computers in order to use the technology they will be

assessed on, putting students at a disadvantage in both gaining and using the digital literacy skills necessary for success (Saine, 2013). A second concern exists in test preparation as teachers may be tempted to practice PARCC like questions. Researchers who have examined PARCC sample questions (Shanahan, 2014) urge teachers to resist test taking strategies in favor of a focus on skills such as reading comprehension or number fluency.

A political issue looms for New Jersey's teachers, as student's transition from the HSPA to the PARCC assessments there may be a potential drop in student scores. Because many students are not familiar with the types of tasks required of them on the new assessments, and the standards being tested are considerably more rigorous, scores are expected to be lower than anticipated (Rothman, 2014). Kentucky piloted a PARCC like assessment in 2012 and saw a 40% drop in student test scores from the previous year. In order to prepare students for the PARCC exam teachers will need support in the form of professional development on technology based instruction in the CCSS infused classroom (Saine, 2014). Teachers will have to adapt their instructional practice in order to prepare students to succeed in this new assessment atmosphere, which may be able to reverse the anticipated downward trend in student achievement with the transition to PARCC. In order to achieve this, school leaders will need to support teachers through professional development aligned to this new paradigm.

Teacher Evaluation

The adoption of a standards based evaluation instruments reflects a practice that a growing body of researchers and professional organizations endorse (Baker et al, 2010, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013, NEA, 2014, Scherer, 2012, Wright, Horn, &

Sanders, 1997). The nation's largest teaching organization, the National Education Association (NEA), has recently announced their support for the use of evaluation systems based on rigorous teaching standards (NEA, 2014). The American Federation of teachers supports a similar position, advocating for teacher evaluation systems that include a variety of measures including standards based evaluation models (AFT, 2010). At the state level the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) has called for standards based evaluation criteria based on preparation and planning, classroom environment, instructional practice, and professional responsibility (NJEA, 2011). Despite the pledged support from a variety of stakeholders, resistance to new evaluation systems still exists as educators resolve issues with the origins and the structures of the new system.

Standards based teacher evaluation. Research exists to both support the importance of standards based evaluation and debunk it as a method of changing teacher practice. Hallinger, Heck and Murphy (2014) see no evidence of evaluation changing teacher practice in the literature, and feel that the past summative nature of evaluation instruments do not create sufficient motivation to change. Louis et al, (2010) support this position as they found that only 38% of teachers felt their observation feedback helped them change their practice. On the other side of the debate, Pianta and Hamre (2009) found that teacher behaviors can be assessed and analyzed to find sources of error and are valid predictors of student achievement; teacher practice can be improved with support and structures. Others support these findings and maintain that feedback is critical for changing teacher practice (Looney, 2011, Steinberg & Sartain, 2015, Taylor & Tyler, 2012). The differences seen by researchers may be a result of context. Evaluation could be a source of change if contextual issues such as strong leadership and effective

professional development exist. Another potential reason for the differences in the literature may be the individual characteristics of the observation model itself considering there are a variety of teacher observation models available to schools.

While teacher evaluation practices maybe heavily dependent upon these contextual factors, consistently across the nation between 94% and 99% teachers are annually rated satisfactory in their summative evaluation (Halverston et al, 2004, Gordon, 2006, Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). The inherent inability of traditional evaluation systems to identify effective instructional practice limits the ability of schools to make strategic decisions about personnel, plan effective professional development, or identify effective practices that directly lead to an increase in student achievement (Hill, Charalambous & Craft, 2012, Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011, Weisberg et al, 2009). In response New Jersey has adopted standards based evaluation instruments to measure the effectiveness of a teachers classroom practice (NJDOE, 2014a). Standards based evaluation instruments seek to lower the subjectivity associated with classroom observation by using detailed rating scales based on public standards, and the use of evidence of teacher practice as indicators of teacher effectiveness (Heneman III, Milankowski, Kimball, & Odden, 2006).

Resistance to change in teacher evaluation. Despite the transparency that exists in the MTEM, teachers resist the new model because they fear being evaluated for indicators that may not apply to them (Conley & Glasman, 2008, Marshall, 2005, Marzano, 2007). The motivating factor for this apprehension may lie in the changes to the system; in the past teachers were observed on their practice, but observations were often vague, provided little formative feedback, and give little evidence of the teacher's

effectiveness (New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Report, 2011, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013). Tuytens and Devos (2014) in their qualitative study on teacher evaluation found that teacher perceptions of their evaluations are directly influenced by their perceived utility of the evaluation system. Teachers will use evaluation as a spring board to professional learning when they perceive feedback as formative and useful, but because their prior experiences with evaluation were often bureaucratic and summative teachers do not yet trust that the new system will be any different (Flores, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2014).

Teachers are also weary of the design of standards based models. They are all held to the same set of standards, focusing less on the complexities and subtleties of each individual classroom in favor of a one size fits all model that holds a high school calculus teacher to the same standard as a kindergarten teacher (Hill & Grossman, 2013, Marshall, 2005). Commercially based evaluation systems such as the MTEM are subject to considerable critique as educators question their ability to accurately evaluate non-traditional classrooms such as art, physical education or music (Kimball, 2002, Marshall, 2014, Overland, 2014). While research based arguments for content specific evaluation tools exist in areas such as special education (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014, Sledge & Pazey, 2013) and math (Hill, Schilling & Ball, 2004) the trend in education continues to move towards a standardized model of evaluation for all teachers across all grade levels. This trend has led to some debate about the ability of evaluation to change teacher practice.

The Marzano teacher evaluation model. The goal of the MTEM is to build a teacher's pedagogical skill over time, increasing their expertise through evaluation feedback that will drive changes in teacher practice (Marzano, et al, 2011, Marzano, Toth, Schooling, 2011). The MTEM is articulated in the form of 10 design questions, representing a logical sequence for instructional design (Marzano, 2007). The first question addresses the communication of learning goals, tracking progress and celebrating student successes. The next three questions address pedagogy, beginning with how students interact with new knowledge, scaffolding towards helping students deepen knowledge, and finally supporting students in the generation of hypothesis (Marzano, 2007). Questions five through nine addresses how teachers engage students and develop relationships with them and the final question addresses instructional planning. Each design question breaks down into an additional element describing a strategy that forms the basis for a teachers rating.

Teachers are rated within elements in each design question based on the degree of dominance, or use of the element throughout the lesson (Marzano et al, 2011). Ratings for each element are calculated based on the student's ability to demonstrate the desired effect, and how the teacher monitors for it (Marzano, 2007). For example, if a teacher was reviewing information in class the observer would rate the degree to which the majority of students in the class understood the critical information already learned. In order to be rated in one of the five categories under the model, either not using, beginning, developing, applying or innovating, a teacher would have to demonstrate the degree to which they monitored whether the students achieved the desired effect (Marzano et al, 2011). During a teachers post conference the observer provides feedback

on each element observed, discussing strategies to get all students to reach the desired effect of the element observed (Marzano, 2007).

Discussion of the MTEM: The adoption of the MTEM requires that teachers set goals, monitor student progress towards those goals, and engage in greater self-reflection in order to receive a satisfactory rating (Marzano, 2007). Whereas these are all components of good instruction, these specific requirements were not present in the prior evaluation system. The way teachers approach lesson design and deliver instruction has also shifted from delivery of content to a focus on mastery of skills. Marzano (2003) maintains that decisions made at the teacher level have the greatest impact on learning. Ineffective teachers impede student learning, but even an average teacher can have a positive impact on student learning (Marzano, 2003, p. 75). Built upon the three instructional pillars of effective instructional strategy, classroom management and effective classroom curriculum design, the goal of the model is to increase student achievement by enhancing a teachers pedagogical skills (Marzano, 2003, 2011).

Marzano (2007) espouses that effective instructional strategies begin with the communication of learning goals and rubrics to students, ensuring that they know what is expected of them and understand how to track their progress. These goals create the environment for learning, ensuring that objectives are both specific and flexible at the same time (Dean, Hubbell, Pitler, & Stone, 2013). Effective instruction also includes helping students develop understanding by questioning what they already know, connecting new content to old, and by creating opportunities to think about content (Marzano, 2003, 2007, Dean et al, 2013). Once students have mastered content, teachers are expected to create opportunities for their students to extend their thinking. Observers

expect to see lessons that help students re-analyze and apply knowledge in authentic ways (Marzano, 2007). These three instructional components form the cornerstone of the model and are what evaluators look for when they observe teachers in this study. The focus is less on what the teacher is doing, and more on what the teacher is designing to facilitate student interaction with knowledge.

Effective teaching goes hand in hand with classroom curricular design, and despite the centralized curricula that teachers use, they still are required to make decisions about its implementation at the classroom level (Marzano, 2003). Recent literature on curriculum implementation is in agreement that teachers influence how the curriculum is implemented in individual classrooms, and depending on the context it is adapted and implemented differently from classroom to classroom (Albright, Knezevic, & Farrell, 2013, de Araujo et al, 2013, Penuel, Phillips, & Harris, 2014, Roehrig, Kruse, & Kern, 2007, Valli & Buese, 2007). Even in tight and prescriptive curricula teachers still have the flexibility to create units that identify the specific aspects of content to be addressed and focus on student exploration of material (Marzano, 2003). Teachers often give up this freedom and leave these decisions to the text book (Marzano, 2003), but in reality they dictate the content, issues or ideas that students are exposed to (Marzano, 2007). Key performance indicators in the evaluation model focus as much on teacher action as they do teacher planning. Units that facilitate the deep exploration of content are reflected in the performance indicators, whereas as lecture or other direct forms of instruction have far less of a focus.

Instructional planning and delivery are an important component to effective instruction, but classroom management plays a role in setting the conditions for learning.

Marzano (2003, 2007) maintains that student engagement occurs because of specific teacher action, and classroom management strategies that build rapport with students develop a healthy environment for learning. The MTEM model incorporates teachers jointly establishing and enforcing rules and procedures with students (Marzano, 2007). Pereira & Smith-Adock (2011) reaffirm this in their study of the child centered classroom, establishing that student choice and child centered discipline allow students to advocate for themselves, building trust and respect. The model also allows teachers to operate with a balanced approach, providing teachers opportunities to be rated for using both positive and negative consequences (Marzano, 2003). Teachers who develop relationships with students based on a healthy respect for authority and a spirit of cooperation can be scored in any number of categories. Other researchers have found that this approach is successful in creating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning (Alderman & Green, 2011). Teachers must not only put into practice these techniques, they must monitor the effectiveness of them and provide feedback to their students so they can track their progress.

Arguably the biggest shift for teachers in this study is in monitoring for understanding and providing feedback throughout the lesson. In a normal lesson a teacher may ask questions to gauge student progress and provide feedback to students on a specific question. The MTEM model requires that monitoring and feedback be provided to all students throughout the lesson (Marzano, 2007). Feedback is effective when it acknowledges correct answers, expands upon what is needed next, is timely and specific to the learning goal, and engages students in the learning goal (Dean et al, 2013). The MTEM is dependent upon rigorous learning goals that are student specific and tied to

timely feedback (Marzano, 2007). This formative feedback is most critical in the early stages of units when students are learning new skills (Hunter, 2004). Teachers are now shifting their focus in the classroom from covering content to providing students feedback that is formative in nature (Marzano, 2007).

Distributed Instructional Leadership

Within any change initiative leadership influences the sensemaking process; teacher perceptions of the leadership structure in this setting play a critical role in how teachers change their practice in the face of a new evaluation system (Coburn, 2005). A distributed perspective on instructional leadership represents the division of labor in American schools today, and more accurately reflects the context of this study (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008). Participants in this study can potentially be evaluated by one of six building level supervisors and four administrators, facing a number of differing opinions about their instructional practice. The division of tasks amongst administrators and informal leaders does not fully conceptualize distributed instructional leadership, consistency, cohesion and cooperation amongst those individuals is also critical to effectively leading schools (Hulpia, Devos, Van Keer, 2011, Hulpia, Devos, Rosseel, & Vlerick, 2012, Spillane, 2006, 2008). Evidence from teacher evaluation can also factor into a successful leadership model. Leaders can positively influence student outcomes by bringing leaders in tune with what is happening in the classroom, and away from administrative tasks that distract them from the core purpose of schools (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004, Robinson Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

Neumerski (2013) cites a greater need for research on distributed instructional leadership among leaders who work in the same building at the secondary level. Much of

the prior research on the topic has focused on the distribution of leadership in elementary settings, or across entire school districts. Few studies exist linking the perceptions of teachers regarding state mandated teacher evaluation systems and instructional leadership; therefore, it is imperative that leadership strategies that lead to improved teaching be studied in an effort to improve student achievement (Ovando & Ramirez, Jr., 2007). In addition, supervision has a prolonged impact on teacher commitment, necessitating research on how instructional leadership influences effective teaching practice (Robinson et al, 2008).

A critical component of this study is how leaders are perceived to understand the evaluation system itself, and the consistency of messages teachers receive from one of any number of evaluators they may encounter. Teachers want their leaders to understand the dynamics of their classes and how those dynamics influence their practice. There is agreement in the literature that distributed instructional leadership is heavily influenced by school context (Coldren & Spillane, 2006, Hallinger, 2003, 2010, Kimball & Milankowski, 2009, Leithwood et al, 2004, 2007, Leithwood, Harris, & Straus, 2010, Neumerski, 2013, Rigby, 2013, Salo, et al, 2014, Reitzug & West, 2011). Therefore teacher perceptions of the differences they experience between evaluators also may influence how they make meaning of the new evaluation requirements. Whereas contextual components are a central focus of this study, the intersection of teacher perceptions of leadership will better frame the context of Palmetto High School.

Distributed instructional leadership practices. Research on leadership that supports learning in the past ten years has examined the empirical impact that school leaders have on student outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 2010, Hallinger, 2003, 2010, Heck

& Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood, et al, 2004, Leithwood et al, 2007, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005, Spillane, 2006). While researchers have different conceptions of instructional leadership, all are focused on school improvement (Rigby, 2014). Leadership is a key component to the overall success of the schools, but leadership only has an indirect influence on student achievement gains and is most impactful through the teacher evaluation process (Leithwood et al, 2004, Marzano et al, 2005). School leaders have a multitude of responsibilities, but researchers have identified four key areas where instructional leadership supports teaching and learning: (a) setting goals, vision or direction for the organization, (b) building capacity in people, (c) ensuring that a structure or environment for learning is supported, and by (d) providing support for teachers via constructive feedback (Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood et al, 2004, Leithwood et al, 2007, Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Murphy, Hallinger & Heck, 2013, Ovando & Ramirez, 2007, Spillane, 2006, 2008).

Visioning. Successful vision and goal setting at the secondary level by instructional leaders should be participatory, but the communication of expectations and goals to the school community falls primarily on the leader (Hallinger, 2003, Leithwood, et al, 2010). Visioning is context specific, it meets the needs of the individual school and sufficiently challenges teachers; these types of goals help staff members internalize and support the instructional program because they see the goals as relevant to their context (Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, Leithwood et al, 2004, 2007). While goal setting is often done collaboratively, visioning is a practice often associated with formal school leaders and is the predominant process by which school leaders imprint their beliefs into the school culture (Leithwood et al, 2007, Marzano et al, 2005).

Capacity. Building capacity in teachers to overcome areas of weakness through professional development and instructional coaching is one way to support evaluation practices. Leithwood and Mascall, (2008) feel this can be accomplished by creating a stable work environment characterized by support for teachers and shared leadership (p. 557). Leithwood et al (2004), in a report commissioned by the Wallace Foundation on leadership in schools, and Marzano (2007) both identified the variety of forms that this type of support manifests itself in schools, including providing opportunities to observe best practice and professional development that is intellectually stimulating (p.7). In order to build this capacity in teachers, formal and informal leaders must understand their interconnection, and that their actions must support both each other and the structures created to support effective instruction (Neumerski, 2013).

Structure. Scholarly research on instructional leadership identifies that the school leader plays a central role in facilitating structures that support effective evaluation practices, without these structures instructional quality cannot be maintained (Leithwood et al, 2004, 2007, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, Marzano et al, 2005, Murphy et al, 2013, Rigby, 2014, Robinson, 2010, Salo et al, 2014). There is agreement in the literature that management tasks such as creating a safe environment, protecting instructional time from distraction, and creating the infrastructure for professional learning must be priorities (Marzano et al, 2005, Robinson et al, 2008, Robinson, 2010). Instructional leaders must also be facilitators of effective instruction (Murphy et al, 2013). The evaluation process already assumes that good teaching and learning is defined; in order to meet the goals of evaluation leaders must create structures that promote inquiry through the research and discussion of best practice (Marzano et al, 2005, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007).

Feedback. Feedback is perhaps the most powerful tool for the improvement of instruction through evaluation; the use of formative and summative feedback provides opportunities for teachers to connect to their teaching practice and improve it (Coldren & Spillane, 2006, Marzano et al, 2011). Salo et al (2014) in their conceptualization of instructional leadership maintains that the utility of feedback will determine how teachers react to it, connect with it, and incorporate it in their instructional practice (p. 8). Teachers must trust that their leaders are instructional experts, and leaders must demonstrate that they possess significant knowledge of instructional practice in order to gain the respect of their teachers and increase the utility of feedback (Marzano et al, 2011, Robinson et al, 2008). Trust is an important theme in the literature and is the key to moving past the compliance orientation that teachers possess about evaluation. The careful wording of evaluations that promote collegiality but don't improve instruction prevents leaders from helping teachers grow through feedback (Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Kimball & Milankowski, 2009, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007).

Administrator and teacher relationships. Instructional leadership and transformational leadership in schools are often linked, but the key difference between them is that transformational leadership is concerned with relationships, while instructional leadership is focused on educational work in concert with relationship dynamics (Coldren & Spillane, 2006, Robinson et al, 2008). Coldren and Spillane (2007) saw a connection across schools in their study on instructional leadership; in order to connect with teachers school leaders must espouse beliefs that they are instructional leaders, and take steps to assure that their practice aligns with that belief (p. 392).

Leaders may attempt to keep their distance from instruction in order to promote collegiality, but instructional leadership requires that evaluators develop sufficient knowledge of instructional practice to contribute to the discourse on pedagogy (Kimball & Milanowski, 2009, Salo, et al, 2014, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007). Robinson et al (2008) support this assertion in their study on student outcomes and leadership; they maintain that leaders who are perceived as sources of instructional advice and who are respected by teachers for their pedagogical knowledge have a greater influence over instruction (p. 663). The school leader plays an important role in buffering teachers from aspects of accountability requirements that do not focus on instruction while also holding them accountable for the ones that do (Papay, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2013). Papay (2012) noted that in order for standards based evaluations to meet these two goals school leaders must be willing to have difficult conversations, provide honest and direct feedback, and make judgments about teacher practice (p.126).

The effectiveness of teacher evaluation depends heavily on how the implementation process is led at the building level. Davis, Ellet, and Annunziata (2002) maintain that a school can implement a research based evaluation tool that represents the most effective way to evaluate teachers, but the model will become infective if school leadership is unsupportive and unequipped to lead the implementation (p.292). Salo et al (2014) noted that the nature of schools, such as the fact that teachers usually work in isolation, and the tendency for administrators to keep their distance from them out of respect for their professionalism, creates uneasiness about teacher evaluation (p. 3). Current research demonstrates that leaders must be cognizant of their actions during the

implementation process, as their actions contribute to the success or failure of teacher growth through evaluation.

Leading the change process. The success or failure of implementation may hinge upon how leaders handle resistance to the instructional changes required by the model. Goodson, Moore and Hargreaves (2006) identified two main themes that fuel opposition to change initiatives in their examination of nostalgia and reform: (a) the idea that teachers hold their schools as "families" of dedicated educators whose students are motivated, and (b) that reform initiatives demean and insult teachers, are prescriptive, and create an atmosphere of compliance (p. 55). These themes identify that teachers possess a sense of professional identity that defines them personally; change initiatives challenge the very notion of who they are as educators, and in turn who they are as people. Resistance to change is a natural reaction to this sense of loss; in the face of new teacher evaluation requirements resistance may manifest itself as a reaction to a perceived threat to job stability, a philosophical difference or resistance to change in general (Burke, 2011, Fowler, 2013) Considering that Achieve NJ has increased the frequency and number of observations, teachers are seeing more administrators in their classrooms (NJDOE, 2014a)

As administrators spend more time in the classroom as observers and evaluators, teacher resistance has risen, creating distrust amongst teachers who now see administrators involving themselves in their professional practice (Papay, 2012, Salo, et al, 2014). Evaluation has required an organizational shift, and multiple levels of the organization are now engaged in the change process. School leaders must now elevate instructional practice and at the same time support teacher learning with research based

practices. Evaluation programs can only be effective if trust exists between evaluators and teachers. Trust may help mitigate the hostility between evaluators and teachers because of state policy aimed at removing bad teachers (Firestone, 2014). This trust can be created by empowering teachers during implementation, allowing them to own the process and guide implementation alongside school leadership. Change leaders can accomplish this by providing the structures to support people impacted by change so they can express their feelings and use them productively (Dale & James, 2015).

Change and Professional Development

The implementation of the MTEM in the PRRHSD has loosely followed traditional change models espoused by Lewin (1958), Kotter (1996) and Fullan, (2011). Whereas a guiding coalition of administrators and teachers was created to choose a model, communicate the need for this change, and implement the changes to the evaluation system, in reality the speed of implementation in this setting may have made the process more challenging for school leadership (Kezar, 2001, Kotter, 1996). In settings where the need for change is never fully realized because of hasty implementation processes required by mandates institutionalization of change becomes difficult (Kezar, 2001, Fullan, 2007). Kezar (2001) describes institutionalization of change as the "conditions whereby the system becomes stable in its changed state" (p.13-14). In this setting institutionalization could be identified as a critical mass of teachers and school leaders ready to support the change effort who have demonstrated the capacity to carry it out (Fullan, 2007). Kotter (1996) found that several key indicators exist in institutionalizing change; a) change will take hold only after it is clear the change is

superior to the old method, b) it requires a great deal of support and discussion, c) it may involve turnover and attrition (p. 157).

Building on Kotter's (1996) theme of support for the change effort, and integrating Fullan's (2007) assertion that change is dependent upon having the right process in place to enact it, an exploration of professional development to support teacher change through evaluation is necessary to understand the context of this change. Differences exist in the literature surrounding the effectiveness of professional development to change teacher practice. Desimone (2009), Guskey (2002), and Shaha, Glassett, and Copas (2015) all see professional development as a linear process that leads to changes in teacher practice, while Opfer, Pedder and Lavicza (2011) and Ho and Arthur-Kelly (2013) see the process as more complicated, context specific, and that change is dependent upon the orientation of the teacher. While researchers may debate the ability of professional development to change teacher practice, both Fullan (2007) and Kisa and Correnti (2015) make a practical case about sustainability and professional development to change teacher practice.

Professional development that declines because of staffing changes or new initiatives that take away from the current change effort will not improve teacher practice (Fullan, 2007, Kisa and Correnti, 2015). Because of the mobility of teachers, administrators and students schools are in a constant state of flux from one year to the next, professional development must align to the individual context and respond to the needs of teachers in that particular setting (Kisa & Correnti, 2015). These naturally occurring issues are challenging for school leaders, sustaining professional development in the age of accountability coupled with the annual personnel changes schools naturally

experience changes the context in which the change effort exists. School leaders may consistently find themselves altering their plans throughout the process in order to meet the needs of their teachers. Guskey (2002) posits an unsettling but potentially effective way to combat these issues by subtly pressuring teachers to change, combining that pressure with support for the change effort. Pressure without support has the potential to derail change effort though, creating the perception that school leaders are transactional. Sustaining professional development around change is often the most neglected aspect of implementation, and as professional development wanes so do the instructional shifts teachers make as well (Guskey, 2002, Kisa & Correnti, 2015).

Pressure and sustained professional development efforts practiced in isolation will not generate the necessary instructional shifts because contextual factors such as teacher motivation and school culture often mediate the effects of professional development (Whitworth and Chiu, 2015). School leaders must understand the context in which they lead and must understand the needs of their staff members. School leaders must involve teachers in the design and creation of professional development so they can mutually construct an understanding of the needs of the staff (Weick, 1995, Whitwork & Chiu, 2015). Research on changing teacher practice points to a number of avenues that can be explored for delivering professional development; portfolio's allow teachers to research areas of deficiency and discuss plans to improve their practice within certain teaching standards (Tucker, Stronge, Gareis, & Beers, 2003, Weems & Rodgers, 2013). Shaha et al (2015) have called for on demand web based professional development as a way to support teachers towards changing their practice. It is clear from the research that teacher practice will not change unless teachers have a voice in the process (Collison et al, 2009,

Prytula & Weiman, 2012), that professional development is aligned to the instructional model used in the context (Shaha et al, 2015), and is relevant to the everyday needs of the teaching staff (Ho & Arthur-Kelly, 2013). In order to provide professional development that promotes institutionalization of the new instructional model school leaders must have a firm grasp on the professional development process and how to sustain it to support change (Fullan, 2007, Masuda et al, 2012).

Change and Teacher Career Stages

Teachers experience change during the progression of their careers through a dynamic process that is bound by organizational context and their experiences with the internal and external environment (Lynn, 2002). Teachers receive messages from their environment about the evaluation model and the instructional shifts required under it. The MTEM requires a change in the way teachers approach lesson design and the delivery of instruction; placing an emphasis on problem solving and higher order thinking (Marzano, 2007). Understanding how teachers adapt their pedagogy in the face of this change may help administrators and school official's better design professional development that will improve teacher practice (You & Conley 2014).

Recent research into teacher career cycles agree that how teachers experience their careers ebbs and flows, it is a non-linear process that rarely ever plays out in the same manner for all members of the profession (Fessler & Christensen, 1992 Huberman 1989, Steffy et al, 2000). Teachers view their work as a part of who they are, and how they respond to systems that challenge this identity is determined by a combination of their professional orientation, skill, and experience (Huberman, 1989, Steffy et al, 2000, Van Veen & Sleegers, 2007). In an exploratory qualitative research study on teachers'

emotions in times of change Van Veen and Sleegers (2007) identified that teachers view their work as a part of their professional identity; their views on the alignment of policy to their professional practice determines their level of resistance to change (p. 106). The nature of this change is very personal to teachers as it challenges their self-identity and their job security. Leaders must understand that resistance to change is natural in situations where teachers feel a sense of personal loss and must develop strategies to ameliorate this sense of loss (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Building leadership and organizational characteristics impact a teacher's feelings of control and autonomy over their classroom (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990). The intersection of a teacher's personal and professional life also impacts how they perform in the classroom, and this manifests itself differently for teachers in different stages of their career (Fessler & Christianson, 1992, Huberman, 1989, Lumpkin, 2014, Woods & Lynn, 2013). Guskey (2002) maintains that change is an experienced based process for teachers, attitudes and beliefs are shaped by the sum of their experiences (p. 384). In order for educational leaders to create a culture where teacher commitment and job satisfaction are high they must support teachers with meaningful professional development differentiated for teachers at different stages of their career (You & Conley, 2014). A wider research base illuminating how teachers navigate policy changes during different stages of their career may help district leaders support the individual needs of teachers in their context (Eros, 2011, Woods & Lynn, 2014).

