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Administrator Perceptions of the Teacher Evaluation Process and Professional Development Programming in New Jersey Independent Schools

by

Marissa C. Muoio

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Department of Education, Management, Leadership and Policy

Seton Hall University

March 2019

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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Marissa C. Muoio has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the **Ed.D.** during this **Spring Semester 2019.**

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE
(please sign and date beside your name)

Mentor:
Dr. David Reid _____ 3/6/19

Committee Member:
Dr. Robert Kelchen _____ 3/6/19

Committee Member:
Dr. Rong Chen _____ 3/6/19

The mentor and any other committee members who wish to review revisions will sign and date this document only when revisions have been completed. Please return this form to the Office of Graduate Studies, where it will be placed in the candidate's file and submit a copy with your final dissertation to be bound as page number two.

Abstract

This study examines administrator perceptions of the teacher evaluation process and professional development programming in New Jersey independent schools. Despite the contentious topic of teacher evaluation within the national landscape today, there is currently little research available concerning administrator perceptions of teacher evaluation and professional development within independent schools. In this study, I ask a) What teacher evaluation processes or tools are being used in the independent schools in the state of New Jersey? b) What types of professional development programs are provided for teachers in these schools? and c) How do independent school administrators perceive the relationship between the teacher evaluation system and the professional development programs?

This explanatory sequential mixed methods study examined data from New Jersey independent school administrators, including surveys (N = 25) and interviews (N = 6). Results show a) New Jersey independent school administrators perceive the evaluation process has an above-average impact on teacher professional growth goals and school improvement goals; b) oftentimes, administrators allow teachers to tailor their own professional development goals; c) majority of the administrators utilize either the Danielson model or a school-created model for teacher evaluation; and d) administrators view the teacher evaluation process as a tool to foster growth in teachers and ensure teachers are mission-focused, but they are averse to using rating scales and tying evaluation to performance. The findings of this study suggest there is great value in the teacher evaluation process as long as it is grounded in professional growth, reflection, and teaching excellence.

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my parents; thank you for striking the balance of never leaving my corner while still managing to always be my toughest critics. In turn, you have pushed me to achieve what I never thought possible for myself.

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First and foremost, I want to thank all my professors at Seton Hall University over the last 10 years, particularly my dissertation committee members. Dr. Reid, I would not have been able to complete this dissertation without your mentoring and guidance. Words cannot express my gratitude to you. I am forever grateful to Dr. Finkelstein for pointing me in your direction and for the timeliness with which you joined the department. Dr. Kelchen, I am so thankful for having taken your class, despite being on the K-12 side of the department. You are so humble, and I am so appreciative of your invaluable insight and guidance during this process. Dr. Babo, you taught me to love statistics and mathematics more than any other educator in my life has. When I doubted myself prior to the qualifying exam, you encouraged me to keep going. Thank you for serving as my mentor throughout the program and for my principal certification. Dr. Muoio does have a nice ring to it.

Thank you to the Mount community, Sister Fran, my colleagues (particularly Kristen and Sarah), and most importantly, my students, past and present. The support and encouragement you have provided me over these four years is unmatched. You inspire me each and every day and reaffirm my choice to pursue my vocation in education.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my family and friends who have supported me throughout the years and who were essential to my successful completion of this degree. Thank you for your words of encouragement, time spent sitting quietly in coffee shops writing, and understanding of my lack of a social life.

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Chapter I: Introduction

In an effort to ensure teacher quality and effectiveness, national education initiatives such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Race to the Top (RTTT), and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) incentivized states to rework teacher evaluation systems. NCLB and RTTT have given cause for public schools to work toward ensuring teachers are not only highly qualified but also highly effective through classroom evaluations and continued professional development. Although ESSA does not require states to establish teacher evaluation systems based solely on test scores, states must still submit their accountability systems to the U.S. Department of Education. As public demand for teacher accountability has increased over the years, so has the development of methods to evaluate teacher effectiveness also. The agreement on the importance of teacher quality has spurred a global discussion on how to best evaluate teacher performance (Atkinson et al., 2009; De Fraine et al., 2002; Hallinger et al., 2014; Leithwood & Earl, 2000; Liu & Zhao, 2013; Flores, 2012; Walker & Ko, 2011). New evaluation systems can help administrators identify better teachers and/or provide teachers with better feedback to help improve their practice (Attinello et al., 2005; Danielson, 2007; Hallinger et al., 2014; Kimball et al., 2004; Milanowski et al., 2004; Sanders et al., 2005; Wilson et al., 2014). Although the implementation of evaluation programs has traditionally been left to the chief school administrator, recent forms of evaluation and coaching among peers have been touted as more effective and beneficial to developing instructional best practices at times (Jewell, 2017).