School leaders must be both persistent and patient; any change that endeavors to increase teacher competence and raise student achievement will require a great deal of time and effort on the part of schools (Guskey, 2002). Policies like Achieve NJ that seek

to impact levels of teacher competence are dependent upon factors related to a teacher's experience. Olsen and Sexton (2009) report in their study of policy changes in the high school setting that teacher career cycles impact teacher resistance to change, teachers at later career stages tend to be more autonomous and reject prescriptive mandates (p.33). Teachers at the beginning of their careers often are overwhelmed by change, they experience isolation, conflicts, and instructional challenges; mitigating this shock may help keep good young teachers in the profession (Huberman, 1989, Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002). The MTEM may impact different teachers in different ways, as teachers become more knowledgeable they shift their beliefs; understanding how context impacts these shifts may help administrators lead this change effort (Cunningham, Zibulky, Stanovich, Stanovich, 2009).

Theoretical Framework: Sensemaking and Sensegiving

Sensemaking and Sensegiving in this context is of great importance, how teachers make sense of the evaluation policy takes place differently within each classroom (Weick, 1995). This process influences the manner in which the school as a whole understands the evaluation model (Honig, 2006). The themes generated in this study were viewed through the lens of sensemaking and sensegiving theory and helped guide my interpretation of participant experiences. Sensemaking and sensegiving regarding the new evaluation model occurs without teachers and administrators recognizing it, and this lack of awareness plays a critical role in how teachers incorporate it into their instructional practice.

By making this process explicit, school leaders can better understand how to support teachers through evaluation feedback. In this case the PRRSD is adopting a

standards based teacher evaluation model created from outside the organization (MTEM), signaling a change in its expectations for teacher pedagogy. Teachers, depending upon their career stage and their previous experiences, make meaning of the instructional shifts in different ways (Fullan, 2007, Spillane et al, 2002b).

Sensemaking: The MTEM represents an instructional shift for teachers because it emphasizes alignment to rigorous learning goals, consistent formative assessment of students and greater self-reflection (Marzano, 2007). In order to illuminate how teachers change their instructional practice under the model, this study will examine their understanding of it through Weick's (1995) work on sensemaking. Coburn (2001) found that teachers' view mandated instructional shifts through the lens of their prior experiences, and these pre-conceived notions about instruction dominate their interactions with their peers on the subject. Sensemaking in this context is the socially constructed process by which teachers select information from the evaluation model, make meaning of it, and put that meaning into practice in their classrooms. (Coburn, 2001, Weick, 1995).

Weick (1995) identifies that this process is heavily influenced by three assumptions important to the concept of sensemaking: (a) teachers make sense of the model by interacting with their peers (b) they understand the model based on the messages they receive from the organization and their peers (c) their understanding of the model influences their own instructional practice. As teachers interact with one another in professional development, department meetings and informal social settings they shape each other's understanding of the model. When teachers socially process their understanding and feelings about what they see and hear they construct an understanding

of the model that is put into practice, and different interpretations of the model may exist depending upon their social circle (Coburn & Russell, 2008, Weick, 1995).

For example, Coburn (2001), in her qualitative study on the implementation of a new reading program, found that as teachers feel pressure to integrate components of new programs into their instructional practice they will often turn to their peers, and the conditions under which these conversations happen influence how teachers integrate the new policy (p.153). Social networks are a valuable resource for teachers and contribute to teacher cooptation or adaptation of the model to fit their own understanding (Coburn, 2001, 2005). As teachers process different messages from their local association, district leadership and their peers they engage in sensemaking in their local context, which may influence how the instructional shifts required under the model are ultimately implemented.

Spillane et al, (2002b) echoed much of Coburn's (2001) work in their study of teacher cognition and accountability policy. They argue that teachers will attempt to adopt these practices, but may wind up adapting or combining these practices with prior practice, or they may ignore entire components of the model and integrate only the elements in which they are comfortable. Teachers tend to gravitate toward familiar ideas while overlooking or ignoring unfamiliar ideas. More recently, Carraway and Young (2015) found that the sensemaking process leads educators to adapt components of new policies and merge them with their past practice, aligning their teaching strategies to comply with the requirements of the new policy. Through informal and formal networks teachers interact with each other; articulating their individual interpretations of the evaluation system, and participating in a collective sensemaking process that allows them

to mediate the confusion they feel about the model (Louis, Febey, Schroeder, 2005, Spillane et al, 2002b).

While there is agreement in the literature that collective sensemaking occurs with teachers, differences exist in how it manifests itself. Spillane et al, (2002b) found that adaptations of policy occur, but Louis et al (2005) saw more consistency amongst teachers in how they implement new policies in their study of how teachers process new state accountability requirements. These differences may be explained by context and how school leaders mediate new initiatives for teachers (Coburn, 2001, 2005, Coburn, & Russell, 2008, Spillane et al, 2002b). This study may contribute to this literature by examining the sense making process by a teacher's years of experience, illuminating how specific contextual elements impact the sensemaking process.

Leaders must understand that teachers will not make shifts in their instructional practice overnight, this sensemaking process for teachers and evaluators must be allowed to play out over time to ensure institutionalization (Kezar, 2012). Coburn (2001) sees sensemaking as necessary and unavoidable; teachers receive multiple messages about policy and must engage in a process to make meaning of them. Successful implementation of the evaluation model requires that the district evolve, and move from a support role to one that analyzes the structures that need changing in order to insure fidelity to the model. In order to understand and ultimately change the structures that support implementation, the PRRSD must explore the inferences and understandings about teacher evaluation and attempt to connect this understanding to teacher practice (Spillane et al, 2002b).

Teacher sensemaking and change. The accountability movement has arguably placed teachers squarely in the public eye in recent years, and evidence exists that teacher's interpretations of the current policy environment differ and diverge from that of lawmakers (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007). The nature of evaluation policy is something that teachers may need to make meaning of entirely; by labeling the evaluation system as "new" policy makers may have encouraged resistance (Kezar, 2012). In order to protect their self-interests teachers interpret ideas as only minor variations of what they are already doing (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006, Holt, 2014, Louis et al, 2005, Spillane et al, 2002b). These types of changes create a crisis and feelings of ambiguity for teachers; in this case teachers see a direct connection between tenure, job security and the evaluation model (Evans, 2007). Teachers start to see the new ideas present in evaluation system as familiar; they often misunderstand some aspects of the evaluation system, and pay little attention to the unfamiliar ideas, which develops an overreliance on the superficial aspects of the evaluation model (Spillane et al, 2002b, Spillane et al, 2006).

As a result teachers rely on their prior experiences to notice, frame and interpret the model to protect their self-image without making any meaningful changes to their practice (Burke, 2011, Katsuno, 2012, Miller-Day, Pettigrew, Hecht, Shin, Graham, & Krieger, 2013, Spillane et al, 2002b). Teacher buy in complements resistance to change, strong teacher communities can be effective when they collaborate to understand and make sense of change, but can be detrimental if they exist only to reinforce negative attitudes regarding change (Fullan, 2007). In light of the current policy environment in New Jersey, the way teachers make sense of the new model may be directly related to

how willing teachers are to change their practice (Louis et al, 2005). In the current policy environment, studying how teachers make sense of the new instructional model at different stages of their careers may help administrators achieve a richer, more nuanced view of how teachers understand, frame and put into practice a new teacher evaluation model in their setting (Halverston & Clifford, 2006). This may help school leaders move away from compliance oriented professional development programs, and towards an approach that recognizes the unique needs of the teaching staff in order to institutionalize the changes demanded by the new instructional model.

Research on the career stages of teachers is in agreement that teachers make sense of changes in policy, and have different needs at various stages of their careers (Fessler & Christensen, 1992, Huberman 1989, Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch, & Enz 2000). Professional development on the instructional model in this setting must address the needs of teachers at all levels of their careers. Masuda, et al, (2013) in their qualitative study of professional development and teacher career stages, found that the reality of professional development does not address teacher experiences (p.12). Instead it is focused on compliance with mandates and is usually disconnected from teacher growth; with the cost of attending often outweighing the benefits (Masuda et al, 2013). As school leaders it is impossible to ignore the impact of change on teacher practice, simply training teachers on the model will not guarantee that it is implemented as intended. A greater understanding of how teachers navigate these changes at different stages of their career may help school leaders address the individual needs of teachers through professional development (Woods & Lynn, 2014).

Sensegiving. Change in the context of teaching and learning is very difficult to accomplish; teachers naturally mourn the loss of their autonomy and independence in the face of a perceived prescriptive evaluation system that dictates classroom practice (Fullan, 1993, Godson, Moore, Hargreaves, 2006). Leaders in any organization often use the tactic of sensegiving to construct meaning for people to effectively influence their interpretation of a change effort (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). Sensegiving is designed to help organizations overcome barriers and facilitate change; it is a deliberate attempt to instigate and manage change (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, Kezar, 2012, Smerek, 2011).

This approach is not always directive though, there is a negotiation process that takes place as teachers and administrators each try to sell its vision of the policy to other members of the organization (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). There is a level of complexity to this process; administrators often can influence the definition of the message, yet teachers are ultimately the deliverers of the message in the form of classroom instruction (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, Smerek, 2013).

Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) in their seminal study on sensegiving found that it occurs in stages over a period of time (p. 434). Sensegiving can also be a top down process as teachers are told what to do rather than being given the chance to construct meaning on their own (Coburn 2001, Smerek, 2013). In between the organizational messages directed at teacher's stands building level administrators. Building level leaders are positioned to balance the competing roles as both deliverers of organizational messages and recipients of change (Sharma & Good, 2013, Rouleau, 2005). Building level leaders must create structures that enable teachers to explore and understand the evaluation model. They play a key role in sensegiving because they are positioned close

enough to district leadership to understand the rationale of organizational messages, yet they are close enough to the rank and file teachers to understand these messages and help interpret for them (Sharma & Good, 2013). In order to successfully mediate these roles building level leadership must encourage discourse about the model.

As a building leader I play a prominent role in the sensegiving process towards the adoption of the new evaluation model. Kotter (1996) and Fullan (2011) both espouse the idea that in order to enact change leaders must create a sense of urgency about the need for change. Sensegiving can be an effective strategy to create the emotional arousal in teachers to buy into change as they must connect with the change prior to adopting it (Vuori & Vietaharju, 2012). As a leader my emotional tone influences how teachers relate to the change; choosing the correct tone will help create a positive cognitive and emotional response in teachers towards the change (Rouleau, 2005, Vuori & Vietaharju, 2012). Allen & Penuel (2015) warn in their study on teacher sensemaking and professional development that the strategies used to bring about coherence may actually undermine it during the change process. As a building leader I must ensure that teachers have the opportunity to create meaning from the messages they receive from district leadership through collaborative professional development. Whereas top down messages are meant to create coherence for teachers, in truth it is the opportunity to make meaning of those messages that will help institutionalize change in teaching practice (Allen & Penuel, 2015, Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991).

Summary

The current atmosphere of accountability in the United States has been fostered by a host of non-system actors who are responding to concerns about the effectiveness of

the American education system (Fullan, 2007). New teacher evaluation requirements have been enacted as a way to combat this perceived lack of effectiveness; however teachers perceive the system as a threat to working conditions rather than a path towards the improvement of student achievement (Flores, 2012). The mandated instructional shifts, required as a result of the new evaluation system, represent a departure from past practice; as a result teachers will view these shifts through the lens of their prior experiences, impacting how they understand and ultimately implement the requirements of the policy in their classrooms (Coburn, 2001, Cuban, 2004).

Ultimately the distribution of leadership in a setting influences how teachers understand and implement evaluation; evaluators act as gatekeepers of information regarding certain aspects of the model, and participate with teachers in the construction of meaning about it (Coburn, 2005, Hallinger, 2010, Spillane, 2006). Teachers must be given time to work within the model. Unfortunately the working conditions in most settings do not lead to teachers becoming better at their craft simply because of the organization (Hallinger, 2010). Changes of this magnitude require the type of instructional leadership that facilitates a true learning community where teachers have opportunities to grow (Fullan, 1993, Guskey, 2002).

Chapter 3

Method

For this research study I conducted a qualitative investigation of how teachers change their instructional practice in light of a new teacher evaluation model within the context of Palmetto High School (PHS). This case study provides a description from the perspective of teachers, who are the intended target of new teacher evaluation policies, and represent an analysis of a specific aspect of the case (Fowler, 2013, Yin, 2009). The case is bound by the sensemaking and sensegiving process that occurs when teachers interact with the requirements of the MTEM in a secondary school setting, and how they perceive the changes to their instructional practice as a result of the adoption of the MTEM (Gioia, & Chittipeddi, 1991, Yin, 2009, Weick, 1995).

This study is designed as an embedded case study as it involves more than one unit of analysis, and in this setting teacher's as subunits will serve as sources for data analysis (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) identifies that an embedded design can be characterized by the sample (p.50). The subunits of analysis of this study occur as a result of the sample. Participants in this study were chosen based on their experiences as the intersection of their length of service, social context, and acquired skills contribute to how they understood and changed their practice as a result of the new model (Fessler & Christianson, 1992, Huberman, 1989, Steffy et al, 2000). An embedded analysis of the sample, in this case the specific groups of teachers within a range of years of experience, yielded a detailed description of the complexities that exist in implementing the evaluation model in this context (Creswell, 2007).

Setting

This research study was conducted at PHS, one of multiple high schools in the Port Royal Regional School District (PRRSD). PHS's student population is approximately 2,000, with 140 teachers, four building level administrators, and six academic supervisors. PHS receives students from nine municipalities, but the majority of students enrolled in the school reside in the municipality of Palmetto or the neighboring municipality. There are two specialized learning centers that draw students from around the district: a learning center dedicated to studying international affairs, and one dedicated to studying animal and botanical growth. In 2013, of the 510 students who graduated, 94% went on to further their education at two or four year colleges or universities; additionally, there are other graduates attending trade or technical schools.

According to the New Jersey Department of Education School Performance Report Card PHS has met its academic and graduation performance targets, but lags in terms of college and career readiness indicators (NJDOE, 2013). The New Jersey School Performance Report Card is an annual report of school performance designed to inform schools and stakeholder groups, such as parents and students, about the performance of their school (NJDOE, 2014c). While the report card focuses attention on metrics that are indicative of college and career readiness educators in New Jersey have criticized the metrics as not being a true indicator of college and career readiness. They question the validity of the measures because they selectively include some data such as the number of students who sit for the PSAT, but leave out other indicators such as rigorous course selection and average GPA (Cocchi, 2013). Another key component to the report card is

the goal of benchmarking one school's performance on state targets against that of another like school in order to set goals for improvement (NJDOE, 2014c).

New Jersey ranks schools based on a peer ranking system, which groups like schools based on similar demographic characteristics such as enrollment in free and reduced lunch, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and enrollment in special education programs (NJDOE, 2013). PHS's peer group consists of 30 other schools representing a geographic cross section of the state. Students enrolled in free and reduced lunch range in school average from 3% to just over 9% of the population. The percentage of students enrolled in LEP programs ranges from 0% to just over 3%. It should be noted that the PRRSD sends all of its LEP students to another school in the district. Special education enrollment in this peer grouping ranges from 9% to 18%. PHS houses a specialized program for students with disabilities that draws enrollment from across the district, resulting in slightly elevated special education numbers.

PHS performs high when compared against schools across the state in academic performance, outperforming 71% of the state, and about average when compared to its peer group. In terms of college and career readiness, the school performs in the average range when compare to schools across the state, but lags when compared to schools in its peer group. When compared to the rest of the state in average SAT score, PHS performs slightly above the state average, but it scores 13% behind schools in its peer group.

Rationale for the setting. While sensemaking is not practiced in isolation, it is important to note that teachers often work in isolation; therefore, organizational context plays an important role in the sensemaking process (Spillane et al, 2006). Organizational structure can lead to differing and sometimes contradictory understandings of the same

policy within the same school walls (Spillane et al, 2006, Spillane et al, 2002a). In the PRRSD multiple levels of governance exist, teachers take their cues from subject level supervisors, building administrators, and central office administrators. The vertical arrangement of the district may present teachers with differing viewpoints on the same element of the evaluation model (Spillane et al, 2006). Within in an organization there maybe one voice that is more influential than the others, or one network of leadership that is more influential than the rest, potentially placing teachers in a position to mediate conflicting messages and influencing how teachers make sense of the policy (Coburn, 2001).

In a hierarchal setting such as the PRRSD the exchange of institutional messages plays a key role in how the model is understood: these messages influence the behavior of both teachers and evaluators (Lammers, 2011). Language, disseminated from central office through the schools, impacts how teachers understand and implement the model (Halverston & Clifford, 2006, Hill, 2006, Spillane et al, 2002b). The nature of schools as an institution may influence sensemaking as teachers have worked in an environment where creativity is a key aspect of the institution. Teachers maintain a great deal of control over their classrooms, and in an environment where there is weak central control over behavior sensemaking is most prominent (Lammers, 2011).

The history of the school district can also influence how teachers make sense of what the evaluation model is asking of them (Spillane et al, 2002b). As mentioned before the PRRSD is a high achieving school district, and each year the district and its six schools receive numerous accolades and awards. The teaching staff is among the highest paid in the county, and the district received over 2,500 job applications during the 2013-

2014 school year. When faced with a change in the very nature of evaluation practice, this narrative may be a serious obstacle to adopting the model as the staff is proud of its reputation (Hansen, 2007). Accolades, awards, compensation, and high demand for positions within the district may send a message to teachers that they play a large role in the overall success of the district and that change is unnecessary (Fullan, 2007). District leaders must understand how the historical narrative connects to sensemaking so that leaders can help teachers move past these barriers and make the required instructional shifts (Kezar, 2012).

Participants

Participants in this study were selected using Huberman's (1989) seminal work on teacher life cycles in secondary schools in Switzerland. Research on teacher career cycles formed the basis for selecting the sample for this study, and helped frame the data analysis and interpretation of how teachers understood the evaluation model. Huberman's (1989) research studied secondary school teachers, or teachers of students in grades nine through twelve, who had little to no administrative responsibilities; his research best identifies with the participants of this study and will form the basis for the selection of participants. Huberman (1989) describes career development as "a process, not a series of events" (p. 32). While not all teachers follow the exact same career path, a majority do fit into the context of his research. Huberman's (1989) sample studied secondary school teachers who had spent between five to forty years in the classroom, and sought to understand the career path of the classroom teacher.

Huberman's (1989) teacher career stages. Huberman's (1989) first stage, survival and discovery, includes teachers in their first through third year of teaching.

These teachers were often overwhelmed in the classroom, with no prior experience these teachers balanced the complex nature of teaching with their enthusiasm for being in the classroom. This phase gives way to the stabilization phase, occurring in year's four to six of a teacher's career, this is where teachers make a commitment to the profession. In most states this also corresponds with the granting of tenure, and with tenure comes less supervision and more autonomy in the classroom. Teachers at this stage of their career have refined their practice and begun to add to their repertoire of instructional techniques. Huberman (1989) suggests that teachers at this phase of their career become more comfortable and confident in the classroom, and have a sense of both relief and pride in the attainment of tenure.

Huberman's (1989) next stage occurs between years seven through eighteen and splits into two paths: experimentation/activism or self-doubts/reassessment. Teachers during this phase of their career may go through one or the other, or at some point may go through both phases during their career. Teachers in the experimentation/activism phase engage with the profession; they are aware of the organizational barriers that impede them, and take a leadership role within their buildings. Teachers in the self-doubt or reassessment phase go through what Huberman (1989) calls the "mid-career crisis" or disenchantment with the profession (p. 35). Teachers reconsider their commitment to the profession and often consider leaving it altogether. Forty percent of teachers in Huberman's (1989) sample considered leaving the profession at some point. Teachers may pass between these phases and move in and out of them during their careers.

Between nineteen and thirty years in the profession most teachers pass through either the serenity or conservative phase of their career (Huberman, 1989). Teachers at

the serenity phase of their careers are more confident, but have less energy; they move further away from their students in this phase and focus their energies on the external environment. This phase and the conservatism phase tend to intersect. The conservatism phase finds teachers more critical of students and the younger generation of teachers. Finally, teachers pass through the disengagement phase of their careers where they withdraw from the profession, but become more positive and reflective about their experiences.

While Huberman (1989) and a host of other researchers (Burke, 2001, Eros, 2011, Fessler & Christenson, 1992, Steffy et al, 2000, Woods & Lynn, 2013) recognize that teachers do not experience career cycles in a linear fashion, Huberman's (1989) research does place teachers within a range of years of experience that will help identify candidates for this study. A purposeful sampling of teachers whose years of experience fall into Huberman's (1989) phases of teaching life cycle were selected, representative of the total teaching population at PHS (Patton, 2002). The number of teachers sampled represented a cross section of teachers from different subject areas (Table 1).

Table 1

Number of Teachers Sampled from Each Discipline

Discipline	# of teachers sampled in each discipline	
Science	2	
Math	5	
Social Studies	3	
Physical Education	1	
English Language Arts	3	
Special Education	3	
Family and Consumer Science	1	N=18

Table 2 compares the teaching population at PHS to Huberman's (1989) framework, and lists the number of teachers that were sampled from each category. Identifying teachers by subject area and years of experience would compromise the confidentiality of the teachers who participated in this study, therefore they were separated into two different tables in order to protect their anonymity.

Table 2

Number of Teachers Sampled from Each Category

Years of Teaching	Huberman's Phases	% Of Palmetto Staff	# of Teachers Sampled	
1-3	Survival and Discovery	15%	3	
4-6	Stabilization	11%	2	
7-18	Experimentation/Reassessment	59%	8	
19-30	Serenity/Conservatism	12%	3	
31-40	Disengagement	3%	2	N=18

Based on 140 teaching staff members at PHS.

Consistent with purposeful sampling of a representative case, I have used the demographic information of the school to choose my sample, not to generalize the experience of all teachers, but to describe and illustrate what is happening in a setting that does not represent a unique or extreme case (Patton, 2002).

Excluded participants. This study was limited to teachers who have been rated at least effective since the implementation of the evaluation system, and who have not been placed on a corrective action plan (CAP) under the requirements of Achieve NJ. This study omitted teachers who have been placed on a CAP since the policy was implemented to avoid the biases that these teachers may have against the evaluation model. Teachers on CAPs may be predisposed towards a negative opinion about the

evaluation system and could have threatened the reliability of the data collected. As an ethical consideration teachers on CAPs were omitted because under the law they are in danger of losing tenure. These teachers may have felt uncomfortable answering questions about an evaluation system that they had not performed well under, or may have felt undue pressure to participate in the study as a condition of continued employment due to my status as a an administrator in the district. It should be noted that less than three percent of teachers at PHS are on CAPs, therefore a large portion of the teaching staff was eligible to participate in this study.

Data Collection

This qualitative case study made use of the primary techniques consistent with this methodology such as participant interviews, analysis of archival documents, and participant observation in order to gather information about and interpret how teachers make sense of the MTEM (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). In order to address issues of trustworthiness and credibility in this qualitative case study multiple sources of data were collected. Yin (2009) describes the use of multiple sources of evidence to "address a broader range of historical and behavioral issues" (p. 115). While teachers' understanding and experiences are best measured through interview data, the organizational messages directed at teachers are a key component to their ability to make sense of the evaluation model. It is this process of sensemaking that will influence teachers' behaviors in the classroom. Material culture is an important component to understanding these messages, as well as direct observation and reflection upon professional development. The themes generated from this case study are more accurate because they were derived from multiple sources of data (Yin, 2009).

I used the techniques of interviewing teachers, participant observation, and analyzing material culture as my data collection techniques. Rossman and Rallis (2012) describe these data collection techniques as a "seamless enterprise" for understanding the entirety of the case being studied (p. 169). The first phase of this study was the collection of material culture. Material culture included the PRRSD evaluation handbook, professional development agendas and presentations, documents related to the MTEM, and public correspondence from the local educational association. Since many aspects of a teachers experience are often not reflected in conversation, material culture helped provide clarity to the multiple voices that provide conflicting views on teacher evaluation (Hodder, 2012). Organizational messages are an important component to this study; those messages often come in the form of memos from central office staff, written documents that outline policy and procedure, and communication from the local teachers association that may have influenced teacher perceptions of new evaluation policies. Since material culture can be given new meaning separate from what its creator intended when interpreted by teachers, it was important to understand how teachers understand messages from all sides of the organization (Hodder, 2012)

I conducted semi-structured open ended interviews with teachers during the second phase of data collection (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Interviews were structured so that follow up questions, both scripted and unscripted, could be asked to encourage participants to freely share their views on the MTEM. (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The design of the interview protocol focused on the teacher's instructional practice and their beliefs, perceptions, and experiences with:

- their current instructional practice under the MTEM,

- their feelings about the profession in the current educational climate,
- the changes they have made in their instructional practice under the MTEM,
- being evaluated under the MTEM,
- school leadership and the implementation of the MTEM,
- professional development towards implementing the MTEM.

The final interview question asked teachers to discuss their perception of how other teachers in the building felt about the model in order to illuminate the messages they received from their peers about the MTEM (see Appendix A for the interview protocol).

The third phase of this study made use of participant observation; in order to better understand the organizational messages that were directed at teachers I observed their behavior and activities during professional development (Creswell, 2014). This phase aligned with scheduled professional development conducted by trainers from Learning Sciences International (LSI), the company that publishes the MTEM, building based professional development sessions, and department meetings. The local School Improvement Panel (ScIP) directed professional development on teacher evaluation at PHS during a scheduled in-service day. The ScIP committee is made up of the principal, assistant principal, and a lead teacher as its core team. Other building level teachers serve on the committee as data coaches, PLC facilitators, and PLC coaches. Achieve NJ requires that every school must establish a ScIP to ensure, oversee, and support the implementation of the district's evaluation system, professional development and mentoring policies in each individual school (NJDOE, 2014d). The ScIP also ensures that teachers the opportunity to shape evaluation procedures in each school by developing their skills as teacher leaders.

Department meetings at the building level were observed as well in order to gauge the reactions of teachers to messages about evaluation by their direct supervisor. These meetings, during the data collection period, included information on aligning instruction to higher order thinking activities. The observations conducted in this setting were overt; participants were informed and aware that they were being observed as a part of the research study; my role in the observation was that of a non-participant observer (Creswell, 2014, Wells, 2010).

Observations of teachers participating in contracted professional development by LSI were also conducted in order to understand the messages teachers received from the designers of the MTEM themselves. These field observations allowed me to gain an understanding of the context, the research setting, and how teachers reacted to message about observation in a social setting (Hatch 2002, Yin, 2009). Field notes were kept during observations in a semi-structured manner; pre-determined questions served as a guide to help frame the notes taken on the behaviors and beliefs espoused by teachers during professional development (Creswell, 2014).

Data Analysis

The interview transcripts, documents collected, and field notes from observations all received analytic memos. This process allowed me to reflect on the data and ask questions about its meaning, and also served as a way to analyze how the data related to my research questions (Saldana, 2013, Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Each data source received an analytic memo, which helped in the formation of the descriptive codes I used for my first cycle coding method. Descriptive codes are a basic foundation of qualitative research; they helped me to breakdown what I saw and heard when trying to understand

how teachers understood the MTEM (Saldana, 2013). I used pattern coding for the second cycle of coding in order to create more streamlined categories in order to facilitate the generation of the major themes in the study (Saldana, 2013, pp. 212). Once the categories were established they each received theoretical memos. This process allowed me to integrate the thematic discussion and situate it within sensemaking and sensegiving theory (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Theoretical memos were selected as a data analysis strategy because the teachers' experiences and how they make meaning of evaluation drives the study; therefore allowing me to continually connect my analysis back to sensemaking and sensegiving theory.

First cycle coding. During the first cycle of coding the codes emerged progressively, changing and developing as the data evolved (Creswell, 2014, Miles et al, 2014). For example it became necessary to assign sub codes to the code "professional development" in order to assign detail to the nuances that emerged within the code (Miles et al, 2014). When describing professional development teachers discussed the need for more concrete examples, which became "PD-examples needed." This needed to be differentiated from the experience of professional development where they experienced examples that did not fit their context, or "PD-experienced." During the first cycle of coding a total of 44 independent ideas emerged from the data collected. Table 3 provides a comprehensive list of the first cycle descriptive codes used.

Table 3

First Cycle Descriptive Codes

First cycle descriptive codes				
PD-examples needed	Collaboration time	Mixed strategies	Unfair evaluation	Meaning: sensegiving
Negative emotions	Meaning: sensemaking	Student centered	Prescriptive	Administrator messages
Distrust evaluators	MTEM: agreement	Observation scores	Distrust MTEM	Content experts
PD: Examples experienced	Prior experiences	Compliance	Student needs	MTEM Administrative support
Staff Morale	No change	Resistance	Student growth	PD: effective
Observers: lack content expertise	Learning goals	Unrealistic expectations	Peer messages	Reflective practice
Inconsistent application	Direct instruction	Professional judgement	Fair evaluation	Positive emotions
External forces	Monitoring	Implementation issues	Definition	PD: experienced
Challenges	Changes made	Lacks value	Common language	

During the first cycle of coding several codes were dropped because they proved to be irrelevant to the study, or they did not emerge across the different types of data collected. The code Impersonal, which conveyed that the observation system did not look at teachers as individuals, was dropped because it was only appeared during one interview, therefore proving to be irrelevant to the study. The code Waiting it out, conveyed a teachers feeling that the observations model would change after a few years, was dropped after all of the data was collected because it appeared in only two interviews, and did idea did not appear in observations or in material culture. Other codes were combined with each other because they were too limiting and narrowly focused. One such example was an early code “Observer reputations.” This code was specific to

the impression that particular observers were more difficult than others. This code proved to be too limiting, and as participants described other factors that led them to distrust the intentions of the evaluators observing them this code was broadened and renamed "distrust evaluators." This allowed a broader range of issues teachers had with their observers to be coded. For example one teacher stated: "That's a bit tough because different supervisors, different administrators, have different reputations, you know, in the building." This segment was one of the few that were coded under Observer reputations. I recoded this segment under Distrust evaluators because this code also represents the distrust that teachers have for some administrators, therefore it made sense to combine the codes because of their similarities (see Appendix B for a detailed list of all first and second cycle codes).

First cycle codes were documented and adjusted as necessary during the analysis process. There were some codes that were not used across the document analysis, field notes from observations or the interview transcripts. The initial first cycle code Instructional technology, which described a teacher's increased use of technology under the MTEM, was only referenced by three participants in interviews. This code was dropped and re-coded under the general category of Changes made, which describes the general changes teachers have made under the MTEM. This coded segment was seen across interviews, field notes from observations and in the document analysis.

Second cycle coding. Once I completed the analysis of my first cycle of descriptive codes and established categories of similar data chunks I began the process of creating larger categories in the form of pattern codes. The second cycle pattern codes helped me develop a categorical and theoretical organization to the first cycle codes,

leading to the development of themes for the study (Miles et al, 2014, Saldana, 2009). The second cycle pattern codes (Table 4) grouped the initial first cycle descriptive codes into smaller categories; these categories were shaped by the studies research questions, the theoretical framework of the study, the perceptions of the participants, and my own knowledge of the subject matter at hand (Miles et al, 2014). The second cycle codes were created by placing like first cycle codes into groups of data that were influenced by both the research questions and the theoretical framework. For example the category Perceptions of Instructional Shifts was created from the overall research question driving the study and the codes that describe a teacher's instructional practice. The second cycle pattern codes include the themes and concepts created from a congruence of the factors described above of Barriers to Effective Growth, Perceptions of Instructional Shifts, Reluctant Compliance, Building Capacity, and Contextual Messages about Evaluation (Miles et al, 2014).

Table 4

First Cycle Descriptive Codes Reduced into Second Cycle Pattern Codes.

Second Cycle Pattern Codes	**First Cycle Descriptive Codes.**
Barriers to Effective Growth	PD: examples needed
	Negative emotions
	Distrust evaluators
	PD: examples experienced
	Staff morale
	Observers: lack content expertise
	Inconsistent application
	External forces
	Challenges
	Collaboration time.
Perception of Instructional Shifts	Meaning: sensemaking
	MTEM-agreement
	Prior experience

Table 4 (continued)

Second Cycle Pattern Codes	First Cycle Descriptive Codes.
Perception of Instructional Shifts.	No change
	Learning goals
	Direct instruction
	Monitoring
	Changes made
	Mixed strategies
	Student centered.
Building Capacity	Content experts
	MTEM-administrative support
	PD: effective
	Reflective practice
	Positive emotions
	PD: experienced.
Contextual Messages about Evaluation	Student needs
	Student growth
	Peer messages
	Fair evaluation
	Observation: effective feedback
	Definition
	Common language
	Meaning: sensegiving
	Administrator messages

Validity. Different data sources collected within this study were triangulated to build a coherent case for the themes generated from this study (Creswell, 2014). A triangulation matrix (table 5) was used to test for internal validity by examining how multiple sources of data support the findings (Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002). This matrix demonstrates how the convergence of several sources of data, or perspectives, led to the generation of themes (Creswell, 2014). The triangulation matrix allowed me to examine the integrity of the methodology used to collect the data and the data itself (Miles et al, 2014).

Table 5

Triangulation Matrix of Themes and Sub-Themes

Study Themes & Sub Themes	Interview Transcripts	Documents	Observations
Instructional Shifts Under the MTEM	**X**	**X**	**X**
Through the lens of past practice	X		X
Teachers believe they mix their strategies	X		X
Barriers to Effective Growth	**X**	**X**	**X**
Lack of trust in observers intentions	X		X
A need for more concrete examples	X	X	X
Overwhelmed by the environment	X	X	X
Reluctant Compliance	**X**	**X**	**X**
Score focused	X	X	X
Reluctant alignment	X	X	X
Unrealistic & prescriptive	X	X	X
Contextual messages	**X**	**X**	**X**
Unified messages	X	X	X
Content area supervisors provide valued feedback	X	X	X
Negativity from peers	X	X	X
Building Capacity	**X**	**X**	**X**
Creating structures	X	X	X
Teachers are reflective in practice	X		X

Once the themes were developed member checking was also used to verify the data; all participants were provided a copy of the initial findings and asked to provide feedback on the accuracy of the themes generated (Creswell, 2014).

Researcher Role

As a former supervisor at PHS now working in another building in the same district I have presented at the district level and at the building level on teacher evaluation systems. Teachers in the PRRSD know me as an administrator and as someone who is actively involved in district initiatives. I have not worked in PHS for over five years, and did not actively work with teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career.

While I have presented at the district level on these topics since I was involved in the district committee that selected the model, teachers appeared to be forthcoming and trustworthy. Many teachers appeared to welcome the opportunity to discuss their beliefs on evaluation. While I was an administrator at Palmetto High School for four years, my position as their former supervisor did not appear to make teachers hesitant to speak with me. As a supervisor my interactions with the staff here were limited to extracurricular activities and athletics, and I did not have much contact with them about curricular initiatives or evaluation. This may have granted me greater access because I was not in a position to evaluate them on high stakes issues, and this may have made them feel comfortable discussing this topic with me. Most teachers in this building do not anticipate that I will return to PHS; the current principal is established and does not appear to be leaving in the near future. Most teachers know that my own desire is to be a principal in the district; therefore, it was likely that most participants do not anticipate working with me again in the future.

Summary

This qualitative case study examined the implementation of a standards based teacher evaluation model from the perspective of teachers in a secondary school setting. This research study was designed as an embedded case study; using Huberman's (1989) career stage model teachers at different phases of their career served as sub-units of analysis within the setting (Yin, 2009). The setting of this case study was PHS, a secondary school in New Jersey that is representative of an organization where leadership is distributed, teachers may receive messages about their instructional practice from multiple supervisors and administrators (Spillane, 2006). An analysis of the perceptions

of teachers, examined through the lens of sensemaking and sensegiving theory, yielded a detailed description of the complex interaction between teacher perceptions and the organizational context.

The data collection methods included a review of archival documents related to the implementation of the MTEM, semi-structured open ended interviews, and participant observation. All sources of data initially received analytic memos prior to the coding process. Analytic memos helped develop the initial descriptive codes, and data was further reduced using pattern coding. Theoretical memos were used to help develop themes during the data analysis process, allowing me to continually connect the data back to the theoretical framework driving this study (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The measures taken to ensure validity included triangulation of multiple sources of data using a matrix, consulting the relevant literature on the topic and member checking. Multiple sources of data yielded answers to the research questions about how teachers perceived changes to their instructional practice, and the sub questions that addressed the organizational context.

Chapter 4

Findings

The implementation of new teacher evaluation systems, a requirement in order for states to receive federal funding under President Obama's competitive Race to the Top (RttT) grant program, has transformed teacher workforce policy in the state of New Jersey (Manna, 2006, McGuinn, 2012a, Superfine et al, 2012). The Port Royal Regional High School District (PRRHSD) implemented the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (MTEM) in response to the requirements outlined under Achieve NJ, the New Jersey State Board of Education policy guiding teacher evaluation. This study was organized to explore how teachers understood the MTEM and changed their practice because of the new requirements. This also study examined the contextual factors that influenced teacher perceptions of their own practice as well as the MTEM in order to help school leaders improve both the utility of feedback in this setting and professional development.

This chapter is organized to represent the findings of a single embedded case study conducted at Palmetto High School (PHS) about the experiences of teachers during the implementation of the MTEM. PHS served as the primary unit of analysis, with teachers in different stages of their careers serving as the subunits of analysis. Using Huberman's (1989) seminal work on teacher career cycles, teachers at different stages of their careers participating in this study were broken into subunits based on their experience. The number of participants in each subunit were selected to embody the demographics of the teaching population in order to describe a setting that is representative of other schools facing the same requirements under Achieve NJ (Patton, 2002, You, 2009). Table 6 provides a breakdown of participant pseudonyms and their

years of experience to facilitate the readers understanding of the data presented in this chapter.

Table 6

Participant Pseudonyms and Their Years of Experience

Participant pseudonym	Years of Experience	Experience Group
Allison	1-3	Survival and Discovery
Jen	1-3	Survival and Discovery
Dave	1-3	Survival and Discovery
Kevin	4-6	Stabilization
Ellen	4-6	Stabilization
Deana	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Art	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Doug	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Cathy	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Sarah	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Amy	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Susan	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Steve	7-18	Experimentation/reassessment
Lenore	19-30	Serenity/conservation
John	19-30	Serenity/conservation
Emily	19-30	Serenity/conservation
Rob	31+	Disengagement
Christine	31+	Disengagement

This chapter will be presented thematically, discussing the findings of this embedded case study and situating it within the literature discussed in Chapter 2. While many of the findings across each subunit of analysis are similar, there are nuances within each sub theme that will be explored.

Themes

Saldana (2009) describes thematic analysis as a "strategic choice as part of the research design that includes the primary questions, goals, conceptual framework, and

literature review" (p.177). Throughout the thematic analysis process interview transcripts, field observations, archival documents and the first cycle codes assigned to these data sources were explored and triangulated to establish reliable themes (Miles et al, 2014). The first pattern, coded as Perceived Instructional Shifts, describes the instructional shifts that teachers perceive they have made since the implementation of the MTEM. The second pattern, coded as Barriers to Effective Growth, describes the contextual issues that prevent teachers from growing through the evaluation process. The third pattern, coded as Reluctant Compliance, represents how teachers comply with the MTEM despite issues they perceive to exist with the system. The fourth pattern, Contextual Messages, refers to messages that teachers are exposed to from district and building administrators about evaluations as well as their peers. The last pattern, coded as Building Capacity, represents the teaching staff's perceptions of the supports they have received from building administrators towards implementing the MTEM. Through participant interviews, archival documents, and field notes from observations the data for each pattern code is broken down in table 7.

Table 7

Second Cycle Pattern Code Frequency

Second cycle pattern code	% of coded segments of data	Number of coded segments from interviews	Number of coded segments from field notes	Number of coded segments from documents
Instructional Shifts	26.5	238	28	14
Barriers to Effective Growth	23.4	215	26	6

Table 7 (continued)

Second cycle pattern code	% of coded segments of data	Number of coded segments from interviews	Number of coded segments from field notes	Number of coded segments from documents
Reluctant Compliance	23.6	244	15	14
Contextual Messages	16.7	177	24	16
Building Capacity	10.1	16.7	10	4

A thorough analysis of multiple sources of data including transcribed interviews, archival documents from the PRRHSD, and field observations yielded convincing and accurate conclusions about the experiences of teachers at PHS during the implementation of the MTEM (Yin, 2009). During the data analysis process, a statement from a teacher participant so perfectly connected the theoretical proposition of the study to their experiences that I thought it was important to highlight it in the introduction of this chapter. When I asked Sarah how the MTEM has changed her instructional practice, she responded:

> At first I thought it was going to be too challenging for me to meet all those protocols, but then I realized over the course of time and with some good professional development and self-guided research that I was doing a lot of that stuff already.

This statement describes the feelings teachers experienced during early implementation, highlighting why teachers perceive that they have made only small shifts in their practice. In this setting teachers have interpreted the model as an extension of their past practice, failing to re-think their instructional strategies and instead focusing on familiar ideas in order to adapt to the changes required of them (Spillane et al, 2002b).

This interpretation has created only a surface level understanding of the changes required, influencing how teachers change their practice under the MTEM.

Instructional Shifts under the MTEM.

Through participant interviews, archival documents and field notes a consistent theme emerged that teachers perceive that they make small shifts to their instructional practice, but these shifts are not significant as they still rely heavily on direct instruction to teach the content. The perceptions of instructional shifts described in archival documents were noted in comparison to the number of elements scored in the evaluation system over the past three years. The perceptions of instructional shifts noted in field observations aligned to those described by interview participants within each subunit, creating a complete picture for the overall case. Teachers made statements indicating that they saw the model as an extension of what they were already doing, framing it within their past practice or their previous experiences. Consistent with Coburn's (2001) finding that teachers interpret mandated instructional shifts through the lens of their prior experiences, Jen described this when she stated: "I think a lot of Marzano lent itself to what we were already doing."

Teachers have instead focused on complying with the MTEM rather than accepting it as a growth model, aligning their instruction when necessary, and continuing with their normal routines when they are not being observed (Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Ramirez et al, 2014). Amy described this when discussing her observations: "I feel like you have to be more aware of what you're doing especially if you're getting observed. You're very much like, "Am I doing these elements? I have to make sure I'm doing these eight things, or it's not a good enough lesson." Teachers still rely on a

combination of direct instruction and student centered instruction in their classrooms. Their resistance to the changes required under the MTEM is multilayered and cannot be attributed to one factor. Fullan (2007) describes change as a three to five-year process. Considering that teachers at PHS are entering year three of the implementation process, there appears to be movement towards greater alignment with the model, but teachers espouse that this alignment is still a matter of self-preservation. Christine described this when discussing the teacher evaluation process: "There's obviously a lot more pressure to fit into those models and to score the necessary scores, maintain your integrity, but you also want to keep your job, so you have to fit in." Teachers like Christine see the evaluation model as a threat to their job security, they align to the model because are concerned that failure to do so could cost them their jobs (Hargreaves, 2006). Instructional shifts in this context are made in order to maintain their job status rather than to align to the espoused intent of the model, which is to raise student achievement (Marzano, 2007).

Through the lens of past practice. Multiple teachers at PHS in all phases of their career view any instructional shifts they have made under the MTEM as a product of their past practice. Teachers in the survival and discovery phase credit their pre-service teaching experience. Allison stated when discussing how the MTEM has shaped her instructional practice: "I don't know if its's because what I was learning about in college and how my student teaching experience went….I felt like a lot of this stuff, Marzano, I felt like I do a lot these already." Teachers in the stabilization phase also believe the MTEM has not changed their practice, they view portions of the model as indicative of what they have already done. Kevin, when asked the extent to which MTEM has changed

his practice, stated: "honestly not much, I still do a lot of the same things. I still use a lot of the same methods." Ellen echoed this sentiment, citing her context as the reason for the lack of change: "It's always been a hands-on class, so as far as that's concerned, it's the same way it's always ran." The lack of significant instructional shifts permeates through all subunits of analysis in this study, teachers simply do not see the instructional strategies espoused by Marzano (2007) as different then their past practice.

More seasoned teachers, those in years seven through thirty-one, indicate that the model has not changed their practice significantly either. In total 11 out of the 13 teachers that fall into these career phases indicate that the MTEM has not significantly changed their instructional practice. Lenore summarized the theme well: "I think that good teachers do what they should be doing regardless of the evaluation model….I think it's minor adjustments, I have not redesigned my strategies." For teachers at in the disengagement phase of their career their prior experiences have been more valuable to them in defining good instruction. Rob described his evolution by stating:

> I've gone away from just strictly note taking, because I found that if you want them to take notes on the Power Point, they're just copying word for word from the Power Point and not even listening to anything you say, or paying attention to it."

A second teacher at the disengagement phase, Christine, describes how her experience has encouraged her to mix her strategies, focusing on more than direct instruction: "Teaching the kids in a different way with probing questions and stuff like that. Where you're getting them to help each other and answer things on their own" Past experience has a great deal of influence over a teacher's instructional practice and the instructional choices they make. This has a strong influence on the lens from which they view the MTEM (Weick, 1995, Spillane et al, 2002b).

Consistent with sensemaking theory, teachers see the MTEM through the lens of their past practice, adapting components of it, combining it with what they have done in the past or rationalizing that they have already been doing some form of it (Spillane et al, 2002b). There are minimal differences in the way teachers at any stage of their career make sense of evaluation based on their past practice. They all consistently see the MTEM as something they have already done, whether it be their student teaching experience or for more seasoned teachers their daily routine. The inherent danger of seeing new ideas as manifestations of more familiar ideas is that teachers may never fully align their instruction to the MTEM (Spillane et al, 2002b). The purpose of Achieve NJ and the implementation of the MTEM is to raise student achievement, but teachers indicate that they continue to rely on traditional strategies to reach the same goal.

In this context teachers have made sense of the MTEM in terms of their past practice, thereby protecting their identity as professionals and allowing them to more comfortably implement the MTEM (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph, & DePalma, 2006, Holt, 2014, Louis et al, 2005, Spillane et al, 2002b). They see the instructional shifts under the MTEM as only minor variations of what they already have been doing for a number of years (Coburn, 2001, Spillane et al, 2002b). For teachers in most phases of their career these minor shifts do align to the important components of the model, specifically learning goals and monitoring of students. Continued superficial implementation of the MTEM will undermine the instructional shifts necessary to raise student achievement (Kezar, 2012). In this setting the sensemaking process has not led to a greater understanding of the shifts required; at least half of the participants indicate the MTEM is a manifestation of their past practice. In this setting the MTEM has served to

reinforce old ideas and strategies, working against the very change the MTEM was supposed to bring about (Spillane et al, 2002b).

Teachers believe they mix their strategies. Archival documents from the implementation of the MTEM were analyzed and placed within the context of the teacher's answers to the interview questions in order to better understand their perceptions about their instructional practice. The MTEM provides observers 17 instructional strategies for addressing content that observers can score during a classroom observation. Marzano's (2001, 2007) research indicates that these strategies support increased student learning. The majority of the lesson segments addressing content, the portion of the model that focuses on instructional strategies, calls for teachers to take a student centered approach in their classroom (see figure 1).

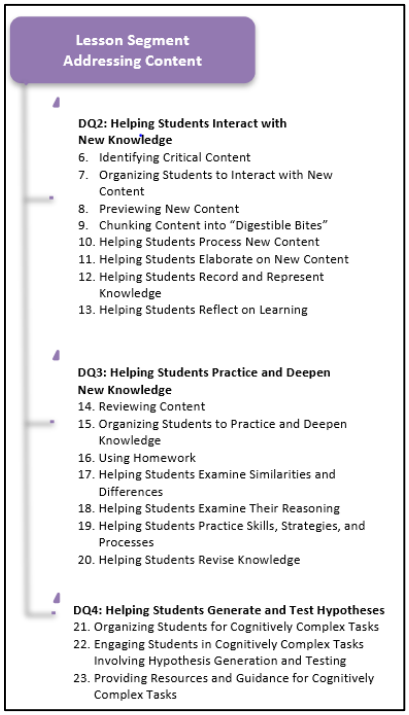


Figure 1. Coded segments of data from the MTEM learning map. Adopted from the *PRRHSD Evaluation Handbook.*

In order to examine the model in greater detail each instructional strategy was coded to determine if it required teachers to take a student centered approach to deliver content, or a teacher directed approach. Based on Marzano's (2001) description of his instructional strategies each element was coded as either Direct instruction or Student centered instruction during the first cycle of coding. Five of the seventeen instructional strategies received the first cycle code Direct instruction, indicating that the teacher was delivering instruction to the students. In addition, twelve of the seventeen strategies received the first cycle code Student centered, which indicates that the instructional strategy called for a student centered approach to deliver instruction.

Sixteen out of the eighteen teachers who participated in this study espouse the belief that they rely on a mix of instructional strategies. Kevin, who teaches a schedule that is loaded with higher level classes, is a proponent of direct instruction, stating that: "admittedly I am a lecturer." This preference for direct instruction is based on his perception that: "even when I did the group learning and even when I do it now I feel like I do it and then I teach it anyway." Lenore also relies heavily on direct instruction due to factors outside of the MTEM:

> You know you learn as you go what works and what doesn't work, and it doesn't always work. I've learned, for example, with the mixed academic tracks today even when they do independent reading, most of its done in the classroom. Because if I ask them to do it outside of school some of them just are not motivated.

The remainder of the study participants indicate that direct instruction is used, but in concert with a more student centered approach.

Rob, despite his misgivings about the MTEM, espoused this belief about varying a teacher's instructional strategy: "I don't know how successful you'll be if you do the

same things all the time. You've got to change it up once in a while." Observation data from the first two years of the MTEM's implementation was analyzed and compared against each other. The data indicates that there has been a slow shift towards a student centered classroom. While observations are conducted only three times per year, observers did see a slight decrease in scored elements associated with direct instruction, such as identifying critical content, and a slight increase in elements scored that are more student centered such as helping students examine their reasoning (see figure 2).

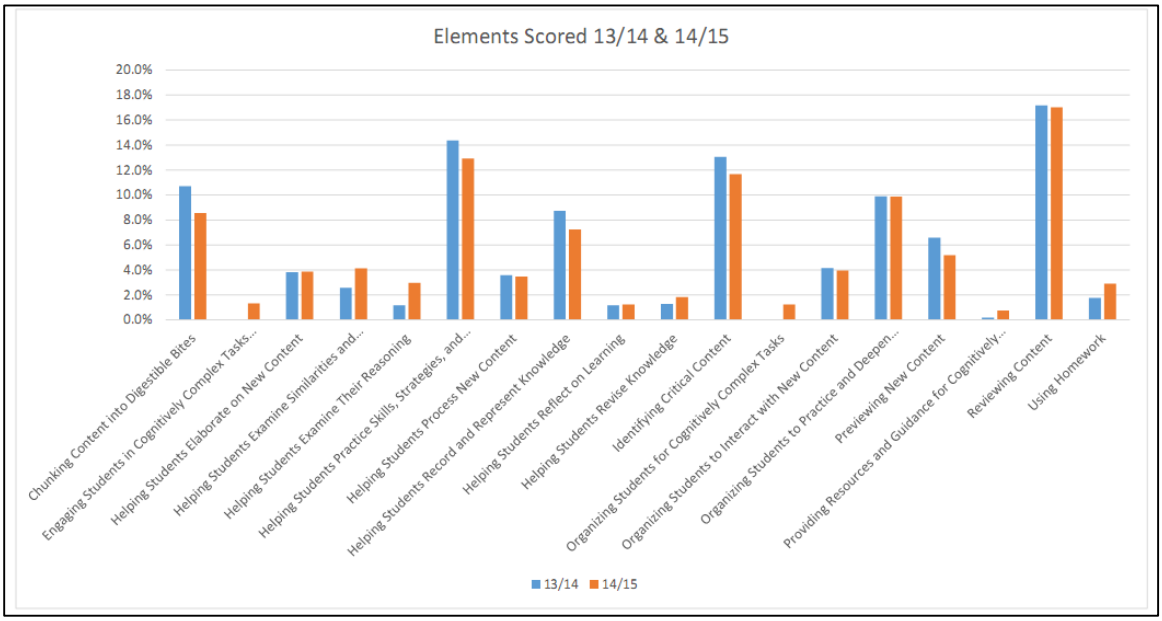


Figure 2. Segment of coded data reflecting scored elements.