Despite the public attention, and at times scrutiny that public schools receive over ensuring teacher quality and accountability, the demands of high-quality teaching are not limited

to just the public sector of education. Nonpublic schools also experience scrutiny over teacher quality, and these schools must maintain their competitiveness and ability to continuously recruit students. Students and parents seeking a private school education are drawn toward schools with strong academic reputations, including quality teachers.

One specific type of a competitive nonpublic school sector is independent schools. The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) defines independent schools by their "independent governance and finance" (Wallace, 2012, p. 45). These schools which are nonprofits are "governed by boards of trustees composed of alumni/alumnae, parents, educators, and community members" (Wallace, 2012, p. 44). Typically, independent schools rely heavily on tuition, charitable contributions, and endowment income financially. Just as public schools are accountable to multiple constituencies, so are independent schools as well. Independent schools are held accountable to their boards of trustees, their accreditation associations, the parents, and the students who attend their institutions. This accountability factor pervades many areas of school life, but most importantly, academics (Evans, 2013). To ensure high-quality teaching, independent schools must maintain high standards for their teachers. Since independent schools are not subject to the same teacher certification mandates that public schools are held to, many seek employees with advanced degrees in content areas rather than those who have attended teacher training programs. The individual schools themselves have the freedom to determine what criteria they wish their faculty to meet during the hiring process. Since many independent schools seek potential candidates with extensive academic expertise in their subject areas, they often view the role of evaluation as one of growth coaching to help the individual acclimate to life in the classroom. "On the job" teacher training is not uncommon in independent

schools (Balossi & Hernández, 2016). With this knowledge, the need for standards to be ensured through both ongoing evaluation and continuous professional development is even more necessary.

While public schools must maintain a common form of the evaluation system, often by district or state, independent schools do not (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). In independent schools, the process of teacher evaluation is carried out by each individual school's administration. If independent schools fail to develop teacher evaluation systems to monitor teacher effectiveness, they may experience potential enrollment problems. These enrollment issues may arise from the reformation of the public school system which places great emphasis on student achievement and is working to narrow the gap between private and public student achievements. Independent schools must also be aware of both the teacher shortage in the United States and the lack of lifelong teachers, particularly in the independent school sector. To attract and maintain high-quality independent school teachers, administrators must recruit, provide consistent and timely feedback, and provide the opportunity to grow professionally.

As of June 2015, NAIS had a total of 1,541 member schools across the United States. The total enrollment in NAIS member schools was 675,115 students. Of the 1,541 schools, 82.1% were day schools while 17.9% were boarding schools. Coed independent schools made up 87.9%, girls' schools made up 6.7%, and boys' schools made up 5.4%. Elementary–secondary schools accounted for 50.9% of all schools, another 36% were strictly elementary (K-8) schools, and 13.1% were solely secondary schools. Nationally, the median tuition of day schools (all grades) is $22,301 while the median tuition of boarding schools (all grades) is $50,811 (NAIS, n.d.).

This study is important because there is currently little research available concerning administrator perceptions of teacher evaluation and professional development within independent schools. The study will provide valuable information regarding teacher evaluation and professional development practices within New Jersey independent schools, which are often considered autonomous. New Jersey independent schools serve over 30,000 students and employ over 4,100 teachers (New Jersey Association of Independent Schools, n.d.). The large numbers of students and teachers within this group justify the value in examining this underrepresented group in educational research.

Statement of the Problem

This study will examine the characteristics of the teacher evaluation process and professional development programs in independent schools located within the state of New Jersey. This study will serve to "map" the territory for an area that has virtually no academic research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine how New Jersey independent school administrators perceive the teacher evaluation and professional development process. Using a mixed method approach, this study sought to provide insight into the current approaches being used in teacher evaluation, the role of professional development in these schools, and the administrator perceptions of both.