Archival data from two years' worth of observations indicates that teachers are gradually shifting towards instructional strategies that are student centered, aligning their instruction with strategies that Marzano (2001) found to improve student achievement such as helping students revise knowledge and helping students examine similarities and

differences. The highest yield instructional strategies according to Marzano (2001), located in design question four, were not scored during the 2013/2014 school year.

The findings of this study differ with the literature on teacher career stages in some aspects. In other studies instructional shifts have occurred differently across teachers in each subgroup because each teacher has processed these changes differently, adapting to the changes at their own pace (Fessler & Christianson, 1992, Huberman, 1989, Steffy et al, 1990). In this setting the majority of teachers are consistently making only incremental shifts, which aligns with the literature on how teachers resist changes to their evaluation system (Guskey, 2002, Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008, Van Veen & Sleegers, 2007) and the institutionalization of the change process (Fullan, 2007). In this case the data indicates that teachers are shifting their practice since the implementation of the MTEM. While teachers still hold on to the strategies that have served them well throughout their careers, the observation data indicates that they are beginning to incorporate the strategies required under the new model.

Summary. Teachers at all phases of their career espouse the idea that they have not significantly shifted their instructional practice as a result of the MTEM. Teachers understand the model through the lens of their past practice, while early career teachers pre-service experiences shape their practice, veteran teachers see the MTEM as an extension of what they have already done. Whereas teachers espouse that they continue to rely on a mix of instructional strategies, archival documents in the form of observation data indicate that small shifts towards high yield instructional strategies have occurred in this setting (Marzano, 2001). Despite these shifts teachers have misunderstood the new model, seeing it as an extension of their past practice and integrating components of it in

order to comply with its requirements so they can achieve high enough ratings to continue their employment (Coburn, 2001, Carraway & Young, 2015, Spillane, 2002b). Teachers at all phases of their career share similar views on the MTEM's influence on the changes they have made to their instructional practice.

Barriers to Effective Growth

Participant interviews, archival documents and field notes from observations yielded conclusive data that indicates teachers perceive significant barriers towards growth under the new evaluation model. The barriers described in archival documents were noted in professional relations meeting minutes between the local teachers union and the district administration. Barriers described in the field observations aligned to the barriers described by interview participants within each subunit, creating a complete picture for the overall case. The barriers described by teachers include a lack of trust in the intentions of their observers, a need for more concrete examples of how to implement the teaching strategies aligned to the MTEM, and that they are overwhelmed by their environment. These findings are consistent with the issues brought up in the literature by Coldren & Spillane (2006), Firestone (2014), and Robinson et al (2008) about relationship dynamics and instructional leadership. The barriers described by teacher's center on the implementation process and how it is carried out at the building level. In this setting the leadership at PHS is in danger of allowing these barriers to render the MTEM ineffective (Davis et al, 2002).

Lack of trust in observer's intentions. Teachers across all sub units of analysis are weary of their evaluators and do not trust that all of them are aligning their actions with the intent of the model. Teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career

were not hesitant to espouse their beliefs that barriers to implementing the MTEM existed, and like their peers at other stages of their careers they share concerns about their observers. Teachers in this phase espouse the belief that some of their observers are rigid in their approach to the MTEM, and at times do not trust their intentions. Jen stated that she is hesitant to follow her instincts as an educator: "…If I let my students listen to music while they write, they'll write full essays. If the wrong administrator walks in I can get in trouble" Building upon the idea teachers in this stage feel observers come in with pre-conceived notions, Dave made the point that: "…. some administrators come in with a preconceived idea, I have to give out this many developing and I have to give out this many you know."

Teachers at the end of their careers, the disengagement phase, echo the sentiments of their younger colleagues. Christine commented on the idea that observers are not aligning to the model and instead coming in with an idea of what they think they should see, instead of the observing the dominant element as the MTEM calls for: "If it's not something that they want to see you can get a poor evaluation. That's kind of tough to deal with." This sentiment was described in a similar fashion by Rob: "sometimes I feel like I have to teach to the evaluator" Teachers have internalized this, Christine described her observation experience and the messages she has taken from it: "I feel like every year they're telling me it's not good anymore."

This same sentiment was noted in a field observation during a MTEM training conducted by LSI. Teachers across different phases of their career expressed their concerns about observers looking to elements that were not dominant in order to score enough data points for those teachers. Data points refer to elements scored during a

lesson, and each year a teacher is required to have at least 15 scored in order for their year-end evaluation to be valid.

Teachers in the stabilization stage of their career share similar concerns about their observers, but their perception of this issue is focused more on the observation score and what it means for the individual teacher. Kevin described the inequity that exists based on who comes in to observe the class, stating: "…. certain people are going to grade you more harshly, more strictly." This inequity creates stress for teachers at this stage of their careers, Ellen described the stress that occurs for them when a rigid administrator comes into an unfamiliar environment: "….that scares me, and you hope that they do understand the kind of environment that it is, and appreciate it at the same time, so that can be a little nerve-racking." Consistent with Huberman's (1989) teacher career cycle model teachers at this phase expect more freedom to make pedagogical choices, and when this expectation is not reflected in observations it increases teacher's resistance to this change.

Teachers in both the experimentation/reassessment and security/conservatism stages of their career share identical perceptions about the fairness and rigidity of their observers. The literature on teacher resistance to evaluation changes describes the impersonal and bureaucratic nature of the evaluation process (Flores, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2014). Susan discussed the impersonal nature of the observation process: "Some people are extremely rigid. Other people are understanding. Some people, it can be very intimidating when people stare and there's no affect or anything as they're listening to a lesson." The lack of trust in the process had Cathy, a teacher in the same sub-unit, questioning the motivation of some observers: "…. It's almost like they are just looking

to see what you are doing wrong, rather than what you are doing right." This perception of fairness extents to the security/conservatism phase teachers as well, with Lenore commenting that: "…. there is a perception that some administrators are, maybe fairer, than others, make you feel more comfortable than others. That becomes an issue."

Teacher perceptions about the way observations are conducted aligns with the literature on relational trust and teacher observation. As discussed in Chapter 2 teachers perceive the MTEM negatively because they do not trust the intentions of some of their observers, creating barriers to effective implementation (Firestone, 2014, Robinson et al, 2008). Whereas the behaviors of observers during observations are not the only barrier to the implementation of the MTEM, it does represent an area that building leadership has more control over.

A need for more concrete examples. Consistent with other studies on teacher evaluation the absence of credible examples on how to improve their practice can be a barrier to growth for teachers (Taylor & Tyler, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2014, Weisberg et al, 2009). Teachers in all sub-units of analysis identify that a barrier to growth through evaluation is their lack of exposure to specific instructional strategies aligned to their context. These examples largely emanate from the training done by consultants from LSI, the company that publishes the MTEM, and also the lack of time to collaborate to experience peer created examples. Allison, a teacher in the survival and discovery phase, described her experience during this type of training: "a lot of the videos we see are like elementary school videos. I would like to see it happen in the high school." Dave, another teacher in the same phase of his career described how the concept of the video library in

the online resource system that teachers have access to is an excellent idea but he feels that:

> if it was broken down or made more robust so that there was evidence at the primary and secondary level throughout. I don't think that you could have the same sort of letters, squares and colors on a carpet as you do in an AP civics class.

These teachers do not feel that the examples that they are exposed to are relevant to their context.

Similar to teachers in other phases of their career, teachers in the security/conservation phase share the same concerns about the examples they have been exposed to in regards to instructional strategies. Deana stated that: "much of what they show is elementary based, so another disconnect between a high school, which is a totally different culture then an elementary or middle school." Teachers in this phase have a nuanced view of this issue though, connecting the lack of examples with a lack of collaboration to explore the strategies themselves as a barrier to growth. Doug's comments provided a summary of how a majority of teachers at this phase of their careers feel: "I'd love to have that first-hand experience of seeing live from another colleague, another teacher in the building."

Teachers in the stabilization phase also see a lack of collaboration time to explore instructional strategies as a barrier to implementing the MTEM. Teachers like Ellen espouse a willingness to use their own time to observe other teachers provided the structures are put in place: "…. I haven't gone to other classrooms in different disciplines, so that would be a really nice thing." Kevin thinks idea that common planning time with people who teach similar subjects would be helpful: "I'd love common planning time, that's number one for me." Currently the district only

emphasizes common planning time for in class resource pairs, but not teachers who teach similar classes.

Teachers in the security/conservation phase of their career describe similar issues with the examples they are exposed to in their trainings, Cathy described her professional development on the model: "…. We're still lacking in real models, because the videos that we see are so unrealistic. They're smaller classes, it's not a practical approach when you have 140 kids with different needs." The inability to connect the concrete examples they are shown to their context is frustrating for teachers. This phenomenon was noted in three separate field observations of professional development, two delivered by LSI trainers and one delivered by a colleague. The chief complaint amongst the staff at the LSI training was the lack of context specific examples, and while better received the peer training was so content specific that teachers outside that content area expressed frustration over the lack of take aways for them.

Frustrated over the lack of concrete examples, the local education association has been critical of the administrators and supervisor's unwillingness to model these examples themselves. In an excerpt from the association's monthly newsletter to its teachers, the association president outlines their frustrations with the administrations unwillingness to model effective instructional strategies (Figure 3).

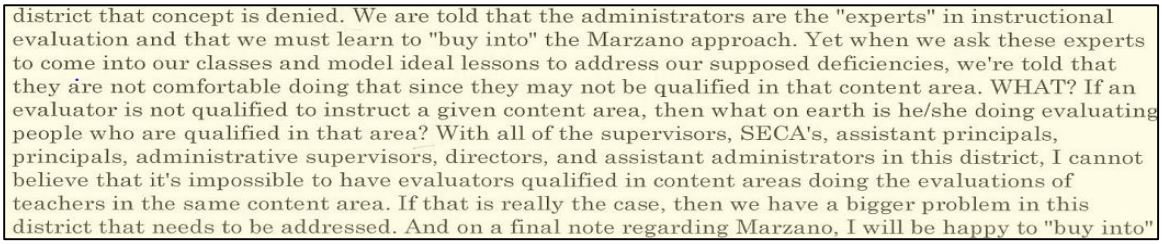

district that concept is denied. We are told that the administrators are the "experts" in instructional evaluation and that we must learn to "buy into" the Marzano approach. Yet when we ask these experts to come into our classes and model ideal lessons to address our supposed deficiencies, we're told that they are not comfortable doing that since they may not be qualified in that content area. WHAT? If an evaluator is not qualified to instruct a given content area, then what on earth is he/she doing evaluating people who are qualified in that area? With all of the supervisors, SECA's, assistant principals, principals, administrative supervisors, directors, and assistant administrators in this district, I cannot believe that it's impossible to have evaluators qualified in content areas doing the evaluations of teachers in the same content area. If that is really the case, then we have a bigger problem in this district that needs to be addressed. And on a final note regarding Marzano, I will be happy to "buy into"

Figure 3. Segments of coded data Barriers to Effective Growth. This segment came from a district professional relations meeting between the union and district administration.

The call for administrators to model effective strategies may be part of the teacher's frustrations with the MTEM and the current state of education, but it also speaks to the lack of context specific examples to which teachers have been exposed. This frustration is espoused by the district's union leadership and has taken hold with the rank and file teacher. Consistent with the theoretical framework guiding this study, the absence of specific examples forces teachers to rely on their past practice to make sense of the model, creating their own understanding of it and implementing it into their classrooms (Coburn, 2001, Spillane, 2002b, Weick, 1995).

Overwhelmed by the environment. Teachers in each sub-unit of analysis describe a variety of barriers, both internally created and externally created, that impede effective growth under the MTEM. The literature on teacher workforce policy is in agreement that external changes in education, NCLB (Dee, Jacob, & Schwartz, 2013, Groen, 2012, Pennington, 2007, Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008, Selwyn, 2007) and RttT have changed the working environment for teachers (McGuinn, 2012a, Nicholson-Crotty, & Staley, 2012, Superfine et al, 2012). With the implementation of the CCSS and PARCC teachers are tasked with challenging students to operate on higher levels of cognitive demand, increasing the pressure on teachers to improve student achievement (CCSS initiative, 2014, Dougherty-Stahl & Schweid, 2013, Neuman & Roskos, 2013).

Teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career feel overwhelming pressure from external sources, and this pressure interferes with their ability to implement the MTEM. Dave described his concerns about creating lessons that align to higher levels of cognitive demand and the curriculum, stating: "…. having those exploration lessons and doing all those things having kids form hypothesis and having them produce

something takes time, and sometimes I feel like I just avoid doing it in order to just ultimately teach them." Allison referenced the political climate in New Jersey: "….in the climate of New Jersey with these external sources of anxiety, but when they start picking at your pension and people criticize you; that can create negative feelings." These pressures weigh heavily on the minds of young teachers as they share their perceptions of what it is like for them to implement the instructional model.

Teachers in the stabilization phase describe barriers that are more internally created, the increasing amount of classes that have become heterogeneous. The elimination of lower level classes has created a barrier for teachers in implementing the requirements of the MTEM. Kevin discussed the issues that come with a policy of offering un-leveled classes: "…. two teachers versus 25 kids, it's not enough. I think the big obstacle is that the kids can do it, let the kids waive into honors, they can do it, or let the kid do this, they can do it." Teachers in this stage see a correlation between their ability to implement the MTEM and the districts movement to heterogeneous classes. Teachers in the disengagement phase echoed the sentiments of their younger peers, describing how class size has impacted their ability to implement the MTEM. Christine described her experience: "I have forty two kids in the class….I can't do everything that Marzano is telling me I should be doing in the classroom."

A much more personal barrier for teachers in the experimentation/reassessment and the serenity/conservatism phase of their careers is the current political state of education in New Jersey. While the MTEM itself is not completely the focus of their negativity, teachers perceive that Achieve NJ and the MTEM have lowered staff morale, producing anxiety and fear in teachers. Dave, an experimentation/reassessment career

phase teacher, described the perfect storm of issues that have become a barrier to growth under the model:

> It just has kind of ramped up the level of negativity amongst the staff. It's really unfortunate because the two kind of get meshed together, the things that are going on and the fights that are occurring over teachers rights issues and money and that sort of thing. The new observation model, the two kind of getting blended together and that's not necessarily the case for the most part, it's just coincidence.

The fear and negativity associated with the model has teachers anxious on a daily basis. Susan, a teacher in the same phase, described how she feels: "….it just keeps you on edge all the time. It almost feels punitive."

John, a teacher in the serenity/conservation stage of his career, pointed the finger directly at the state of New Jersey, stating that: "….it all trickles down from the state and then from the local level. They mandate something and whether or not you're trained in it or not it happens." Teachers at both of these phases of their career don't completely reject the model, but their negativity toward it stems from conditions that are external to the environment. Sarah, an experimentation/reassessment phase teacher, described the how the negativity got out of control early, and while she understands the reasoning behind the implementation of the MTEM, she also highlights the external barriers that impact a teacher's willingness to grow under the model:

> All the negative stuff was percolating all over the place and nobody could do anything to stop it. That's what was really intimidating, especially for somebody like me, who doesn't have a plan to leave education any time soon, who still has to tackle the Mt. Everest of observations and random visits. I think initially I think it all had to do with planning in the beginning, but we have to buy into 'we have to become better teachers.' This model is going to help us get there.

Summary. Teachers in all phases of their career perceived similar barriers to effective implementation of the MTEM. Trust in the intentions of their observers has become an issue for teachers in this setting. Survival and discovery phase teachers and

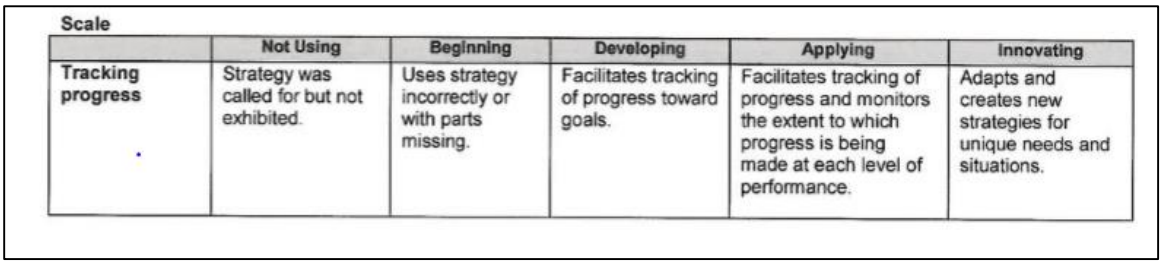
disengagement teachers share similar fears that some observers come in to observe with a quota of scores to assign to teachers and the motivation to document teacher behavior. Middle career teachers, stabilization through serenity/conservatism phase teachers are more concerned with the application of the MTEM, fearing that certain observers are too rigid in their approach. The lack of trust in their observers extends to their perceptions of the instructional examples they have been shown, teachers at all phases of their career feel that the instructional videos do not reflect the high school context, fueling their perception that the MTEM is not appropriate for high school. Teachers also perceive external and internal barriers towards implementation of the MTEM. Stabilization phase teachers are concerned with internally created issues such as the creation of heterogeneous classes and large class sizes. The remainder of the faculty is focused on the negative political climate in New Jersey surrounding teachers, seeing teacher evaluation as a politicized issue. These issues have created resistance to the teaching staff's willingness to embrace the MTEM.

Reluctant Compliance

The analysis of participant interviews, archival documents, and field notes from observations yielded the distinct theme of reluctant compliance to the MTEM. Teachers align their instruction to the MTEM because they must, this theme compliments the theme of instructional shifts, providing clarity as to why teachers have aligned to the model rather than significantly shifting their instructional practice. Interview data and field notes from observations support the theme that teachers are focused on their numerical observation score rather than the growth potential from observations. During participant interviews teachers described seeing little value in the model, instead they

align to it because they are required to do so. Data from field observations, participant interviews and archival documents also indicate that teachers perceive portions of the MTEM as unrealistic and prescriptive, creating anxiety around the observation process.

Score focused. Teachers discuss evaluation in terms of the numerical scores assigned by the state to specific categories under Achieve NJ, rather than the growth indicators that they work with under the MTEM. The MTEM makes no mention of numerical scores in the scale that is used to score each element in an observation (see figure 4).



Scale

	Not Using	Beginning	Developing	Applying	Innovating
Tracking progress	Strategy was called for but not exhibited.	Uses strategy incorrectly or with parts missing.	Facilitates tracking of progress toward goals.	Facilitates tracking of progress and monitors the extent to which progress is being made at each level of performance.	Adapts and creates new strategies for unique needs and situations.

Figure 4. Sample of the MTEM evaluation scale. Adopted from the *PRRHSD Evaluation Handbook.*

The PRRHSD has published a state mandated manual that aligns with the stipulations of Achieve NJ, aligning the MTEM (see figure 4) to the state scoring system (see figure 5). The state numerical score is applied to the MTEM, thereby placing a numeric value to each growth indicator. This numerical score factors into a teachers final evaluation, and while not explicitly discussed during observations, the number means more than the growth indicator to teachers.

Not Using (0)	Beginning (1)	Developing (2)	Applying (3)	Innovating (4)

Figure 5. Sample of the MTEM growth indicators aligned to ACHIEVE NJ. Adopted from the *PRRHSD Evaluation Handbook*.

The focus on numerical scores has impacted teachers differently in different phases of their careers, but for each they focus on what they can do to get the highest score possible. As Christine, a teacher in the disengagement phase of her career stated: "Throw me a four, if you're telling me all these things that are so good, where could I have done better so that I could have gotten the four and not the three?" During a field observation an LSI trainer specifically told teachers that a score of applying is an excellent score, and that the score of innovating is the exception and not the norm. Teachers across all sub-units of analysis do not agree, they see the numerical score as a definition of who they are as teachers. Jen, a teacher in the survival and discovery phase, espoused this by stating: "It's like a grade and I feel like I pour out my heart into my teaching so if I don't get the innovating I feel like it hurts." Lenore, a teacher in the serenity/conservatism phase described her feelings on the scoring system: "I think a three is saying, 'I'm okay.' I don't want to be okay."

Teachers in the experimentation/reassessment phase, the largest subunit, are able to separate the MTEM from the numerical rating system more clearly than their peers, but other system factors draw their focus back to the numerical score. The following passage from an interview with Sarah describes this idea: "I think people have accepted the model, I think they don't like the rating system, nobody wants to be a number." Whereas teachers in this phase see the difference, the fact that under Achieve NJ the

average teacher evaluation score for each school is published for the general public influences them to place an emphasis on scores rather than growth. Susan discussed the importance of numerical scores because they become public knowledge, reflecting negatively on the staff collectively: "part of the reason why our teachers were not highly effective because nobody was giving out four's." Teachers at this stage of their career focus on the numerical score as a reflection of their school, but this still becomes a personal issue for teachers, damaging their sense of professional pride. Participant interviews with 14 out of 18 teachers demonstrates that teachers focus more on the numerical score then the growth elements in MTEM.

Alignment, in the early stages of implementation, is a consistent theme in the literature on new teacher evaluation (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Interviews with teacher participants indicate that teachers are aligning with the model out of necessity. Kevin described the compliance mindset and his attempts to figure out a way to stay to true to his instructional philosophy, yet align to the model: I've been reluctant to adapt…because of that goal of maintaining positive reviews in your job, it's going to force me to adapt a little bit. I'm trying to figure out how to do that without compromising what I really want to accomplish." Much like Kevin, the majority of veteran teachers are focused on maintaining employment, adopting a compliance orientation in order to maintain their current status (Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Ramirez et al, 2014).

Reluctant alignment. The majority of teachers who participated in this study describe the MTEM or portions of it as irrelevant to their context, focusing on aligning to the model as closely as possible. The perceptions of teachers in the survival and

discovery phase align closer to the intent of the MTEM (Marzano, 2007), Allison expressed this by stating: “I think that a lot of teachers don't recognize that the Marzano is not about the content, it’s about the strategies of teaching.” Veteran teachers do not share this perception though, and the idea that the MTEM is irrelevant to their context has been ingrained in them from the beginning by their local teachers union. The union has brought this up in district professional relations, and the union president has openly questioned the qualifications of a system created by Dr. Robert Marzano to evaluate them (see figure 6 and 7).

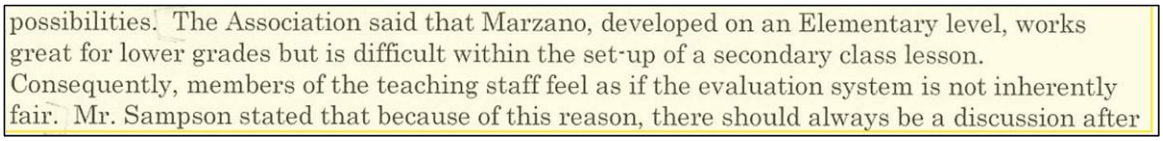
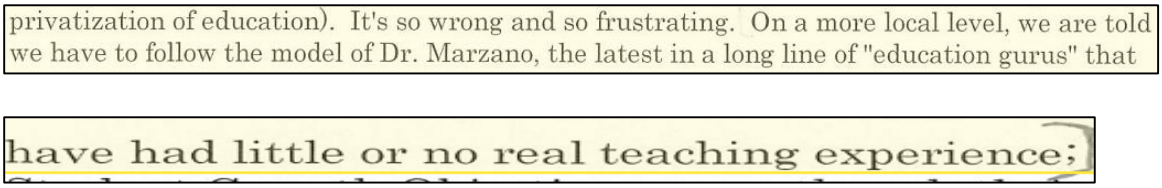

possibilities. The Association said that Marzano, developed on an Elementary level, works great for lower grades but is difficult within the set-up of a secondary class lesson. Consequently, members of the teaching staff feel as if the evaluation system is not inherently fair. Mr. Sampson stated that because of this reason, there should always be a discussion after

Figure 6. Excerpt from professional relations meeting.


privatization of education). It's so wrong and so frustrating. On a more local level, we are told we have to follow the model of Dr. Marzano, the latest in a long line of "education gurus" that

have had little or no real teaching experience;

Figure 7. Excerpt from the union presidents message to the teaching staff.

Interviews with teacher participants indicate that the MTEM lacks value because they feel it does not align to the high school classroom, despite their feelings they indicate they will align to the model because it is a requirement. Kevin highlights this perspective during an interview:

> I feel initially I do make that effort, let me move towards what this evaluation model wants me to do. But, as far as how I feel about it, in short, I don’t feel that this evaluation model is intended for high school level education.

Christine, a teacher in the disengagement phase, provides further details by echoing the association leadership and highlighting the disconnect between content and pedagogy:

> I don't know if everything that they actually have in there applies. Your using the same model for social studies, math, science and English, but they're all…. Math and history are a little different, science and history are different…. I don't know if there's one model that fits every discipline.

Despite their misgivings, teachers are aligning to it because they must. Amy, A teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase of her career describes her mindset under the MTEM: "I feel like I'm more aware of how I am gonna teach this the Marzano way. I've drank the Kool-Aid, because I know the Kool-Aid counts."

Overwhelmingly teachers indicate that they are aligning because of the threat of being scored and therefore are only complying with the model when they must. Susan, teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase, describes this phenomenon when discussing a monitoring technique:

> Another thing people do because of the panic of Marzano is they'll have packs of index cards, which nobody in their right mind uses. They'll have it because if you get observed you can just hand them an index card. That's an example of the dog and pony show.

Christine summed up the beliefs of other participants: "the only time I think I'm going to do it a hundred percent the way they want me to is when I know I'm getting evaluated." This data demonstrates the dangers that the school district is facing in their efforts to improve student achievement. The MTEM has been adopted by the PRRHSD to both grow teachers and students, but as Guskey (2002) found in his research on professional development, the time, effort and resources used to implement the MTEM will be wasted if the district cannot find a way to help its teachers see value in the instructional model.

Compliance is another avenue for teachers to make sense of the evaluation model, they will publically adopt the requirements of the model because they must, but in reality they may not have accepted the teaching model (Weick, 1995). Teachers in this setting have demonstrated behavioral changes when necessary, but they espouse that there has been little change in their core beliefs, which may hurt the sustainability of the change effort in this setting (Detert & Pollock, 2008). Consistent with Godson et al's (2006) findings, this study also found that the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system, designed to improve teacher practice, has instead created an atmosphere of compliance. Interviews with teachers indicate that they do what is necessary to achieve the required scores to maintain their status, nearly all participants, except for teachers at the survival and discovery phase, ignored the growth indicators in the model and focused instead on numerical ratings.

Unrealistic and prescriptive. Veteran teachers who participated in this study perceive the MTEM as unrealistic and prescriptive. Moreover, the MTEM has created anxiety around the observation process for teachers, further entrenching their disdain for the system and promoting only reluctant compliance to the model. Early career teachers, those in the survival and discovery phase, express regret over the prescriptive nature of the MTEM as they feel it discounts their professional judgement about the needs of their students. Jen described how the MTEM discourages her from implementing activities she feels are in the best interest of her students: "I would love to take the time and help my kids fill out job applications, but if I had a pop in and I wasn't teaching I would get a not using. I feel like that stinks for the kids." Despite this teachers in the survival and discovery phase are not as reluctant about their compliance to the MTEM. Dave admitted

to the difficulties of monitoring all students, but agreed with the premise of it. “They're not all nourished at the same point during a lesson. I think that sometimes within the model, we're challenged, and I think rightfully so, to try and reach all students at each one of those points.” A third teacher in this phase, Allison, discussed her mindset when discussing her planning: “I’m always thinking, All right, how this would relate to the Marzano scale?” While early career teachers recognize the challenges their veteran peers bring to light, they are much more willing to align their instruction to the MTEM.

Veteran teachers, those in the stabilization phase through the disengagement phase, espouse the idea that the MTEM holds teachers to a standard that is extremely difficult to meet. Participant interviews, field observations and archival documents all support the teacher’s perception that the expectations placed upon teachers within the model are unrealistic, leaving them to question the fairness of the model. Cathy, a teacher in the serenity/conservation phase of her career, described this feeling by plainly stating: “I think there are aspects of it that are just unrealistic.” Susan, a teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase of her career, described how the model does not take into consideration the normal day to day operations of a classroom:

> Parts of it are silly. I get the concept behind it. Obviously you have to monitor kids. Obviously you have to check their understanding, but I think that sometimes it becomes a show…. Real life is not like that. Some days you lecture. Some days you hand back papers. If somebody happens to drop in on you for that amount of time, you’re going to get a negative evaluation.

Rob, a teacher in the disengagement phase of his career, described the pressure teachers feel in classes where multiple students have IEP’s and other issues related to classroom performance: “it’s a lot of pressure, you’re supposed to have every kid on task 100% of the time. That’s a difficult thing to do, they’re teenagers.” Consistent with the

literature discussed in Chapter 2, teachers indicate that they have found a way to comply with the model, but they feel that there is a cost to this alignment (Hargreaves, 2006, Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

The cost described by teachers in different phases of their career is consistent except for teachers in the survival and discovery phase. Alignment to the model has left teachers feeling like they have lost some of the creativity inherent to the profession. Sarah, a teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase, described this feeling by stating: "…. we almost have to fit a mold, I'm not a mold person, I'm not. I'm a mold breaker, but in a positive way." Art, a teacher in the same phase, described a similar notion, stating: "I find it a bit of a nuisance in that it's a bit of a strict and rigid way to evaluate the creativity and everything that goes into what teachers do." Finally Ellen, a teacher in the stabilization phase who teaches in a less structured environment stated: "I feel that I'm always very regimented to the model. I want students to enjoy the class and to talk, but in a sense, you just feel sometimes that almost like you're on eggshells." This loss of creativity and the teacher's interpretation that standards based evaluation models can be rigid is described in the literature; creating a compliance orientation and stress around the evaluation process (Fullan, 1993, Godson et al, 2006).

Summary. The compliance orientation found in this setting is consistent with other findings surrounding the implementation of teacher evaluation (Hargreaves, 2006, Godson et al, 2006, Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Teachers in this setting are focused on scores rather than the growth indicators embedded in the MTEM. Even teachers in the experimentation/reassessment phase of their career, who acknowledged the difference between the growth indicators and the state mandated scores, focus on the numerical

score because of its high stakes nature. Teachers in this context in all phases of their career align their instruction to the model in order to achieve the necessary scores to maintain employment. Professional growth, pedagogical development and student success, all tenants of the MTEM (Marzano, 2001, 2007), are not considerations for teachers in this setting. Young staff members, those in the survival and discovery phase of their careers, feel that the MTEM takes away teachable moments for students, they see it as prescriptive and that it limits their instructional freedom. Veteran teachers espouse similar feelings, but take it further claiming that specific practices, such as monitoring all students, are unrealistic.

Contextual Messages

Across all subunits of analysis interview data, archival documents and field notes from observations produced conclusive data that supports the finding that teachers receive different messages in their context. Teachers across all subunits of analysis indicate that school leadership has provided a unified message about their expectations surrounding the MTEM. This differs from the previous discussion of the lack of concrete examples of effective practice teachers feel that they have been exposed to during professional development. In this instance teachers are talking specifically about the expectation of behavior and clarity of those expectations. Additionally, teachers perceive that they have received clear and effective feedback from their content area supervisors, although most teachers reject the idea that someone outside of their content area could provide feedback. Teachers have had a different experience with their peers as they perceive the messages they have received about the MTEM as negative.

These findings align to Weick's (1995) model of sensemaking in organizations. In this case teachers have made sense of the model by interacting with their peers, understanding it based on the messages they receive from both school leadership and their peers. Their preconceived notions about the evaluation model and their early experiences with evaluation have dominated their interactions with their peers on the subject (Coburn, 2001). Content level supervisors have participated in the sensegiving process with teachers, providing feedback to influence their understanding of the model and implementation of it in the classroom (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, Smerek, 2013). In this case teachers lean on their peers for comfort, socially processing the new model and creating a negative perspective on it.

Unified messages. School leadership has played an important role in defining the meaning of the MTEM for teachers. Archival documents from the implementation of the MTEM show the schools efforts at creating a common language for teachers, and for presenting a unified message (see figure 8). This excerpt from a district created presentation demonstrates the PRRHSD's attempt to craft a unified message for its teachers. District and school leaders created documents, presentations and quick reference guides in order to help facilitate and promote the change effort and assist teachers in creating their own meaning around the intent of the model (Sharma & Good 2013).

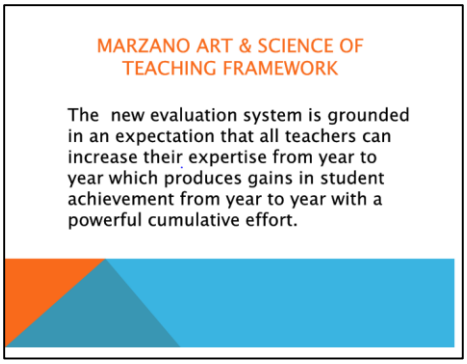


Figure 8. Segment of coded data from a MTEM presentation.

Additional archival documents such as the *PRRHSD Certificated Staff Evaluation Handbook* demonstrated the district and the buildings continued efforts to create a common language around the MTEM.

Teachers within the majority of sub-units of analysis describe the expectations administrators lay out about the MTEM as consistent. Dave, a survival and discovery phase teacher, described his perception of how administrators have set a consistent tone about the MTEM in the building: "I think that the overall message is unified. There is a very similar message from all of the observers." The sentiment is echoed by a Kevin, a stabilization phase teacher, who stated: "As far as expectations and how to implement it, there's nothing else they could really do to make that more clear." The clarity and consistent messages provided by building leadership has even the most resistant teachers at least acknowledging that they understand the critical components of the MTEM. Rob, a teacher in the disengagement phase, stated: "I don't know why we're doing it, but I know what it is." Christine, who is admittedly resistant to the model, still feels that school leadership has sent consistent messages about the evaluation process: "I think they've been good. One of the things they keep telling us, we're not out to get you, I mean, I don't feel like that. I've never felt like that."

By outlining clear expectations and effectively communicating the intent of the model to the staff building leadership has earned their trust. Teachers are confident that their leaders have a firm grasp on the model and have facilitated their implementation of the model (Firestone, 2014). Ellen, a stabilization phase teacher, described how her supervisor has earned her confidence by demonstrating competency in the model: "my supervisor was very good about delivering us the information about the things that we should be doing in class…. she was very clear about their expectations." Doug, a teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase of his career, described how building leadership has demonstrated their expertise in the model:

> When you sit down with them they all seem to have a firm grasp of the model itself. They seem to be well schooled in it. That helps in getting the message across and getting the message to me as a teacher that they know what they are doing.

Content area supervisors provide valued feedback. Despite the competency school leadership has demonstrated within the MTEM, veteran teachers trust and value the feedback from content area supervisors more than feedback from people outside of their content area. Teachers from the stabilization phase through the disengagement phase have created relationships with their supervisors, they trust the messages they receive from them about effective instruction more because they share the content area expertise. Doug described how supervisors have framed feedback to him: "I get a lot of advice in terms of what they did when they were teachers themselves and they guide me." Ellen described the value of the content area supervisor, stating: "I feel that my supervisor has been one of the most effective components in the whole Marzano model."

Relationships between content area supervisors and teachers have made teachers more comfortable discussing feedback. Amy described how their common knowledge of

the classroom context allowed her to convince the supervisor the score that she received did not reflect what was observed: "…. once I explained it to her that it was a higher level thinking question for them, she changed that." Rob, a teacher in the disengagement phase, remarked that he trusts the feedback from the content area supervisor more because of their history together: "my supervisor still is on the same path that she was before. It's still constructive criticism, it's more meaningful."

Teachers in the survival and discovery phase do not place a higher value on feedback from their direct supervisor. Teachers in this phase of their career crave more constructive feedback from all of their observers. Allison stated that: "I wish I would get more constructive feedback versus positive…. I am confident in my teaching strategies but I know that I could improve." This openness to feedback also applies to teachers who have received lower scores. Jen described her experience with receiving a low score from a central office administrator: "she came in and she brought books on how to better myself, and sat with me and taught me how to go through I-observation, she basically said this is what I saw but this is how you get better." This enthusiasm for constructive feedback has allowed teachers at this stage of their career to accept critical feedback from more than just one person, and has opened them to new instructional strategies (Salo et al, 2014). Allison described an experience with a non-content area observer:

> I had another administrator, come in to observe me. He had given me a suggestion like what if you put a visual of the character while you're teaching. It blew my mind how much better the kids did the next time when they did it. You're the administrator for a reason, you've done this so I'll take any help that I can get. Anything that's going to make me a better teacher and help my kids learn better I would appreciate it and I would love to try.

Lack of value non-content area feedback. Whereas teachers trust their content area supervisor's feedback, they feel the feedback from administrators and supervisors

from outside their content area lacks value. With the increase in observations required under Achieve NJ it is common for teachers to be observed by people outside of their content area, a change from past practice. Despite this, only one group, teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their careers, espoused the idea that this was not a factor in their acceptance of their observation results. Allison described her experience with a non-content area person: “I had somebody come in that wasn't math content, and they had questioned something that I did, and personally I thought that what I did, how I presented it was right, but they didn't, but I just haven't seen a problem with it.”

The literature on teacher resistance to evaluation describes how observers may lack the ability to give meaningful feedback because they do not possess specific content knowledge, and how this creates credibility issues for teachers (Kimball, 2002, Marshall, 2014, Overland, 2014). During a field observation at a training conducted by LSI, a district administrator had to address the teaching staff about their complaints over this issue. Teachers in this training felt very strongly that observers outside their content area did not understand their content and therefore were unable to truly understand what was happening in the classroom. The LSI trainer reiterated the message delivered by the district administrator that the observation model is focused on instructional strategy, not content. Despite these assurances teachers still have a different perception.

Teachers in the stabilization phase of their career are concerned with non-content observers not understanding their context. Ellen, who teaches in a non-traditional classroom described her concerns:

> my concern, being an elective teacher, is how is an English supervisor going to come into my room where it's organized tasks, and they might be used to just going in and having the kids get their Shakespeare book and turn to this page and that's it, and the bell rings, let's just put our books away; no. In my classes,

> especially with the foods classes, it's very interactive. They're around the room, they're using all different types of equipment, and they're figuring things out.

This concern differs from the teachers with more experience, who have much stronger feelings about non-content area observers that range from concern to outright rejection of their ability to observe them. For teachers in the experimental/reassessment phase these concerns center around the lack of curriculum knowledge, and as Art stated: "if they don't understand the content sometimes they'll just focus on elements that don't really have anything to do with the curriculum." A second concern for more experienced teachers that aligns with the literature on content specific evaluation models is that their observers do not understand the abilities of specific student populations, specifically special education (Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014, Sledge & Pazey, 2013). When describing their experience with a non-special education person observing her class Emily, a teacher in the security/conservatism phase, expressed concerns over her observer's ability to relate to the class: "…. you come in and it's a completely different setting. I guess in my mind I worry can they still do their evaluation?" The local education association has reinforced this idea, discussing the issue during district professional relations (Figure 9).

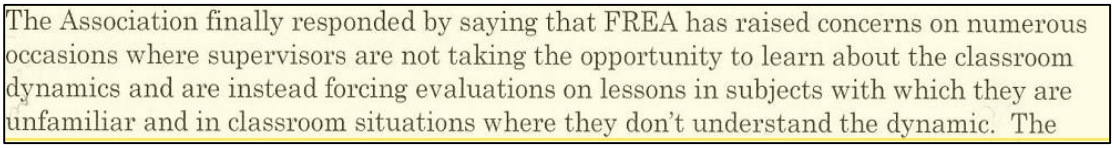

The Association finally responded by saying that FREA has raised concerns on numerous occasions where supervisors are not taking the opportunity to learn about the classroom dynamics and are instead forcing evaluations on lessons in subjects with which they are unfamiliar and in classroom situations where they don't understand the dynamic. The

Figure 9. Segment of coded data from professional relations.

This segment, an excerpt from the minutes of the districts professional relations meeting, highlights this concern at the district level.

Teachers who are in the disengagement phase of their career reject the idea that someone from another content area could offer a realistic critique of their pedagogy. Teachers in this phase value content, they're focus is on that aspect of their craft. Rob offered an assessment of his ability to offer critique on another subject area: "I can't go into a science lab and know if they're doing it the right way or the wrong way. I couldn't critique it" Christine provided a similar assessment, doubting how the MTEM can compare two unlike content areas: "You can't compare a Math class to a Phys Ed class, you just can't do it, but they're grouping everyone together." The perceptions of teachers in this setting about observers outside their content areas aligns with the concerns that Flores, (2012), Tuytens and Devos (2014), and Ramirez, et al, (2014) raise about teachers inability to improve their practice when feedback lacks value for them.

Negativity from their peers. Teachers in all sub-units of analysis experienced negative peer messages about the MTEM, 17 of the 18 teachers who participated in this study describe having experienced negativity from their peers about the MTEM. The negativity teachers experienced was evident across archival documents and field notes from observations as well. The context of the local teachers union and the messages teachers receive from them is an important component to the implementation of the MTEM. Teachers receive negative messages from the association, and these messages largely emanate from the negative political environment surrounding teachers today (figure 10).

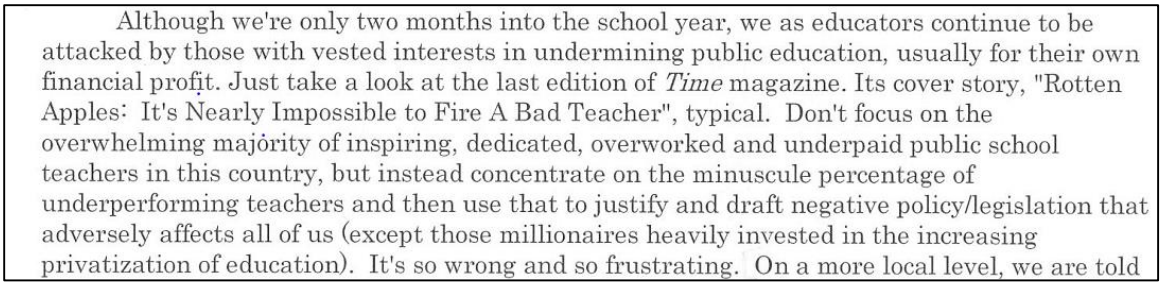

Although we're only two months into the school year, we as educators continue to be attacked by those with vested interests in undermining public education, usually for their own financial profit. Just take a look at the last edition of *Time* magazine. Its cover story, "Rotten Apples: It's Nearly Impossible to Fire A Bad Teacher", typical. Don't focus on the overwhelming majority of inspiring, dedicated, overworked and underpaid public school teachers in this country, but instead concentrate on the minuscule percentage of underperforming teachers and then use that to justify and draft negative policy/legislation that adversely affects all of us (except those millionaires heavily invested in the increasing privatization of education). It's so wrong and so frustrating. On a more local level, we are told

Figure 10. Segment of coded data from local union president.

The local teachers association, which had representation on the district advisory committee that selected the MTEM, has largely been critical of the new model. Eighty-nine percent of the communication that the local education association published to teachers within the first two years of the model's implementation described issues with the implementation process or the model itself. As evidenced in figure 10, this resistance may have more to do with TEACH NJ (2011) then it does with the MTEM. Among the changes to teacher evaluation discussed in Chapter 1, TEACH NJ (2011) has also lengthened the service time requirement for teachers to receive tenure to four years and one day, as well as creating structures to strip tenure from teachers for documented underperformance. The MTEM is the mechanism that the PRRHSD can use to document underperformance and eventually begin the process of stripping tenure from a teacher.

The local teachers union has taken the position as the defender of teacher's rights in the current political environment. Archival documents indicate that teachers disdain for the changes in evaluation are directed at the state and federal level. Art described the pressure teachers feel, and the message that the reform movement has sent to teachers: "The focus isn't on the education of the kids as much as it should be. The focus becomes us versus them, it's the bureaucracy and it's political." Whereas the local teachers union's resistance to the MTEM can be attributed to the current political environment, the

negative messages they send to their membership influences how they process the changes required under the MTEM (Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991, Sharma & Good, 2013).

The negative messages teachers receive from their colleagues range from issues with the MTEM itself, the observation process, its implementation and the stress people feel about the changes. Christine, a disengagement phase teacher, described the stress teachers feel:

> I mean you sit in the cafeteria, and that's the people that have time to come to lunch. All everyone talks about is how stressed they are, and how much they have to do, and paperwork, and covering your butt, and Marzano, and the domains, and who got observed and who didn't get observed.

Teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career are exposed to both positive and negative messages from their more experienced peers. These messages have not changed their thoughts on evaluation despite what they are exposed to. Alison stated: "There's a lot of negative feedback. Personally, I don't view it as negative ... For the majority I do feel like a lot of its negative feedback." Jen understands how the changes have impacted her more experienced peers:

> the older teachers have trouble with it and I could relate. If I was doing something for twenty years and all of a sudden someone was coming in and telling me change everything you do and I'm going to judge you on it.

The data suggests that these messages do not appear to impact the way teachers at this stage of their career implement the MTEM.

Veteran teachers, those in the stabilization phase through the disengagement phase perceive a range of negative messages from their peers about the MTEM. The message can be light hearted about aligning to the model, Emily, who is in the serenity/conservatism phase stated: "everyone jokes about all the different terminology and stuff, and I think at this point people will joke more about everything, but in the end

everyone's doing it." Teachers also perceive that their peers are afraid of the MTEM, John, also in the serenity/conservatism stage described this fear when he stated: "that's what teachers fear. What if it's a day that I'm doing something and what if I'm doing something that doesn't fit exactly into it?" Kevin, who is in the stabilization phase of his career, echoed these sentiments when describing the messages that he receives from his peers:

> I think a lot of the other staff, they're more timid with that, they're more reluctant, they don't want people to come in, they get uneasy, it's stage fright or it's intimidation or the kids aren't a true representation of themselves.

An experimentation/reassessment phase teacher, Steve, describes the impact he perceives this has had on teachers: "I think there's plenty of other teachers that think this is their downfall."

The negative messages that teachers receive from their peers has contributed to their resistance to the evaluation system, which has impacted their growth under the MTEM (Weick, 1995). Christine described how teachers feel about being observed, highlighting how teachers have resisted this change and discuss it openly:

> The only reason I can't wait to be observed, is so I get it done and over with, and I can teach the way that I teach, and the way I feel comfortable teaching, and the way the kids like to be taught. I mean, people talk about it all the time. It's like, a major topic of conversation, is getting evaluated. I walked into lunch today, and someone said "I finally got my long evaluation done. I don't have to worry about it for the rest of the year." It's discussed all the time, from September to June.

A cross section of veteran teachers who participated in this study espouse the idea that messages from their peers have serve to reinforce the negative feelings teachers have about the MTEM. The issues discussed earlier in this chapter were described by teacher's when they recalled discussions in the lunchroom and the teachers' lounge. These interactions align with the literature on social processing; which in this case has fostered

an atmosphere of resistance towards the MTEM, creating another barrier for district administrators to overcome in order to implement the model (Coburn, 2001, Coburn & Russell, 2008, Weick, 1995).

Summary. Teachers at all phases of their career have received the same message about the expectations of the MTEM and what is required of them. School leadership has sent a consistent message, and while the MTEM does not appeal to all teachers who participated in this study, school leadership has facilitated this change by interpreting its meaning for teachers and sending clear messages (Sharma & Good, 2013). Veteran teachers in this study share both a respect for the feedback they receive form their content area supervisor, and a similar distrust in the feedback received from non-content area observers. This differs from early career teachers, those in the survival and discovery phase of their career, who trust the feedback they receive from different observers. Survival and discovery phase teachers also differ in their interpretation of peer messages, whereas all teachers experience negative messages, survival and discovery phase teachers empathize with it but it does not create the same level of animosity towards the MTEM as it does with their veteran peers. The contextual messages about evaluation that veteran teachers receive appears to impact their view of the MTEM more than it does survival and discovery phase teachers.

Building Capacity

The analysis of interview transcripts, field notes from observations and archival documents yielded data that concludes that school leadership are perceived to be capacity builders by the teaching staff. Despite the implementation issues discussed in Chapter 4, school leaders at PHS have acted as capacity builders, creating a vision for instruction for

the building. School leadership has led change through the creation of supportive structures that facilitate the implementation of the MTEM, providing opportunities for teachers to participate in professional development and build teacher leadership through PLC's. Finally, school leadership has created an atmosphere where teachers perceive that they can be reflective in their practice.

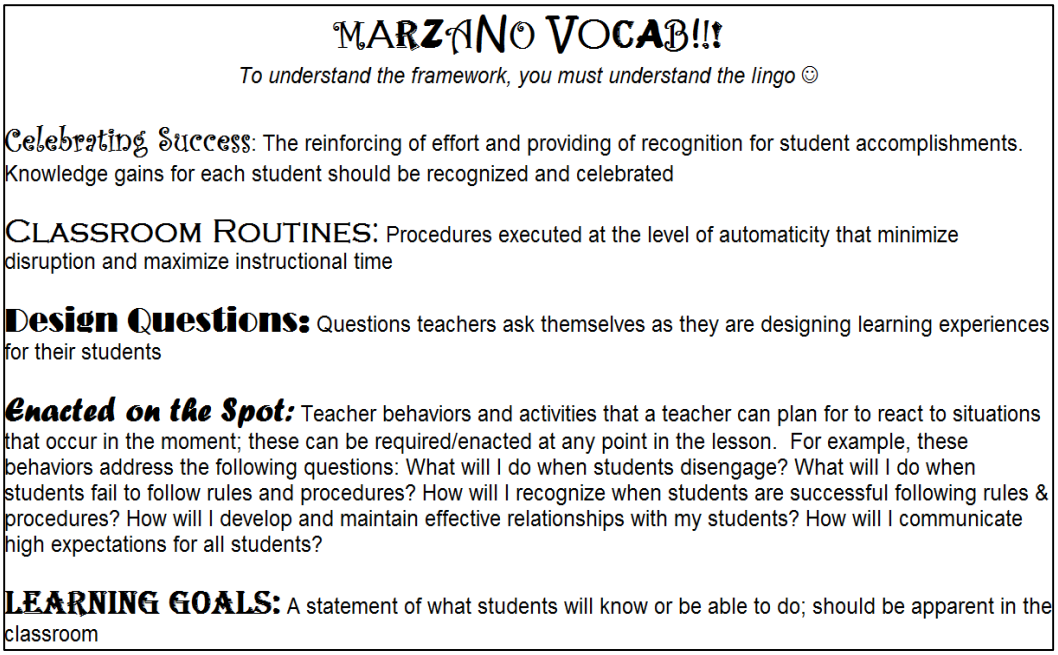
The literature on distributed instructional leadership describes capacity building and creating supportive structure or environment for learning as key components of leading change (Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood et al, 2004, Leithwood et al, 2007, Firestone & Martinez, 2007, Murphy et al, 2013, Ovando & Ramirez, 2007, Spillane, 2006, 2008). The behaviors of school leaders in this setting facilitates intellectually stimulating professional development that supports effective instructional practices (Leithwood et al, 2004, Marzano, 2007, Neumerski, 2013). Leaders in this setting have created an overall vision for instruction for the building, effectively communicating expectations and supporting teachers in this context (Hallinger, 2003, Leithwood et al, 2010). Despite the implementation issues described previously, teachers perceive that their leaders are competent communicators who have done an effective job of mitigating some of the issues seen in the early implementation process.

Creating structures. School leadership is credited for supporting structures that have allowed teachers to understand the model through PLC's, professional development and expectation setting. Teachers also feel that these structures have created an atmosphere that allows teachers to be reflective in their practice, allowing them to better implement the requirements of the MTEM. Susan described the atmosphere school leadership has created towards implementation of the MTEM:

> I think it's very clear what's expected. I think that Alexis is a great principal. I think that anytime you have questions, they're answered…. I think that they're very supportive of making sure we understand what's going on.

With the issues impacting the implementation of the MTEM described earlier in this chapter that are outside the control of school leadership teachers feel that the efforts of this school's administration has helped them feel more comfortable implementing the MTEM.

In field notes it was noted across three separate observations that school leadership has provided teachers the opportunity to clarify their understanding of the MTEM and reflect upon their practice. Kevin referenced a field observation when he discussed the value of the professional development session: "I was at Pine Street for a Marzano refresher for professional development. I thought it went really well, I thought it helped me a lot. The leadership gives you opportunities to know what's expected and how to do it." Across archival documents examples of resources provided to the teachers, created at the building level, reinforced the theme that school leadership has created structures for teachers to understand the MTEM (figure 11).