Research Questions

This study will answer the following research questions:

1. What teacher evaluation processes or tools are being used in the independent schools in the state of New Jersey?
2. What types of professional development programs are provided for teachers in these schools?
3. How do independent school administrators perceive the relationship between the teacher evaluation system and the professional development programs?

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Historical Overview of Independent Schools

K-12 schools are typically identified as either public or private institutions. However, within the private realm of K-12 education, there are different types of institutions. Presently, these private institutions can be classified as faith-based or independent schools. At times, some schools are both faith-based and independent. Faith-based schools that are not independent are governed by the diocese where they are located, while independent faith-based schools are governed by a certain religious order and also have an independent board of trustees. To be an independent school, a school must be driven by a unique mission, governed by an independent board of trustees, accountable to its community, and accredited by state-approved accrediting bodies (NAIS, n.d.). Although the entity that is known today as NAIS was established in 1962, the roots of its history can be traced back to 1925 at The Fessenden School in Massachusetts. It was here where members of what became known as the Independent Schools Education Board (ISEB) first met. They met with the purpose of establishing some type of standardized admission for the lower grades of secondary schools. They decided that standards in the subjects of math, English, Latin, and French should be established (NAIS, 2018).

After successfully trying the new standards out for admission the following school year, the group called for another meeting to establish a board. In 1924, 21 representatives from 18 schools in the New England and Mid-Atlantic areas came together and unanimously voted in favor of establishing the Secondary Entrance Examination Board (SEEB). Shortly after establishing this board, 19 schools chose to use these new requirements for admissions while

another 80 schools requested more information. In 1925, a conference presided over by Dr. Lewis Perry, principal of Phillips Exeter Academy, and attended by 24 of the 25 schools belonging to NAIS at the time established the new guidelines for the SEEB. The new guidelines included a group of approved bylaws, dues setting, executive committee–endorsed actions, and plans of additional actions. These new guidelines, along with the establishment of the board, helped to make the admission process more orderly and began a new collegial relationship among the independent institutions (NAIS, 2018).

By 1930, after only having been in existence for about 6 years, the membership was approximately 100. However, by 1962, membership rose to 500. Over time, various subcommittees began to deal with the different aspects of the curriculum. In 1958, the board's name was changed to ISEB (Castetter, 1976). The year 1964 brought the merger of ISEB and the National Council of Independent Schools (NCIS). Until this point in time, ISEB was responsible for deliberating over issues of curriculum, testing, and quality teaching. Meanwhile, NCIS was made up of multiple groups of both state and regional associations whose focus was on accreditation and the association's image. While ISEB was focused on maintaining and improving the internal standards of academic excellence, NCIS's job was to provide strength and outreach to maintain the place of independent schools in America's educational landscape (NAIS, 2018).

By 1977, a report was published called *NAIS and the Future.* This report was published with the intention of providing a plan for how NAIS could function in the future to support and unify the various state and regional associations of independent schools. A central office in Washington, D.C., was also decided upon. In the years that soon followed, NAIS released

statements regarding their position of antidiscrimination within their schools. In 1981, a resolution was passed, which supported tuition tax credits for parents of students in private schools (Esty, 1992). However, it included nondiscriminatory admission policies and an understanding that the funds obtained should not take away from federal support of public education. Throughout the 1980s, independent schools continued to assert themselves as part of the national educational landscape through connections made within their office in Washington, D.C. Alliances with the National Association of College and University Business Officers, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, and Association of Governing Board of Universities and Colleges were formed to better support independent school business administrators, advancement teams, and boards of trustees.

During the later 1980s, NAIS President, John Esty, dedicated his efforts toward breaking down barriers across three different domains. He sought to narrow the gap within the number of minority teachers working in independent schools, ensure that the “glass ceiling” that was preventing women from attaining top administrative leadership positions in independent schools was shattered, and work to ensure that access and equity to independent schools were not limited through the economic barriers that existed. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, another area of focus emerged within independent schools: a teacher shortage. After much time, planning, and fundraising, NAIS released a series of commercial campaigns designed to draw prospective teachers into the profession.