MARZANO VOCAB!!!

To understand the framework, you must understand the lingo ☺

Celebrating Success: The reinforcing of effort and providing of recognition for student accomplishments. Knowledge gains for each student should be recognized and celebrated

CLASSROOM ROUTINES: Procedures executed at the level of automaticity that minimize disruption and maximize instructional time

Design Questions: Questions teachers ask themselves as they are designing learning experiences for their students

Enacted on the Spot: Teacher behaviors and activities that a teacher can plan for to react to situations that occur in the moment; these can be required/enacted at any point in the lesson. For example, these behaviors address the following questions: What will I do when students disengage? What will I do when students fail to follow rules and procedures? How will I recognize when students are successful following rules & procedures? How will I develop and maintain effective relationships with my students? How will I communicate high expectations for all students?

LEARNING GOALS: A statement of what students will know or be able to do; should be apparent in the classroom

Figure 11. Segment of coded data from a locally created resource. This resource explains the MTEM vocabulary to the teachers.

Support for teacher led PLC's and professional development has provided teachers with a firm foundation on which to build their understanding of the MTEM (Marzano et al, 2005, Robinson et al, 2008, Robinson, 2010, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007). Steve described the alignment of PLC's and contractual meeting times as a way to build capacity in teachers:

> They've done a really good job as far as whether it's a PLC or it's coming from administration when we are having faculty meetings, department meetings across the board explanations are very clear ow what they're looking for, what they want us to do, and how they want us to do it. It's very, very clear on what we're supposed to do and how were supposed to do it.

Teachers feel that school leadership analyzes the needs of the staff and supports them during faculty and department meetings as well as scheduled professional development. Art described this by stating: "if there are things that the staff generally is not as strong in, you know, there'll be someone who does perform well in that who's presenting at the next PLC." Deana also described this sentiment as well by stating: "…. we get the

information about what we're doing well in and what we're not doing well in, and then we get training on the things that we're not doing well in." finally, Lenore described the amount of time dedicated to the implementation of the MTEM: "We've had a lot of PLC's and a lot of faculty meetings, we've had a lot of training."

Teachers perceive that school leadership has created a clear vision for instruction for the building under the MTEM. This vision has yielded clear expectations for teachers, and school leadership has consistently supported teachers in aligning to these expectations. Teachers describe this a number of ways; Sarah described this theme by discussing how school leadership set the tone for the MTEM's implementation: "I think we had to be sold on it. I think we had to be reminded that it wasn't designed to hurt us and nobody was looking for us to fail, they all wanted us to be successful." Dave described the how valuable this process was for him coming into the MTEM:

> I think there was clear communication from our building leadership that this was a new process and that they valued the educational team that they had in place from top to bottom and basically they were going to guide us through it. We're all going to get through this together. We're all going to explore, there's going to be some challenges, and there's going to be some bumps in the road. We're going to make sure that we communicate well.

Jen describes how the consistency of messages and supportive leadership has aided the implementation process: "all our professional development meetings are geared toward our ultimate school goal, which is essentially what the observers are looking for when they come in." Communication and expectation setting have been critical components to helping teachers implement the MTEM, as has support in the form of resources (Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, Leithwood et al, 2004, 2007).

School leadership has supported teachers by providing resources for them to implement the MTEM. Cathy described how resources continue to flow to teachers by

stating: “we still consistently get extra information. We just got something yesterday they put in our mailbox. It was a two tri-fold thing that helps you understand and visualize.” Jen appreciates how choice and best practices have helped shape her understanding of the MTEM, stating that: “I love this year that with the PLC’s that we get to choose what we go to,” and “they also let individual teachers in the building do workshops that kind of reinforce and demonstrated some scenarios that I think also helped too.” Interview data and archival documents support the theme that teachers trust school leadership, and they feel that this trust has supported their implementation of the MTEM (Davis et al, 2002, Papay, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2013).

Teachers are reflective in their practice. The majority of teachers who participated in this study, with the exception of teachers at the disengagement phase of their career, espouse positive feelings about the profession. The MTEM, while not popular with teachers at PHS, has forced teachers to become more reflective in their practice. Doug, a teacher in the serenity/conservatism phase of his career described how the MTEM has forced him to focus on his practice by stating: “There are things in here that have definitely made me a better teacher by focusing on other things besides what I’ve always done.” Art, a colleague in the same career phase echoed this sentiment by stating that the MTEM: “does make you stop and think about it (teaching).” This theme is echoed by teachers in other phases of their career, Sarah, an experimentation/reassessment phase teacher stated: “I would definitely say that because of the new observation system, it has made me look at my strategies with a magnifying glass.”

The comfort teachers at PHS School feel about reflecting on their practice is attributed to the efforts district and school leaders have made to create an environment where teachers are comfortable doing this. Steve, a teacher in the experimentation/reassessment phase stated: "the process that the district has gone through as far as the observation models has really had an impact on me in terms of evaluating myself as a teacher more." The theme of reflective practice presented itself within two separate field observations; teachers shared with their peers how the MTEM has promoted reflection within their practice. Finally, the comfort level that teachers feel in being reflective in their practice has influenced their instructional practice. Susan describes how her pedagogy has changed as a result of her past experiences: "Lecture is the ideal way to sort of control everything by talking and standing in front of the class. I think as I gained confidence as a teacher, I realized that this is not necessarily the most conducive way for the kids to learn that way."

Summary. School leadership is credited across all subunits of analysis for creating structures to help support implementation and creating an environment where teachers are able to be reflective in their practice. Through the creation of PLC's, setting a vision for instruction, and providing resources for teachers, school leaders have acted as instructional leaders, providing the necessary conditions to support teacher growth despite the teacher's negative view of the MTEM. Whereas teachers in the disengagement phase do not espouse that they are reflective, the remainder of the participants in this study have become more reflective in their practice. The lack of reflection in teachers at the disengagement phase may be due to their disdain for the MTEM instead of a failure on the part of building leadership.

Summary of bound case. Through first-cycle descriptive coding and second-cycle pattern coding several key themes emerged from the data. In total 1,055 mutually exclusive segments of data were coded across interview transcripts, archival documents towards the implementation of the MTEM, and field notes from observations. The theoretical propositions of sensemaking and sensegiving, as well as the research questions informed the analysis of the data collected for this study. These themes consisted of instructional shifts, barriers to effective growth, reluctant compliance, contextual messages, and building capacity. The five themes discussed in Chapter 4 describe the relationship that exists between teachers at different stages of their career and their interaction with the MTEM.

These themes highlight the similarities and differences that exist at PHS towards implementing the MTEM for teachers at different stages of their career. Through the lens of sensemaking and sensegiving theory this study illuminates how teachers have made sense of the changes in their evaluation system in this context. The interaction of these themes provides an overall picture of how teachers at PHS have changed their practice since the implementation of the MTEM. Teachers perceive that they have made slight changes to their practice, aligning to the system and adopting a compliance orientation. This perception is influenced by the messages they receive from the environment, and the barriers they perceive exist in this context. While teachers espouse that significant barriers exist, school leadership is credited with facilitating their understanding of the model and building their capacity towards implementation.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

This qualitative case study was designed to research how teachers perceived the changes to their practice since the implementation of the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (MTEM). This study was conducted during year three of the implementation process, teachers at the point of data collection were operating under the MTEM for a total of two school years. This chapter will discuss the findings of the study, situating these findings within sensemaking and sensegiving theory, the theoretical lens that frames this study. The findings will be presented and discussed thematically in order elaborate on their meaning for this context and ones like it. Chapter 5 will include a discussion of the implications and recommendations for school leaders implementing a new evaluation system in a similar context, and a discussion of how I intend to lead these shifts in light of the findings of this study.

In order to understand how teachers perceived the changes to their instructional practice since the implementation of the MTEM semi-structured open ended interviews were conducted with teachers at different phases of their career (Creswell, 2014). In addition to the previously mentioned interviews field notes from participant observations were analyzed, as well as archival documents from the implementation of the MTEM to create a complete picture of the overall bound case (Creswell, 2014, Yin, 2009). This study provides a different perspective then the current research on teacher evaluation. Teacher evaluation has been examined previously to study its impact on student achievement (Baker et al, 2010, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013, Garret & Steinberg, 2014, Goldhaber, Goldschmidt & Tseng, 2013, Kane & Stager, 2012), and

how principals lead changes to teacher evaluation (Halverston, Kelly & Kimball, 2004, Halverston & Clifford, 2006, Hill, Charlambous, & Craft, 2012, Murphy, Hallinger & Heck, 2013, Ovando & Ramirez, 2007). Teacher evaluation has also been examined from the policy implementation perspective, (Ramirez, et al, 2014, Ramirez, Lamphere, Smith, Brown, & Pierceall-Herman, 2011) and from the perspective of how principals have experienced and reacted to the policy implementation process (Milankowski & Heneman, 2001, 2003). This study examines the teacher's perspective, illuminating how they perceive the changes to their practice as a result of evaluation, and highlighting the contextual factors that influence those perceptions.

Discussion of Major Findings/Answer to Research Questions

The first research question was designed to illuminate teacher's perceptions about the changes to their instructional practice since the implementation of the MTEM. The data analysis described how teachers framed these changes through the lens of their past practice. It also described the focus teachers place on numerical scores, and underscores how these shifts are slowly moving from compliance to institutionalization. The second research question investigated the barriers teacher's face that undermine professional growth under the MTEM. The data analysis described the contextual barriers that have fueled resistance to the new instructional model and the evaluation process itself. The third research question focused on the messages that teachers receive and respond to in this context from their peers and district leadership. Themes were developed describing the value teachers place on content area expert's feedback versus that of non-content area observers, and the unified messages they receive from school leadership. Teachers also described the negativity they faced about the MTEM from their peers. The last research

question sought to illuminate how teacher's perceptions of distributed instructional leadership could help me lead the required instructional shifts under the MTEM. The data analysis process led to the development of themes around capacity building, creating supportive structures, and encouraging reflective practice in teachers.

Small shifts towards compliance: The first research question, how do teachers in different stages of their careers describe the instructional changes they have made in response to the implementation of the MTEM, yielded the finding that teachers perceive that they have made small shifts in their instructional practice in order to align to the instructional model. The implementation of the MTEM aligns to what Fullan (2007) describes as an educational change that "is a learning experience for the adults involved" (p. 85). Considering that the MTEM has been in use for two years, the teachers at Palmetto High School (PHS) are still in what researchers call the second phase of implementation (Burke, 2011, Fullan, 2007). In the fall of 2013 the FRHSD chose the MTEM in order to comply with the mandates of Achieve NJ (FRHSD Evaluation Handbook, 205). The implementation of the MTEM was dependent upon a number of factors including the district context, school capacity to implement and the political context of New Jersey at the time (Fullan, 2007). As discussed in Chapter 4 each of these factors played a role in how the MTEM was accepted by the teaching staff at PHS.

The change to the MTEM is still in the early phases of implementation, teachers are more focused on compliance with the model, they move towards the model because they must. Susan described her compliance orientation when she stated: "I hate to say the whole thing about a dog and pony show, but it's for forty-six minutes, if this is what they want to see, that's what they'll see, because that depends upon my final evaluation."

Susan describes Weick's (1995) assertion that people can demonstrate publically that they accept change through their actions, but their core beliefs have not changed yet (p. 140). In this setting teachers demonstrate compliance when they are evaluated, but still rely on old behaviors when they are not being evaluated.

Institutionalization of the MTEM by teachers would be characterized by a deep acceptance of the model and an espoused commitment to changing their practice. This will normally occur at the end of a change effort, and in this setting this will happen if teachers see that the instructional strategies within the MTEM lead to student achievement gains (Kotter, 1995, Marzano, 2007). Early career teachers have been more willing to adopt components of the evaluation model, each teacher in this sub-unit discussed how the model has shaped their teaching practice. Jennifer stated that she is: "definitely more focused on the learning goal. I used to put it in my plan and that was it. Now my kids keep a log, we discuss what we are learning every day." Jennifer and her colleagues in the survival and discovery phase have shifted towards institutionalization of the MTEM largely due to a combination of their commitment to the profession and their eagerness and willingness to please their superiors (Fessler & Christensen, 1992, Huberman, 1989).

Despite the compliance orientation in this setting a majority of the veteran staff described during the interview process a move towards institutionalization of learning goals and monitoring, two of the major components of the MTEM. John described how monitoring has shifted his practice:

> It's much more enjoyable because it's a way to monitor your class and to see how much your students understand. The one thing that I'm still working on is trying to get more than the four normal suspects who want to volunteer answers more involved.

John's description of monitoring demonstrates how compliance is slowly shifting towards institutionalization. Compliance is a part of the change process, and a combination of teacher turnover and increased comfort level with the MTEM will promote institutionalization of this change (Kotter, 1995, Fullan, 2007, Burke, 2011).

Fullan (2007) warns that the quick initiation of educational change that does not take into consideration the contextual factors within a setting makes implementation of reform more difficult (p.104-105). The speed at which this change was forced upon teachers has damaged the implementation process. The following passage from an interview with Sarah describes how teachers felt about the change: "we were thrown into it initially. I don't think there was a rolling out of this in a smooth way when we were introduced to it without any fear of reprisal." As a result, many teachers felt as if they needed to comply with the model in order to maintain their positions. Rob described this compliance orientation when he stated: "Now I'm more worried about teaching to the model and not really teaching to the students."

Moving from compliance to institutionalization will take time, it may occur naturally through staff attrition, and will require that teachers see evidence that the shift in practice benefits their students (Kotter, 1995, Kezar, 2001). It is difficult for teachers to see the connection to student achievement when they compare themselves to peers in different settings. Deana questioned how accurate the model can possibly be when PHS, a high achieving school as compared to the rest of the state, has such low teacher evaluation scores when compared to schools whose students underachieve: "First of all, there's a lot of low performing districts, but ninety percent of their teachers are rated highly effective. That doesn't seem like it's adding up, and then we're in the bottom five

percent of the state." In this setting teachers have adopted a compliance orientation towards the MTEM because they are unsure of the model, helping teachers move towards institutionalization of the instructional shifts required will require school leaders to design professional development that will mediate the implementation issues present in this setting (Whitworth & Chiu, 2015)

Lens of their past practice. Understanding how teachers make sense of the new instructional model is a key component to implementing the MTEM with fidelity. Susan described the mindset that exists when discussing the MTEM, highlighting how teachers see the MTEM as an extension of what they have done in the past:

> If you have been teaching and you've been around the block several times you know the importance of higher level thinking. You know the importance of goals. You know the importance of monitoring. You understand how you have to move up the old school Bloom's Taxonomy. It's almost as though he took skills 101 and transferred it into a model, a business almost. I think his philosophy is sound because the base of what was already known to be workable practice.

Teachers will continue to focus on what is familiar, ignoring the higher order thinking skills embedded in design question four in favor of the more familiar, and traditional instructional strategies. Teachers must move past this surface understanding of the MTEM or they risk losing sight of the core intent of the MTEM, which is to improve student achievement by raising the level of cognitive complexity students are exposed to in the classroom (Marzano, 2007, Spillane, 2002b). Kezar (2012) describes sensemaking as a necessary process, but it must be supported by school leaders to ensure that the process goes deeper, that it moves beyond the surface understanding of the MTEM in order to institutionalize the change and align to the core mission of the model (p. 775).

It is important that teachers understand the model and become comfortable with it, but the implementation process must be continually supported. Early in the

implementation process teachers at PHS claimed to be overwhelmed by the change, but they will become more comfortable with change if they are given the time and resources to understand it (Derrington & Campbell, 2015). Teacher's understanding of the MTEM, and their belief that it simply represents a renaming of their past practice is a natural part of the implementation process, but will become a barrier to full implementation of the MTEM if left unchecked by school leadership (Kezar, 2012, Spillane et al, 2002b, Weick, 1995).

In this setting a teacher's career stage was not a significant factor in the sensemaking process. Whereas teachers at the beginning of their career made sense of the evaluation system through the lens of their student teaching experience, they still made sense of the evaluation model much the same as their older peers. The data gathered in this setting points to a superficial understanding of the instructional shifts required under the MTEM (Spillane et al, 2002a). Teachers have grasped the changes they need to make, but they have yet to connect the instructional strategies to increased student achievement. For example, when discussing monitoring Kevin stated:

> I think it's a great goal, I think that's always been the goal. I don't think we needed a model to be like, "Hey, your goal should be hitting all your kids," or "Based on the percentage of kids you hit today you are really effective." Yeah, that's always been the goal. I don't think we need a model to do that.

His belief that teachers have always had the goal of monitoring all students for understanding illustrates that they see the model as a manifestation of their past practice. Teachers have yet to connect monitoring to increased student achievement, despite Marzano's (2007) finding that the two are linked.

Score focused. Teachers in all phases of their career are focused on numerical scores because they have much to lose under the reforms brought about by Achieve NJ.

Teachers are beset by a sense of personal and professional loss, and the shift in the way they are scored has added to this sense of loss (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Dave described how differences in the way teachers are scored has influenced their perception of the MTEM: "There's sort of a paradigm shift, under the old system most of the teachers wound up with very high ratings, the new system doesn't allow that to happen as often." As discussed in chapter 4 this paradigm shift has been difficult for teachers to accept; they concentrate on trying to do what is necessary to achieve the required scores rather than to shift their practice in order to promote student achievement.

This score focus is rooted in the fact that teachers view their work as a part of their identity, both professionally and personally (Van Veen & Sleegers, 2007). Deana described this when she discussed her observation: "The whole fact that you are reduced to a number stinks." Teachers focus on scores rather than growth in this setting because they are concerned with losing their jobs, they see the MTEM as a direct threat to their livelihoods (Burke, 2011, Fowler, 2013). Flores (2011) described the summative and bureaucratic nature of teacher evaluation in her study on how teachers experience changes to their evaluations. Hallinger et al (2013) described how an emphasis on the summative nature of evaluation impedes growth. I propose that both issues are at play in this setting, teachers have placed the summative nature of evaluation, in this case their numerical score, above the espoused intent of the model. Teachers see the summative nature of the evaluation process and do what is necessary to achieve the desired scores to maintain their employment. This is evidenced by their continued focus on the state assigned numerical score when discussing evaluation, often ignoring the growth indicators described in the MTEM. This has undermined the implementation of the

MTEM in this setting, making it difficult for teachers to accept feedback that is designed to help them grow (Hallinger et al, 2013, Ramirez et al, 2011, Ramirez et al, 2014).

The veteran staff challenge. Teachers in the survival and discovery phase are more likely and more willing to make the necessary instructional shifts in this setting. Consistent with the literature on teacher career stages (Huberman, 1989, Fessler & Christenson, 1992, Steffy et al, 2000) veteran teachers are more resistant to change and have had the most difficult time making the required instructional shifts. The levels of resistance to this change ranges, Sarah described her alignment with the MTEM when necessary: "I'm focusing on the learning goal because I realized that it's a requirement." Art describes his outright refusal to align to the model: "I find it a nuisance, it doesn't actively change how I teach, how I prepare to teach, or even how I assess. It's more of an afterthought." This evidence demonstrates that the MTEM lacks value for many veteran staff members, suggesting that they do not understand the vision of the instructional shifts required under it (Drake, 2002).

Teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career understand the vision of the MTEM in this setting, as Tara stated: "I think that a lot of teachers don't recognize that the Marzano is not about the content, it's about the strategies of teaching." This quote from a transcribed interview perfectly encapsulates what Marzano's (2007) model is built upon; high yield instructional strategies that improve student achievement. Veteran teachers in this setting have not let go of the content though, struggling with the notion that Marzano's (2007) strategies can help deliver the content as effectively as traditional direct instruction. Doug teacher described this mindset when he stated:

> Over my ten years I've tried to adapt my style to be a little bit more student centered but at times I do find myself falling back into that, me talking a little bit

> too much. I try not to make it straight lecture but at the same time especially with the AP and the honors courses, sometimes it is necessary.

As discussed in Chapter 2, with time and professional development veteran teachers will shift their beliefs when they are more knowledgeable about a reform effort (Cunningham et al, 2009). The findings here reflect Steffy et al's (2000) work on teacher career phases, it is apparent that veteran teachers in this context all have different needs that must be met in order to process the changes to their context as a result of the MTEM. Teachers need help coping with these changes or they will struggle implementing the required shifts in their practice (Fullan, 2007, Steffy et al, 2000). Christine described the overwhelming nature of the changes in education over the last few years:

> I have to be honest with you. I feel sorry for these young teachers that have another fifteen, twenty years left in school, because I can't even imagine. For the last five years things have changed drastically every single year. We went from Lexile learning to differentiated instruction to rigor, to SGO's. What's going to happen down the road? I have no idea, but I feel bad for them.

Her response to a question about shifting his instructional practice demonstrates the initiative fatigue teachers feel. Some veteran staff members are unsure if the MTEM will be in effect in the future, unwilling to invest more time and energy into a shift that may not be around in a few years. Art described this feeling when discussing investing too much time in making instructional shifts: "The rhetoric changes every couple of years and my perception is, you know, Marzano's going to be gone in a few years."

The findings of this study align with Olsen and Sexton's (2009) assertion that veteran teachers are used to a certain level of autonomy, and mandates that require changes to their instructional practice will be met with resistance. There are any number of factors that influence how teachers accept change, some of these may include their professional beliefs and experiences, their level of competency and events in their

personal lives (Fessler & Christenson, 1992, Guskey, 2002, Huberman, 1989, Lumpkin, 2014, Steffy et al, 2000, Van Veen & Sleegers, 2007, Woods & Lynn, 2013). For the building leadership at PHS, understanding the individual needs of veteran teachers will allow them to build professional development that will help them align their instructional practice to the vision of the MTEM (You & Conley, 2014).

Barriers to implementation: The second research question, what barriers do teachers in different stages of their careers identify that undermine effective professional growth under the MTEM, yielded data suggesting that significant barriers exist in this context towards implementing the MTEM. These barriers have fueled resistance to the instructional model in the building, adding to the culture of compliance discussed previously in this chapter. While the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 on teacher career phases describes the difference in how teachers experience change (Fessler & Christianson, 1992, Huberman, 1989, Steffy et al, 2000), the findings of this study align closer to Lynn's (2002) conceptualization of change at different career stages. Change was bound by the organizational context in this setting, teachers across all sub groups consistently described similar experiences, suggesting that issues with the implementation of the MTEM played a bigger role in their experiences with the instructional model than their career phase.

The one area where teachers at the beginning of their career, the survival and discovery phase, and the remainder of the staff differed in their perceptions of barriers to implementation was in their acceptance of the model. While I touched on this previously, this particular sub theme dealt with their views on the system being prescriptive and unrealistic. Veteran teachers, 13 out of 15 interviewed, expressed that the MTEM did not

align in some way to their values. The three teachers in the survival and discovery phase of their career espoused that the MTEM did align to what they believed to be good instruction. Jen described her agreement with how teachers are expected to monitor under the MTEM: “I like the student evidence part because if they're not getting it, what's the point. If they're not understanding what you're teaching, and you're not checking to make sure, and you're running to get through a curriculum, then you may as well be talking to an empty classroom.” Veteran teachers like Cathy, however, espouse a different view of monitoring: “I think some of the other stuff, making sure you check on every single student is difficult and next to impossible if you have a class of 28 students by yourself.”

Fessler and Christenson (1992) describe early career teachers as functioning primarily in the role of learners (p. 76). Both Huberman (1989) and Steffy et al, (2002) highlight the eagerness of teachers to please their supervisors, and most importantly survive the beginning phase of their career. Throughout out the interview process teachers in this phase of their career align with the literature around early career teachers, indicating that they spend hours preparing lessons, and are focused on helping their students. Allison described how she feels pressure under the MTEM to meet the expectations of the curriculum:

> I feel that the curriculum is already packed with stuff, and sometimes I feel pressured to make sure I reach a certain part in a certain amount of time and therefore I don't know if I truly let the have those exploration lessons and doing all those things and having kids form hypothesis and having them produce something from a cognitive and complex task.

Whereas teachers at the survival and discovery phase of their career do not view the MTEM as prescriptive and unrealistic like their veteran peers, they do feel pressure from the system differently. Professional development aligned to address the differences

in the way teachers process the MTEM should be a priority for PHS if they are to help teachers understand the vision of the MTEM (Eros, 2011, Millward & Timperley, 2010).

Weary of observers intentions. Leithwood et al, (2009) and Leithwood et al, (2010) describe trust in leadership as a major component towards teacher acceptance of reform initiatives. Interview data, material culture and observation data all elicited the theme that teachers do not trust the intentions of some of their observers. Teachers felt that observers came in with preconceived notions about what they should see, or in some cases teachers felt that a quota system existed in the minds of their observers. These feelings were limited to building administrators and supervisors outside of their content areas, teachers still trusted that their content area supervisor would conduct a fair and unbiased evaluation of their instructional practice. Susan described the frustration teachers feel, summing up the consensus that with some observers it is impossible to score well: "if you get the 'wrong person' it doesn't matter what you do. You literally will never get above a 3 and you're lucky sometimes if you get a 3. I think I speak to the frustration of a lot of people with that." Cathy echoed this sentiment, stating that: "It's really become a matter of, to be completely honest, everybody knows if you get these people you're going to get a poor score."

Teachers are referencing the issue of relational trust between themselves and school administrators over observations, and they feel that this has damaged acceptance in this setting, acting as a barrier to professional growth. Deana describes this when discussing one of her observations with another colleague "I can't believe that I got to deal with them. I know no matter what I'm going to do, it's not going to be good enough." Huberman and Milankowski (2001) in their study on the implementation of teacher

evaluation systems found that implementation is more important than the effectiveness of the system (p. 209). In this setting the application of the MTEM by some school leaders during the implementation process has undermined the MTEM itself. It is impossible to determine whether their perceptions are accurate, but their perception is their reality because they have repeatedly experienced it (Fullan, 2011). School leaders must use their knowledge of the MTEM and their interpersonal skills in ways that begin to rebuild relational trust with the teaching staff (Robinson, 2010). Lenore described the impact on the building as a result of this issue: "I think morale is low. I think that there have been some really good teachers who have gotten some very low ball scores."

The relational trust between administrators and teachers goes beyond aligning to the instructional model though, it also facilitates an environment that supports risk taking and innovation in the classroom (Fullan, 2007). The weariness that exists about being observed may in fact make teachers less likely to take instructional risks. Jen described how she is hesitant to rely on her instincts for fear she might be evaluated harshly: "I'm afraid to let them do the things that I think they need to do to be better learners." The MTEM has components built into it that encourage teachers to consider the individual learning needs of their students, but as Jen described fear of being observed doing something that is unorthodox leaves teachers hesitant. This fear of vulnerability ultimately undermines the change process underway in the PRRHSD, teachers perceive the MTEM as a threat in part because of the way their observations are conducted by some administrators (Leithwood et al, 2010, Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Opportunities to make sense. Through the analysis of archival documents, interview transcripts and observation notes one consistent concern expressed by the

teachers was a lack of concrete examples of teaching practice that align to the MTEM. Art described the examples of teaching practice observed in professional development by stating: "quite honestly the ones that we've seen are pretty bad, and the ones that are good are much more often at the elementary level." Both Masuda et al (2013) and Taylor and Tyler (2012) describe the importance of professional development connecting with teachers, but it must also connect to their practice or they will lose confidence in the change process. In this setting teachers at PHS have erected barriers to the MTEM due to this disconnect, professional development has not met the needs of the teachers and therefore teachers have languished in uncertainty. This feeling was espoused by Cathy when describing what she needed in order to implement the instructional model: "we don't have these samples of how to do something better, we don't know how to improve sometimes."

Derrington and Campbell (2015) in their study on the implementation of teacher evaluation systems found that incomplete or a partial understanding of mandates are a natural consequence of unsupported concerns about reform efforts (p. 322). Rather than provide teachers with concrete examples about how to implement specific instructional strategies aligned to the model, the PRRHSD should create structures to engage teachers in a collective sensemaking process. In this setting creating the conditions for teachers to engage with the unknown, to collaborate with one another in order to create understanding around the MTEM will help them develop a deeper understanding of the model (Coburn, 2001, 2005, Friedman, Lipshitz, Overmeer, 2001).

Kezar (2012) identifies that this is a strategic process, one designed to overcome barriers in settings where new policy initiatives exist. Teachers at PHS desire these

opportunities, they appear to understand that their colleagues may be the best resource for understanding the requirements of the MTEM. Doug described this feeling when he stated: “I would love it if we could have a little bit more where we are in a teacher's classroom, a colleague's classroom being able to observe them. Having the time to be able to observe more often my fellow teachers, especially outside of my department, to see a real world context.” Whether it is to achieve a desired score as Lenore stated: “We want to be innovating. It's time, and it's even time to watch and to model. Let me go into a teacher that's getting all fours,” or to reach different learners as Amy stated: “time to get with your colleagues and just talk. What do you do in your class? What's a good lesson? We've got the same kids. How do you reach those kids?” Teachers indicate a desire to collaborate in order to better understand the model.

It is incumbent upon building leadership to foster this collegiality amongst the staff. They require opportunities to collaborate in order to collectively make sense of the model. Fullan (2007) recognizes that schools are not designed to foster this type of collaboration, but if teachers are to understand the model school leadership must make collaboration a priority. If teachers are afforded the opportunity to collaborate they will be able to create a shared understanding of the MTEM, a building wide coherence will be created about what is expected of teachers, mitigating much of the uncertainty around it (Allen & Penuel, 2015, p. 147). This can only be accomplished when teachers have the opportunity to observe best practices and participate in stimulating discussion around the model (Leithwood et al, 2004, Marzano, 2007).

The perception of pressure. In the face of internal and external barriers towards implementing the MTEM teachers must both trust their evaluators and trust that the

model is focused on improving their practice (Conley, Muncey, You, 2006, Flores, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2014, & Stronge, 2005). The context in which teachers exist influences how they process change, and in the face of these barriers teachers require support in order to effectively implement the MTEM (Fullan, 2007, Lynn, 2002). Whereas teachers perceive external and internal pressure differently, a common thread around this theme is that teachers have tied the MTEM directly to these pressures, creating barriers to implementing the model. Ellen, a teacher in the stabilization phase of her career, described the impact this change has had, and the political environment:

> It's changing the way that the teachers teach or have taught in the past to much for their comfort level. It's requiring them to stay later, to go the extra mile, to change, which is painful…it's seen as an inconvenient change. It's coming along at a time when the teacher's unions of New Jersey are having their political issues and you're adding to this (MTEM) to that environment, which is pretty negative.

Across interview transcripts, observation notes and archival documents the pressures described by teachers ranged from the political climate in New Jersey, to the PRRHSD's move towards heterogeneous grouping, and large class sizes. All of these internally and externally created barriers have influenced teacher's willingness to accept the MTEM. Teachers have weathered criticism from politicians in New Jersey, they have faced increasing pressure from the federal government to reform evaluation, including the expectation that student achievement data will count for a portion of their evaluation (McGuinn, 2012a, Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has done more to influence teaching than any other piece of legislation in history, narrowing curriculum while focusing on test preparation (Pennington, 2007, Schoen & Fusarelli, 2008, Selwyn, 2007). Veteran teachers have lived through these externally driven changes, their resistance to teacher

evaluation, which is yet another externally driven change, is natural (Fullan, 2007). The Teacher Effectiveness and Accountability Act for the Children of New Jersey (TEACH NJ), which codified teacher evaluation requirements in New Jersey, was signed into law on August 6, 2012 (TEACHNJ, 2012).The swift implementation of the new evaluation requirements, roughly one year from the passage of the law to the implementation of the MTEM, gave teachers and school districts little time to select a model and train teachers, creating a tremendous amount of pressure on teachers (Derringer & Campbell, 2015). Leaders had little time to build capacity for the change, hurting the implementation process and in turn creating resistance (Fullan, 2007, Kotter, 1996).

Unrealistic expectations. Teachers also perceive the MTEM itself as a barrier to implementation, facing pressure to implement a model that they describe as unrealistic and prescriptive teachers resist the model rather than embrace it. In the following passage Sarah described the frustration she feels when trying to align her instruction to the model: "It's too intimidating because I think it's too big. There's too much stuff that's not important. All those little checklists how is that going to translate into making my student college ready and a successful person." Deana described how difficult it is to be rated a highly effective teacher when a small number of students don't fully participate:

> I was told, "Well, you to do what you can to motivate them." I can't spend time on those 2 kids when I have 28 other kids who want to be involved. There needs to be some more flexibility or something in there... Don't tell I have to have 100% in order to be able to get a highly effective.

This finding underscores the complexity in change processes that involve a teacher's instructional practice (Fullan, 1993). Teacher perceptions of relevance and confidence in the system are critical components creating teacher buy in (Conley et al, 2005, Flores, 2012). In this setting they espouse little confidence in the system; Kevin described the

MTEM in this fashion: "This is utopian, this is idealistic, and this is not reality. I think the model is that way."

The perception that many of the requirements of the model are not attainable is troubling for school leaders tasked with ensuring instruction aligns to it. While school leaders may be quick to remedy this issue with increased professional development, pushing more information at teachers may not clear up the teacher's negative perceptions of the model (Weick, 1995). The findings from this study align with Goodson et al's (2006) assertion that changes to teacher evaluation systems tend to insult teachers, are viewed as overly prescriptive, and create an atmosphere of compliance rather than true instructional shifts. School leadership must understand this atmosphere before taking action. More professional development aligned to the model may not be the answer, instead engaging teachers in a process where they can engage with the model, make sense of it, and draw conclusions as to how it fits into their instructional practice may be the best way to promote institutionalization (Weick, 1995).

Contextual messages. The third research question: what messages do teachers in different stages of their careers receive and respond to from their peers and district leadership about the MTEM, yielded conclusive data that supports the conclusion that teachers receive different messages in this context. Teachers receive different messages from their peers and school leadership, while school leadership provides a coherent and unified message about the MTEM, their peers are seen as a source of negativity surrounding the MTEM. They also value feedback differently, non-content area supervisors are not seen as a source of instructional expertise, but feedback from their content area supervisors is trusted and well received. These findings are significant

because the social context in which teachers interact acts as the lens from which they view and make sense of the MTEM (Spillane et al, 2002b). Weick (1995) describes how teachers will ultimately create understanding around the model by interacting with their peers. Teachers will receive messages about the MTEM their peers and other members of the organization, process those messages and ultimately make decisions that will influence their practice.

Social processing: Teachers are exposed to a range of messages from their environment, from consistent orderly messages from school leadership, to negative messages about the MTEM from their peers. Teachers in this study perceive that school leaders have provided them with consistent messages about their expectations surrounding the MTEM. Doug described the consistency of the messages that he has received from different evaluators under the MTEM: "They've actually been very consistent even though they may not even be aware of the others' observation when they are coming to observe me." Steve described the professionalism school leadership has displayed in their social interactions: "Professionalism number one. Then number two is the style, the manner that they address people in their interactions and in their style of the communication really is where you see it." In this context school leadership has earned the respect of its teachers by modeling expectations and consistently providing feedback aligned with the school's instructional vision (Hallinger, 2010, Leithwood & Mascall, 2008, Leithwood et al, 2004, 2007).

Whereas teachers receive consistent messages aligned with the vision of instruction for the building from school leadership, their interaction with their peers on the topic has been largely negative. Teachers at all phases of their career experienced

negativity surrounding the evaluation model. This negativity has the potential to damage the implementation process. Christine described how teacher's socialization around the MTEM has impacted morale: "Everything's a number. Are you one, are you two, are you three, are you four? Everybody talks about it and everyone talks about evaluations, and it's really brought the morale down a lot." Art described the negative connotation that took hold early in the process: "there were conversations, multiple conversations talking about how it seemed unfair, and any time you bring that up that's not going to be a good situation." The socially created reality around the MTEM has constrained teacher's orientation towards the model and has influenced how it translates into their practice (Weick, 1995).

While negativity towards the evaluation model may not necessarily impede teachers aligning to it because of its high stakes nature, building teacher's capacity within the model may help teachers accept it. Attrition may also help calm the negativity surrounding the model, as more teachers at later stages of their career retire and new teachers are hired this issue will begin to wane (Kotter, 1996). Change creates resistance because teachers are afraid of loss, they fear developing new skills, or because they disagree with political nature of the change (Burke, 2011, Fowler, 2013, Fullan, 2007, Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). In this context teachers perceive that this change has impacted morale. While school leaders are credited with being transparent and supportive, they must not allow the collective disdain for the MTEM to impact institutionalization of it or they may risk rendering it ineffective.

Valuing feedback. A common thread throughout interviews and observation notes was the lack of value teachers place in the feedback of non-content area observers. At the

same time, teachers trusted the opinions of their content specific supervisor, with whom they have the closest relationship. Cathy described her feelings when discussing the feedback that she received from someone outside of her content area:

> From a math point of view, there was logical and very good reason why I didn't do what they suggested. I think that happens within a different discipline. I think some of the disciplines are more closely related but I think some of them are so far apart the supervisor may not understand the nuances of the discipline itself.

The lack of trust in evaluator feedback acts as a barrier to implementation in this setting. Feedback is only as effective as the its perceived utility (Salo et al, 2014), teachers must trust that their evaluators are experts in pedagogy in order for them to change their practice (Conley et al, 2006, Flores, 2012, Robinson et al, 2008, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007). In this setting their observer's lack of content knowledge is a major barrier to their acceptance of both the feedback and the MTEM itself. Whereas the teachers agree with some researchers who have called for content specific evaluation (Hill, et al, 2004, Hill & Grossman, 2013, Johnson & Semmelroth, 2014, Sledge & Pazey, 2013), the contextual realities of this setting point towards the continued use of a standardized model.

Consistent with Kimball's (2000) finding in his study on standards based teacher evaluation, teachers in this study felt feedback devoid of content related strategies was not as meaningful. These findings highlight the importance of developing observer preparedness to evaluate instruction and give quality feedback through participation in continued professional development (Ovando, 2006). In order to increase the utility of feedback in this setting teachers need to trust that their observers have the capacity to provide useful feedback. In this setting that trust does not exist, the following passage Sarah illustrates the attitude of many teachers in this setting:

> if it's somebody who knows your craft then they can offer up experiences based on what they've taught in their own classroom. I mean I'm sorry but how do you teach a business class or how you teach an art class is going to be far different from how you teach a class on literature or grammar skills.

In order to build trust teachers must receive actionable feedback from which their instructional practice can grow (Toth & Marzano, 2015). Conversations must be collaborative and shift from descriptions of what was observed to mutually constructed strategies for improvement. I propose that school leaders should collaborate to specifically address this issue, drawing on each other's instructional expertise. While it is impossible for observers who haven't taught the content to become experts in it, they can still grow teachers by consistently providing valuable feedback (Leithwood et al, 2004, Taylor & Tyler, 2012).

Tuytens & Devos (2013) and Kimball (2000) found that as teachers gained more experience their perceived utility of feedback waned; consistent with those findings teachers in the disengagement phase espoused the same feelings. Christine described her resistance:

> The first time I had an observation and someone who's not in Phys Ed tells me a better way to run my class, I said to them, could you do me a favor? Could you come in and teach the lesson, and let me observe the way you do it so I can better understand what I'm supposed to be doing?

In this case it is important that school leadership understands that as teachers progress in their careers their expectations for actionable feedback increase (Steffy et al, 2000). Providing teachers with this type of feedback may promote greater buy in for teachers at later stages of their career.

Change leadership. The findings from this study that address the fourth research question, how do teacher perceptions of distributed instructional leadership influence

how I will lead the instructional shifts required under the MTEM, provide exemplars of successful practice that will help me develop a leadership framework that will enable me to promote teacher growth through evaluation. The findings of this study indicate that leaders in this setting align their practice to critical leadership competencies described in the literature by Hallinger (2003), Leithwood et al, (2004), Leithwood et al, (2007) of visioning, capacity building, the creation of supportive structures and the promotion of reflective practice in their teachers. The support teachers have received in this setting has come in different forms, but teachers recognize the efforts of school leadership to set the vision for instruction in the building as evidenced by how Kevin described the way administrators communicate their vision: "They tell us this is what we're deficient at, this is what we're not deficient at. This is the focus for the year, these are the DQs we need to hit this year."

Leithwood et al, (2010) describe how professional and personal support for teacher's growth in the face of accountability demands can build capacity in teachers. With the increased pressure described before in this chapter weighing on teachers it is important for their growth that they view their leadership as supportive. Allison described in the following passage how leadership supported her by structuring her schedule to allow her to collaborate with her inclusion partner: "I mean this year, administration is doing a good job with scheduling us so that our ICR teacher and I have prep time so we are able to collaborate." Small changes that create supportive structures have helped teachers better prepare to implement the model. As discussed in Chapter 4 whether it is repurposing contractual time or promoting professional development, school leaders at

PHS are consistently looking to provide outlets for teachers to build their capacity within the model.

Providing structures does not build capacity in and of itself though, leaders must constantly monitor those structures to ensure that they are functioning as designed (Leithwood et al, 2007). While support and capacity building were evident in the perceptions of teachers, observation data also yielded professional development aligned to the model. School leadership, in concert with the School Improvement Panel (ScIP) designed workshops during in-service training that aligned to the MTEM. Teachers perceived that this professional development came as a result of data analysis and an assessment of the professional needs of the staff. Art, who is a member of the ScIP team, described: "I meet with the principal and the assistant principal, the ScIP leader once a week and that's really helpful for me to gain an understanding of what they're looking for because we often talk about what general strengths and weaknesses the staff has. I usually end up presenting, or preparing a presentation." School leaders in this setting have aligned their practice to Marzano et al, (2005) and Hallinger's (2003) findings that monitoring data is an important component for providing teachers with intellectually stimulating professional development.

My Leadership. In conceptualizing the necessary leadership activities to effectively lead the instructional shifts required under the MTEM I found myself referring to Hallinger's (2003) work on instructional leadership. Hallinger (2003) describes instructional leadership as defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school climate. Within these leadership concepts I have chosen to focus on three core competencies as a result of the findings of

this study. In order to lead the instructional shifts necessary under the MTEM as a high school principal I believe that I must a) be seen as an expert in pedagogy, b) facilitate growth by focusing on helping teachers make sense of the model, c) provide actionable and meaningful feedback to teachers through the observation process (see figure 12).

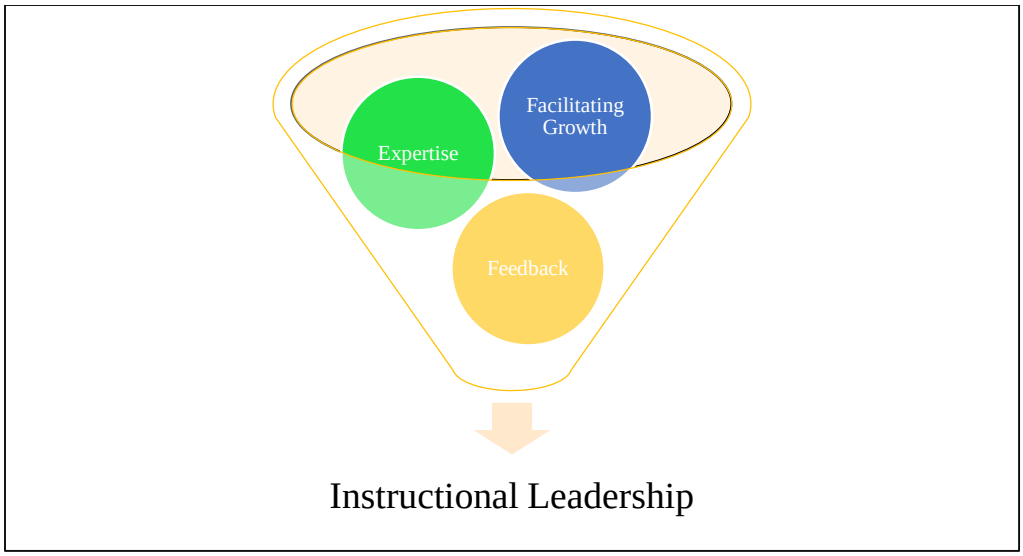


Figure 12. My conceptualization of instructional leadership competencies.

Instructional expertise. The data from this study suggested that teachers do not trust that non-content area observers are qualified to observe them. As a school leader it is incumbent upon me to not only develop my own instructional expertise, I must also develop it with my administrators and supervisors as well (Marzano et al, 2011, Robinson et al, 2008). As a high school principal your day is filled with any number of distractions that take you away from the instructional program, which is why is incumbent upon school leaders to dedicate time to developing instructional expertise. To move past the traditional sloganistic use of the term instructional leader I must demonstrate that I am involved in the instructional program, I must work to initiate ways to bridge the gap

between my managerial duties and what teachers do in the classroom (Coldren & Spillane, 2007, Leithwood et al, 2004). Meeting regularly with the ScIP team to discuss observation data and the instructional needs of the building will help teachers see me as an instructional expert, as will regular classroom visits. These visits should not be evaluative, instead they should be focused on observing good practice in order to build my own capacity to recognize and evaluate excellent instruction.

DuFour and Marzano (2011) describe effective instruction as "actual evidence that students have learned" (p. 142). In order to develop instructional expertise, it is important that I demonstrate to my fellow administrators and teachers that I have a firm grasp on this concept. The use of the time we have available as school leaders to explore this data is critical to demonstrating this competency (McEwan, 2003). Time in the form of professional development, department and faculty meetings as well as administrative meetings to explore student achievement data and discuss interventions will demonstrate my commitment to enhancing teacher's instructional practice. While these practices will not eliminate the teacher's bias towards content area experts evaluating them, developing all building leaders as instructional experts will further legitimize the evaluation process in the eyes of the teachers (Coldren & Spillane, 2007). Moreover, dedicating time to conduct co-observations and discuss effective instructional practice weekly with my core administrative team will help foster my own growth as well as the growth of my team.

Facilitating growth. Teachers, faced with the implementation of a new evaluation model, must be able to make meaning of it if they are going to implement the instructional strategies required under the MTEM (Coburn, 2001). The findings of this study have demonstrated to me that teachers make sense of the model through their social

interactions, adopting, adapting, combining and ignoring messages about evaluation with their colleagues (Coburn, 2001, p.162). In order to facilitate understanding of the model I must engage teachers in the sensemaking and sensegiving process. Too often teachers are told what to think about the model rather than given a chance to construct their own meaning of it (Smerek, 2011). Professional development time is spent on mandates, compliance and other bureaucratic duties, but effective instructional leaders use professional development to facilitate instruction (Murphy et al, 2013).

In the absence of concrete examples of effective instructional practice, which may or may not exist to the specificity teachers are asking for, teachers must engage in a process that allows them to unpack the instructional strategies within the MTEM and develop fluency in them. Weick (1995) describes times of uncertainty and turbulence as opportunities for sensemaking. The implementation of the new evaluation model has created these conditions in the district, and as a school leader it is incumbent upon me to engage teachers in a process to mitigate this condition. This process should include using contractual time, faculty and department meetings, as opportunities to have teachers work in professional learning communities (PLC) to unpack and discuss the elements within the model.

In Chapter 2 I discussed the responsibility of instructional leaders to build structures to support effective instruction. The findings of this study support the idea that teachers need time to collaborate, to be intellectually stimulated and to have opportunities to observe best practice (Leithwood et al, 2004, Marzano, 2007). Murphy et al (2013) posit that instructional leaders are more likely to positively impact student achievement if they create structures that facilitate teacher growth (p. 352). Through a focus on creating

understanding around the elements within the model I can help teachers better understand what is expected of them, raise their comfort level with the change, and help them focus on connecting the strategies within the model to student achievement.

Meaningful feedback. Toth and Marzano (2015) found that the feedback teachers receive on their evaluations has focused on narratives about events that occurred during the lesson rather than actionable feedback. Whereas the findings from this study indicate that teachers only value feedback from their content area supervisors, I must focus on creating the conditions for teachers to receive actionable and meaningful feedback. This will require two specific and distinct leadership activities on my part. Initially I must model feedback in my observations that avoids the narrative scripting of events observed and focus on providing constructive feedback that promotes teacher growth. Secondly, I must monitor the feedback of my administrative team and work collectively to increase the utility of feedback in our school. Developing capacity in my leadership team to provide effective feedback is critical, the principal cannot be the only person responsible for moving the instructional program forward (Hallinger, 2003). These two leadership practices align to what Marzano et al (2005) and Marzano et al (2011) describe as the most useful ways instructional leaders can monitor school practices.

Kimball (2002) found that most evaluators only have been found competent to deliver feedback in generic areas, and this type of generic feedback does not improve teacher practice. Currently, the method in which we deliver feedback is not working, trust issues dominate the observation process in this setting. In order to increase the utility of feedback in this setting I must ensure that observers from different content backgrounds are capable of providing focused and actionable feedback to our teachers (Marzano &

Toth, 2015, Salo et al, 2014). Accountability and growth can co-exist if teachers are confident that their observers can provide meaningful feedback, in order to achieve this balance, it is critical that my administrative team understands what effective feedback looks like and has the capacity to provide it to teachers (Kimball, 2002).

Implications for Practice

Did teachers change their practice as a result of the implementation of the MTEM? In short, teachers did, but only in small increments and only because they were required to do so. Many teachers espoused that they loved teaching, and loved interacting with their students. In this setting teachers spoke of intrinsic motivation and of a love for helping their students become better learners. The connection between student learning and the MTEM was not made though, teachers did not see the value in the system and have therefore resisted it. Teachers in this setting resisted change because of political disagreements with policy makers, feelings of loss, and because of philosophical differences with the evaluation system (Burke, 2011, Fowler, 2013). The larger implication for school leaders is that change is context specific, and in this setting the implementation of the MTEM faced multifaceted challenges that could not be anticipated by school leadership. While Fullan (2001) and Kotter (1996) present excellent models for leading change, the reality is that leaders must understand their environment and address the needs of that environment if the change process is going to be effective.

The findings of this research study identified the multifaceted contextual factors that influenced implementation of the MTEM. The implications of these findings center on four key points that leaders must address in order to facilitate change. First, change is framed by teacher's experiences, understanding their perspective is an important

component to implementing the MTEM, especially in veteran teachers. Secondly, professional development must support the varied needs of teachers specific to the context. A one size fits all model of professional development is not appropriate for all teachers, and in order to lead implementation of major change initiatives school leaders must engage teachers in site specific professional development. Third, teachers across all phases of their careers resist change and build barriers to implementation due to a political climate that fosters feelings of loss in teachers. Finally, in an era where accountability has emphasized the quick implementation of mandates leadership that builds supportive structures facilitates the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems.

The implications discussed in the following sections will be framed through the lens of the conceptual framework guiding this study. The literature on sensemaking in organizations will help guide the discussion of how teachers frame change and how to best support it. Research on teacher career stages and change will also help frame the discussion on professional development and the processing of change, and finally the literature on instructional leadership will help guide the discussion on supporting change.

Change is framed by experience. As discussed in the literature review teachers make meaning of change through the lens of their prior experiences, socially constructing this meaning and implementing it in their context (Coburn, 2001, Weick, 1995). Spillane et al (2002b) and Carraway and Young (2015) describe the process by which teachers recognize familiar ideas and gravitate towards them, avoiding unfamiliar ideas in the evaluation model all together. Time is a factor in the change process, teachers will not adopt the changes required of them under the MTEM quickly, and the results of this

study demonstrate teachers are slowly adapting the shifts required of them (Kezar, 2012). The change process requires time and patience on the part of school leaders, teachers must be allowed to the requisite time to understand how the change fits within the context of their instructional practice.

These findings indicate that teachers in all stages of their career process the changes to their evaluations through the lens of their past practice. Even early career teachers rely on their student teaching experience or their most recent school experiences as models of good instruction. Despite the best efforts of school leaders to cultivate a common understanding of the model, the previous experiences of teachers dominate their conceptualization of the model. The more ambiguity and uncertainty that exist in a setting, the greater chance multiple meanings and confusion will exist. Weick (1995) posits that in order to reduce multiple meanings we need to improve the quality of information, not the quantity (p. 99). More examples and more information may not be the answer. Instead opportunities for teachers to process and socially construct meaning around the MTEM may help mitigate the uncertainty that exists around the model. This type of sensemaking rarely occurs in schools, instead it is more common in informal and unstructured settings where teachers interact (Coburn, 2001, Louis, 2005). A commitment from school leaders to engage teachers in the sensemaking process, creating structures that support teacher's exploration of the MTEM in a meaningful dialogue, is necessary in order to mediate the sensemaking process and structure it so that it is productive (Louis, 2015, Smerek, 2012).

Supporting veteran teachers. The findings of this study support the assertion that veteran teachers, especially those in the disengagement phase of their career, have

the most difficult time accepting the changes to their evaluation system. While many of these teachers are nearing retirement, they still hold considerable sway with their peers. You and Conley (2014) highlight the importance of career stages in the examination of teacher's work context, positing that we would see a more uniform interpretation of change if career stages were not a factor. Veteran teachers rely on their past successes to frame and interpret the meaning of the MTEM. They also have professional development needs as well, they have a need grow and at the same time they have a need to pass on knowledge after a lifetime of teaching (Fessler & Christenson, 1992). Pairing these teachers with a survival and discovery or stabilization phase teacher has the potential to support both of these needs.

Furthermore, school leaders need to see support for veteran teachers processing change as a right (Steffy et al, 2000). Veteran teachers possess resiliency, but in an environment where they perceive attacks on their pensions and livelihoods, this resiliency has been tested. Consistent with the findings of this study, Huberman (1989) also found that disengagement phase teachers view some school reform efforts as ill-advised, and are weary of administrators charged with implementing them. Planning supports for veteran teachers is not without its challenges, they have varying needs, motivations and outside influences that impact their ability to process change (Fessler & Christenson, 1992). School leaders must be sensitive to these issues and take into consideration the demographics of their teaching staff when helping teachers process change.

Professional development aligned to the context. An important component to this study was the contextual factors that influenced how teachers changed their practice under the MTEM. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 is clear that context plays a role in

any reform initiative (Halverston et al, 2004, Leithwood et al, 2004, Neumerski, 2012, Ovando & Ramirez, 2006, Reitzug & West, 2011, Salo et al, 2014). While teachers in this setting were adamant that the examples of effective instruction under the MTEM did not align to their context, teachers did espouse a willingness to collaborate in order to explore those examples. By considering the contextual factors that influence teacher perceptions about the evaluation model professional development in this setting should engage teachers in collaborative process that explores best practices and strategies for student achievement (Davis et al, 2002). The findings from this study indicate that teachers perceived deficits in how they were trained to implement the model. Teachers indicated a desire for spoon fed strategies designed to provide them with concrete examples of best practice. While easier, the reality is that they do not exist to the extent teachers desire.

The alternative for teachers is to help them construct their understanding by providing them with opportunities to collaborate on site specific issues in order to create solutions to the barriers already discussed (Looney, 2011, Marzano, 2005). Tuytens & Devos (2013) recommend that involving teachers in the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems will help promote acceptance of the new model. Simply adopting the model will not promote acceptance (Kimball, 2002). Instead, school leaders need to focus their efforts on allowing teachers to facilitate the implementation process. Teachers own interpretations of evaluation policy differs than that of the policy maker, therefore using teacher evaluation as an opportunity explore improvements to instructional practice in their own context will enhance their understanding of the intent of the model (Penuel et al, 2007, Sinnema & Robinson, 2007).

Resisting change. The findings from this study indicate that teachers in all stages of their career resist change and build similar barriers to implementation. These findings differ from the findings of Fessler & Christianson, (1992), Huberman, (1989), Lumpkin, (2014), and Woods and Lynn, (2013) who claimed that the intersection of a teachers personal and professional lives influence their different interpretations of change. In this setting veteran teachers resisted change in the same manner, focusing on the political environment in New Jersey and the MTEM itself. Survival and discovery phase teachers resisted as well, but did not indicate the negativity towards the MTEM that their veteran peers did. Consistent with the literature, the political situation in New Jersey triggered a sense of loss in teachers that led to them resist model (Burke, 2011, Fowler, 2013).

These findings place school leaders in a difficult position, they are forced to implement mandates in order to align with the new law, but they also must maintain morale in the school building. They become the mediators of policy, implementing externally driven and unpopular policies that require immediate results, and balancing them with the teacher's desire for more incremental change (Spillane et al, 2002a). In this case the teachers slow and incremental alignment to the MTEM fosters compliance, but will not produce the end result of increased student achievement because they are not fully implementing it. A possible explanation for this lies within Sinnema and Robinson's (2007) findings that teachers view evaluation as an opportunity to celebrate success and support colleagues, and tying evaluation to student achievement is threatening to teachers.

Leading change that is so controversial for teachers is not without its difficulties, teachers build barriers over the lack of content alignment (Marshall, 2014, Overland,

2014), the perceived utility of feedback (Flores, 2012, Tuytens & Devos, 2014), and the prescriptive nature of evaluation (Goodson et al, 2006). School leaders are faced with difficult challenges, and these findings illuminate that the contextual factors at play in any one setting, like trust in observers or the alignment of professional development, have an impact on how teachers view new teacher evaluation requirements.

Supportive leadership. The findings of this study provide examples of supportive leadership that has helped mitigate some of the implementation issues experienced by teachers. Whereas external mandates and the political climate in New Jersey erected barriers towards implementing the MTEM, the findings of this study indicate that supportive leadership in the form of consistent messages and facilitation of a reflective atmosphere has the potential to keep implementation from derailing. Supportive leadership alone will not mitigate all of these issues, but evaluation will improve teacher capacity in a supportive environment (Kraft & Papay, 2014). In this setting the supports teachers felt that they received from school leadership led to increased teacher understanding of the MTEM. Clear and consistent messages from school leaders helped mediate the model for teachers, rather than reinforcing their anger towards it (Louis et al, 2005).

Leithwood et al (2004) and Marzano et al (2005) posit that school leaders indirectly impact student achievement. Whereas teachers in this setting describe school leadership as supportive and helpful in understanding the model, school leaders had no direct impact on students. Increasing time in the classroom and conducting a greater number of observations brings school leaders closer to the classroom, but it does not increase their impact on student achievement. Despite these facts school leaders must

continue to be mindful that their roles are changing, and with that they must take advantage of opportunities to influence student achievement (Davis et al, 2002, Ovando, 2006). Teachers in this setting at all stages of their career espouse the need for greater help in aligning their instruction to the MTEM. The confusion and anxiety surrounding the model provides school leaders an opportunity to talk with teachers about improving their instructional practice (Coldren & Spillane, 2007). Leaders need to be prepared, they must develop their instructional expertise and be able to communicate their vision of instruction to teachers if they are to successfully lead teachers in making instructional shifts.

Recommendations

The following section will outline recommendations for PHS towards improving the implementation of the MTEM as well as considerations for implementation of future reform initiatives. This section will also outline recommendations for future research that may address the limitations of this study and provide a wider research base on teacher evaluation. The recommendations listed below will address the perceived issues surrounding the implementation of the MTEM at PHS. These recommendations will require considerable effort from both school leaders and teachers to create a buy in around the MTEM.

Implement peer observations. School leaders should consider creating structures that allow teachers to observe their peers who have scored at least applying or innovating in high yield instructional strategies. Teachers indicate that they would like to see more concrete examples of effective practice. To this point the only examples that they have seen are from the video library from LSI. Teachers indicate a willingness to collaborate

with one another in order to better their practice. Additionally, empowering teachers as instructional coaches on a volunteer basis will also allow teachers to receive constructive feedback in a non-threatening environment. The school could train a cohort of teachers as observers and allow them to conduct voluntary, unofficial observations to help build capacity in teachers.

Re-focus professional development. Professional development needs to take into consideration two major points in this setting. First, teachers need opportunities to explore elements of the MTEM and make meaning of the instructional strategies. They need to collaborate both departmentally and interdisciplinary to understand the model. These PLC's should be teacher run and conducted in such a manner that sparks discussion, but also allows teachers a safe space to discuss their understanding of the model. Secondly, professional development should be differentiated for teachers at different phases of their career. These offerings should not be overt though, teachers should have a degree of choice as to what type of professional development they would like to attend. By considering career stages when designing professional development schools can increase the likelihood that they will offer resources that meet the needs of teachers at different stages of their career.

Commitment to instructional leadership. There is a disconnect between how teachers view feedback from content area supervisors and non-content area supervisors, especially in veteran teachers. The majority of veteran teachers are used to the old system of evaluation where one person observed them once or twice a year and gave them subjective and vague feedback. The findings here indicate that not only do school leaders need to create buy in around the MTEM, they need to sell themselves as instructional

leaders. Increasing interrater reliability and ensuring that all supervisors and administrators are implementing the model uniformly should be a starting point. This will only serve as a surface level change though; school leadership must build a culture where feedback from any observer is seen as valuable. Currently teachers are observed by their content supervisor twice, and by a non-content are person once. A starting point should be to have the content area supervisor only observe teachers in their area once, and have two other people observe them each year so that they see a total of three different observers. This may begin to desensitize teachers to the idea of non-content are people observing them.

Secondly, supervisors and administrators should work together to collaborate on feedback. By examining feedback as a group school leaders can begin to develop uniformity and also develop their own capacity to provide better written feedback. Just as teachers need to observe their peers, supervisors and administrators should observe one another's post-conferences with teachers. By collaborating with one another school leaders will improve their ability to conduct effective post conferences and provide verbal feedback that teachers will embrace.

Recommendations for future research. This study was limited to one school in a high school district, and the context of the study, building leadership and school culture all impacted the findings of the study. Conducting a multi-case study in the high school setting may facilitate a greater understanding of how teachers implement the requirements of new teacher evaluation systems in the high school setting. In this setting the MTEM was already implemented for two years by the time my data was collected. A longitudinal study that follows teacher evaluation from implementation to

institutionalization may yield a more complete picture of how teachers make sense of evaluation.

The demographic population of PHS was a limitation to this study, there was not a high percentage of teachers in the beginning of their careers or at the end of their careers active at the time the data was collected; therefore, trying to capture their perceptions only reflected a small portion of the staff. A quantitative research study that examines teacher perceptions of evaluation across a wider population may help add to the literature on this topic. Teachers at all stages of their career expressed doubt, anxiety and stress around the topic of evaluation. This study only focused on teacher perceptions of the changes they have made in the classrooms as a result of the model, and did not consider teacher self-efficacy. Future studies on teacher evaluation should examine topics such as teacher self-efficacy and changes to their evaluation system, as well as teacher job satisfaction in light of the new evaluation mandates in New Jersey.

Summary

The rationale for conducting a qualitative case study on the implementation of a new teacher evaluation model in the high school setting stemmed from a need to study the degree to which teachers changed their instructional practice as a result of implementation. Teacher evaluation has been studied from different perspectives, but this study was unique because it was approached from the perspective of the teacher. Teacher perspectives were studied in order to understand how they made sense of the new requirements by analyzing the contextual factors that influenced their practice (Halverston & Clifford, 2006, Kezar, 2012, Marzano et al, 2011). The data collected from archival documents, interviews and field observations generated the themes of

instructional shifts, barriers to effective growth, reluctant compliance, contextual messages, and building capacity. The themes generated highlighted how teachers resist change in this setting, which is bound by their organizational context and the internal and external environment (Lynn, 2002).

Teachers perceived only incremental shifts in their instructional practice, and data from the observation system supports their perceptions. These shifts occur through the lens of their past practice, teachers view the MTEM as something that they have always done, and that significant change is not necessary. They believe that they mix both student centered and direct instruction, and that this mix of strategies meets the requirements of the MTEM. Teachers identify significant barriers to implementing the evaluation system. The external and internal environment, most notably the political nature of education reform in New Jersey at this time, has lowered teacher morale, making them feel attacked. They also distrust that all of their observers are following the model with fidelity, enacting artificial quotas on scores and operating with an agenda to withhold higher scores from teachers. Teachers also identify that they are not exposed to concrete examples of practice that would better explain how to implement the model.

This has led to a compliance orientation around the MTEM. Teachers reluctantly align their instruction to the model when they feel they are going to be observed in order receive the necessary scores to maintain employment. They view the system as unrealistic and prescriptive, and while they align to it out of necessity, they perceive that it has impacted their autonomy in the classroom. The contextual messages teachers received in this setting were varied. Teachers perceived that they received clear and consistent expectations from building leadership, helping clarify confusion around the

model. While faith in the school's leadership was espoused by teachers, they saw little use for feedback on their instructional practice for anyone but their content area supervisor. This, coupled with the negative messages that they received from their peers about the MTEM, created a scenario where teachers received differing messages about evaluation. Finally, teachers saw their leaders as capacity builders. School leadership was credited with creating structures that helped them implement the model, and providing a safe environment for reflective practice.

Teachers, organized in sub-units of analysis in this study, largely held the same perceptions around the MTEM. The largest areas of divergence came from teachers at the beginning of their career, the survival and discovery phase, and the end of their career, the disengagement phase. These areas of divergence were limited, for example survival and discovery phase teachers valued feedback from all of their observers and desired more constructive feedback and were less score oriented. Disengagement phase teachers diverged from the rest of the sample in that they were more resistant to the model, and value content over pedagogy.

The findings from this study have implications for the school leadership at PHS and for leaders in other similar settings. Understanding that changed is framed through the lens of the teachers past experience is a key towards implementing any educational reform. Veteran teachers, more than any other group, will need support to process educational reform and implement it into their practice. The importance of supporting veteran teachers underscores the need for professional development around change brought on by educational reform that is context specific. Change is processed differently in each context, and teachers resist change based upon a combination of their past

experiences and their current environment. Finally, supportive leadership that builds capacity in teachers to implement change will help ameliorate teacher's negative feelings around reform. While there is no blueprint to implement change brought upon by educational reform, leaders who understand their context will be better prepared to implement it.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

1. How many years in total have you been teaching?
    - How long have you been at this school?
    - What subjects do you currently teach?
    - What levels within those subjects do you teach?

2. Tell me about your predominant instructional strategies? How have they evolved over time?

3. Since the implementation of the Marzano evaluation model how do you feel about teaching? What has changed? What hasn't changed?

4. To what extent has the Marzano evaluation model changed the way you deliver instruction in your classroom? If it hasn't why not?

5. In what ways does the Marzano evaluation model align with what you believe to be components of a good lesson? What are some components of effective instruction that are not included in the evaluation model?

6. Describe the experience of being evaluated by different observers. What messages about effective instruction did you receive from each of them?

7. How has school leadership contributed to your understanding of what is expected of you under the Marzano evaluation system?

8. What types of supports do you feel you need in order to further implement the requirements of the Marzano evaluation model?

9. In terms of the school and the district, what are some of the biggest challenges towards implementing the requirements of the Marzano evaluation model?

10. What is your perception of how other teachers feel about the Marzano evaluation model?

Appendix B

Code Book

First Cycle Descriptive Codes	Description	Example
PD: examples needed	Teachers discuss the need for concrete examples to implement components of the MTEM	"I think that providing good, strong strategies and examples that are seen in the building and applied practically and often would be really useful as a teacher."
Negative emotions	Teachers express negative emotions when discussing the MTEM	"It's very stressful, very stressful."
Distrust evaluators	Indication from the teacher that they do not trust the intentions of the evaluator.	"I think there is an inequity that exists based on who you are observed by. Certain people are going to grade you more harshly, more strictly."
PD: examples experienced	References to teacher participation in professional development where they have been shown concrete examples of strategies aligned to the MTEM.	"Much of what they show is elementary based, so another disconnect between a high school, which is totally different culture, than an elementary or middle school."
Staff morale	References to staff morale or issues that impact staff morale	"That lead to a year here which is a pretty special high school with great moral to where everybody was down, everybody was negative, everybody was I'd had enough."
Observer-lacks content expertise	References to observers who don't have a background in the content or who do not demonstrate expertise in the content.	"I take offense to a Social Studies supervisor coming to evaluate me, because if I went to evaluate a Social Studies teacher, I don't know how good I would be at it."
Inconsistent application	References to inconsistent application of the MTEM. Implementation has not followed the model with fidelity.	"It's not fair at all, when you're getting observed

		with numbers and some people know and they could prepare, and some people don't know, it's not fair. It's not consistent. It's not right."
External forces	Participant references external laws, mandates or pressures impacting evaluation	"There's a lot of things about the state, people not involved in education trying to regulate education and change education. Again, not being experts, not doing their research, not asking the people in the trenches for their opinions."
Challenges	Teachers indicate challenges, real or perceived, towards implementing the model with fidelity.	"You know, I have fifty kids in some of my classes. In the Health room, I have forty two kids in the class. When I'm told, your desks aren't right or you're not moving around, or whatever, I physically can't. I can't do everything that Marzano is telling me I should be doing in a classroom."
Collaboration time	Teacher references the need for collaboration and the time, resources and freedom to do it.	"I would love it if we could have a little bit more where we are in a teacher's classroom, a colleague's classroom being able to observe them"
Meaning: sensemaking	Teachers indicate the process that they undertook to understand components of the evaluation system themselves	"I'm the first one to take out that Marzano book and turn to one of the domains and one of the numbers. This is chunking content or reviewing content, or creating a hypothesis and reading what it says."
MTEM: Agreement	Teacher indicates that a portion of the model holds value to them, or they	"I think it all does pertain to teaching. There hasn't been something where I

	indicate agreement with a specific element within the model.	looked at it and really felt that it didn't.”
Prior experience	Remarks that indicate teaching experience has helped shape a teachers instructional practice	“At first I felt like it was going to be too challenging for me to meet all those protocols, but then I realized over the course of time and with some good professional development and self-guided research, that I was doing a lot of that stuff already.”
No Change	Remarks that indicate little to no change in teacher practice	“For me, I haven't made many changes.”
Learning goals	Teacher discusses learning goals within the model	“I definitely incorporate learning goals more and focus more on learning goals and the scale more.”
Direct instruction	Traditional lecture, sit and give teacher presentation	“I admittedly am a lecturer. That is my go to, it's what I feel comfortable doing.”
Monitoring	Teacher describes or discusses monitoring for student understanding	“Another piece from Marzano that is the monitoring at the end. That's changed a lot, because I've ... Before I'm like, "Everybody good?" Then you move on, and then you realize then half them aren't good.”
Changes made	References to changes teachers have made to their instructional practice as a result of the MTEM.	“I'll tell you one area where it may have changed it. I'm more cognizant of monitoring.”
Mixed strategies	Teacher describes a change to a more student centered teaching approach	“So lately my instruction has been a mix of lecture, exploration, and practice.”
Student centered	Teacher describes a more student centered approach to instruction.	“Recently with the new wave of education and the Marzano I've done a lot more to student based learning. A lot more individual, a lot more

		projects, a lot more group, just a more diversified classroom as well.”
Observation scores	Teacher discusses or describes observation scores, whether numerical or through a descriptor	“The only thing I think is because there's a number assigned to it there's a little bit more of that competition. It's like a grade and I feel like I pour out my heart into my teaching so if I don't get the innovating I feel like it hurts”
Compliance	References to teachers describing complaining with the model, regardless of its instructional worth at the moment	“Honestly, I try to do as much as I can with it, but the only time I think I'm going to do it a hundred percent the way they want me to, is when I know I'm getting evaluated”.
Resistance	References to teachers discussing resistance towards the MTEM.	“I think that the current model that we use obviously doesn't fit my style of teaching so I'm not a huge proponent of it. I've been very resistant to adapt.”
Unrealistic expectations	Teacher remarks reflect a feeling that the MTEM is unrealistic in its expectations of teachers.	“I think some of the other stuff, making sure you check on every single student is difficult and next to impossible if you have a class of 28 students by yourself.”
Professional judgement	Teacher makes reference to their professional judgement being discounted in the evaluation model.	“Yeah, sometimes my professional judgement is not looked at.”
Implementation: issues	References to the implementation process the district undertook to introduce the model.	“I think the roll out is important, it wasn't done in an ease ... It could've been handled differently. If I were the one being asked to do it I might've handled it a bit differently. I would've educated my staff a little more about it

		and taken more of an active role in being part of all those meeting instead of expecting a committee to do it, because they were struggling.”
Lacks value	Teachers indicate that the model or portions of the model lack value or don’t align to their values.	“I don't match up my lesson to Marzano, I can't because then there's something gets lost and then I'm pushing a square peg into a round hole and then ... That's not me.”
Unfair evaluation	References to unfair evaluations, observations where the teacher feels inconsistencies or misinterpretations of the model impact observation results.	“When we first started doing Marzano, that's exactly what was happening. Some of the people that were doing the observations would say, I'm coming to your class during period 3, 4 tomorrow, and then some people would just get popped in, and that isn't fair.”
Prescriptive	Speaks to the rigidity that teachers perceive in the evaluation system that impacts their ability to implement it or their resistance to implementing it.	“I think a lot of it is they're trying to be very black and white and you can't with teaching.”
Distrust MTEM	Teachers discuss their distrust of the MTEM as it does not reflect elements of effective instruction or they do not trust that the model is effective at evaluating them.	“I think a lot of people go back to they think it's a money making thing. Who is this Marzano guy and why are we doing this and how come this is the purpose behind it? What is wrong with what we were doing in the past?”
Student needs	Teacher indicates the student population, or the needs of the student population has not changed despite the MTEM implementation.	“The kids haven't changed, either. They are the same kids. The majority of them still want to learn.”
Student growth	Teacher describes how they perceive student growth by implementing the MTEM.	“Like I said the big thing is just to get them to think for themselves. I think the big- my big question was

		... Last year, the beginning of last year, when I was doing these warm up activities, the kids have five problems to do."
Peer messages	Messages that teachers receive about effective instruction or the MTEM from their peers.	"Everybody's just kind of putting up with it because it's become part of the job."
Fair Evaluation	Teachers describe their evaluation experiences as fair, either because of their supervisor actions or their scores accurately reflect their teaching.	"I've actually had good experiences. I've fortunately my observations have gone well, I've had people who have when you have the observation after the fact you sit down and discuss it."
Observations: effective feedback	References to effective feedback that teachers receive from their observers.	"She came in and I got a developing, which I deserved because I wasn't monitoring. She came in and she brought books on how to better myself, and sat with me and taught me how to go through eye observation, and how to just ... Basically said this is what I saw but this is how you get better. I appreciate that."
Definition	Definitions that administrators at the building or district level provide teachers about components of the MTEM.	"The Marzano framework contains three general categories of lesson segments: lesson segments addressing the content, lesson segments enacted on the spot, and lesson segments involving routine events. The ten design questions are organized under each segment."
Common Language	References to common language of instruction or use of common terms that define teaching under the MTEM.	"We're all kind of learning it together, so I think that gaining the same vocabulary and

		understanding of the whole process is good.”
Meaning: sensegiving	How administrators and professional developers have provided messages to teachers about the MTEM.	“She did offer to help teachers make sense of the model, and how they incorporate it into their instructional practice.“
Content experts	Describes the experience of being observed or evaluated by content area experts as opposed to observers outside of their content area.	“I find that the people that are in my content area will ask more key questions, like more ... I'm just trying to think of the word that I would use ... Maybe more content based questions, and maybe offer up how I would change the situation that might've happened in the room at that moment.”
Administrator messages	Messages teachers receive from school administration about the MTEM.	“Our supervisor has done a great job of explaining our expectations, so people should just continue to do that for the teachers, and make it more of a "Let's do this together," instead of an "I got you" kind of thing, and our supervisor's done a good job of just validating that you've done all of this before.”
MTEM-administrative support	References to support that teachers perceive from the school administration in the implementation and understanding of the model.	“I think a positive statement from the school leadership that they're going to continue to make the staff better, I think when that's the goal, I never really felt like there's a lot of "gotcha" moments.”
PD: effective	References to teacher perceptions that the professional development that they have participated in aligns to the observation model and has supported their growth.	“All our professional development meetings are geared towards our ultimate school goal, which is essentially what

		the observers are looking for when they come in"
Reflective practice	Teacher references to their personal reflection upon their instruction as a result of the MTEM, and the changes that they make as a result of that reflection.	"There are some lessons I just know where terrible and you go back in the next day and you go back to scratch and you start all over again. You redo that lesson."
Positive emotions	Teachers indicate positive emotions about their job and how they have experienced the evaluation process.	"What hasn't changed is my attitude, my love for teaching, my love for the material, my enjoyment with the kids. I really, really do love the kids and I just love being a teacher, so that hasn't changed at all."
PD: experienced	References to professional development, either delivered or promised.	"So the professional development has really ... the last two years has been phenomenal."

Second Cycle Pattern Codes	**Description**	**First Cycle Descriptive Codes.**
Barriers to Effective Growth	Barriers to effective growth under the MTEM took on many forms. These barriers included a lack of concrete examples or strategies, a lack of trust in the intentions of evaluators, non-content area observers conducing evaluations on teachers, low morale around the MTEM, and general negative emotions about the process. External forces acting upon teachers, driving the implementation of the MTEM also were factors, as well as structural	PD: examples needed Negative emotions Distrust evaluators PD: examples experienced Staff morale Observers: lack content expertise Inconsistent application External forces Challenges Collaboration time.

	problems within the district.	
Perception of Instructional shifts.	How teachers perceived the instructional shifts they have made under the MTEM. The prior experiences of teachers, and how they made meaning of the evaluation model was a pattern that influenced their perceptions. Their level of acceptance of the MTEM also was considered. Their indication of the changes they made, as well as their perception of their instructional strategies also emerged as themes that led to their perceived instructional shifts.	Meaning: sensemaking MTEM-agreement Prior experience No change Learning goals Direct instruction Monitoring Changes made Mixed strategies Student centered.
Reluctant Compliance	Within the theme a pattern emerged that indicated teachers saw little value in the totality of the MTEM, that it was unrealistic and prescriptive, leading to resistance and distrust of the model. Their experiences weren't positive, but teachers reluctantly complied with the requirements of the MTEM in order to maintain positive evaluation scores.	Observations scores Compliance Resistance Unrealistic expectations Professional judgement Implementation: issues Lacks value Unfair evaluation Prescriptive Distrust: MTEM.
Building Capacity	Reflects the support and capacity building teachers experienced during the implementation of the MTEM. Teachers respect their supervisors a great deal, as well as the building administration. A pattern within this theme was that of positive emotions	Content experts MTEM-administrative support PD: effective Reflective practice Positive emotions PD: experienced.

	toward their job and the atmosphere in the building, as teacher felt comfortable reflecting upon their practice. Teachers experienced positive professional development that build their capacity towards implementing the MTEM.	
Contextual Messages about Evaluation	This theme reflects the messages teachers received from the building administration and their peers towards implementing the MTEM. Administrator messages to the teachers, as well as peer messages helped shape teachers understanding of the MTEM. Teachers experienced a common message through both their evaluation feedback and professional development. A focus on student growth and student needs was reflected in teacher perceptions about the MTEM.	Student needs Student growth Peer messages Fair evaluation Observation: effective feedback Definition Common language Meaning: Sensegiving Administrator messages