By the early- to mid-1990s, under the helm of new NAIS president, Peter Relic, the organization continued to strengthen its relationships with a number of organizations while branching out into new endeavors. NAIS increased its national presence by ensuring that

conferences were held in cities across the country. Newfound partnerships were established with the Klingenstein Foundation, DeWitt Family Foundation, Wallace Foundation, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Edward E. Ford Foundation, and Teachers College of Columbia University. The collection and use of statistics across the organization was greatly improved. NAIS's reputation grew as the number of schools increased, and the organization's impact grew within the federal government. The organization earned its place among the conversation of American elementary and secondary education. As the 1990s continued, so did NAIS's progress on the national and international scale. National conference attendance soared to 4,500 by 1997, as well as participation in the People of Color and Leadership through Partnership conferences. Continued updates of NAIS's Principles of Good Practice were undertaken to ensure that its constituents had current guidelines on which to base many of their administrative decisions. The global reach of independent schools expanded beyond Europe and into Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. NAIS served as a starting point for many international education conversations.

As the early- to mid-2000s rolled in, NAIS reexamined its core criteria for acceptance and model standards for accreditation and discussed a vision for sustainability organized by categories which included demographics, financial, environmental, global and programmatic factors. More recent milestones for NAIS include launching the survey center, piloting the High School Survey of Student Engagement, and continuing to publish valuable guidebooks and reports for all independent school constituents (NAIS, n.d.).

Currently, NAIS has refreshed its mission to envision "a vibrant community of independent schools for a changing nation and demanding world" (NAIS, n.d.). In conjunction with this new mission, NAIS has four core values: "Excellence: Achieving extraordinary quality,

Equity: Serving all students equally well, Efficiency: Ensuring every dollar provides maximum benefit to students, Emotion: Exhibiting passion and commitment" (NAIS, n.d.). Through its marketing materials, NAIS claims to promote excellence through its programs, tools, and resources that it provides to its constituents. It values its commitment to equity within its member schools and its devotion to sharing the unique stories of learning and growth that happen within its schools.

Overview of Teacher Evaluation and Its Historical Context

The debate over teacher evaluation and accountability has increased greatly over recent years as various stakeholders have become interested in current K-12 reform movements that have promoted change in teacher evaluation (Chait & Miller, 2010; Toch & Rothman, 2008). Many stakeholders are no longer content with traditional models of evaluation and are instead demanding that teacher evaluation be directly tied to student performance on standardized tests (Jewell, 2017; Grimmett, 2014). This has caused the creation of new forms of teacher evaluation that take into account the relationship between the results of student performance on standardized tests and the job performance of teachers. To better understand the recent movement to reform the teacher evaluation process, it is important to first understand the historical context and development of teacher evaluation (Jewell, 2017; Grimmett, 2014).

In the time of the colonies, the earliest forms of teacher evaluation were conducted by community leaders and were to ensure that the community and religious values were being imparted, rather than focusing on student achievement. These leaders "visited schools to make sure their preferred curriculum was being addressed, reviewed whether the teacher was

maintaining discipline in the classroom, and made sure the teacher was providing appropriate physical maintenance of the premises" (Jewell, 2017, p. 74). There was little to no control over schooling by the federal or state governments. Decisions over instruction and teaching were left entirely up to the leaders of the community and teachers. If a teacher was found ineffective, the teacher was not given a chance to remedy the faults and was terminated immediately.

This model during the time of the colonies began to evolve in the 1800s during the birth of the Industrial Revolution. As education gradually became more attainable, the content of the curriculum shifted to the more academic subject matter, and teachers with more experience were sought after. After the 1800s, schools formed an administrative model, and the evaluation of teachers shifted from community leaders. This new model was still one of inspection to make sure teachers were teaching the desired curriculum, but it was also one of training. During the 1800s, teachers began to receive college training to ensure their preparation as educators. As the continued needs of students progressed, additional administrative roles were introduced, such as those of superintendents and principals. These roles assumed the responsibilities of observing the quality of teaching and helping teachers improve their knowledge of subject matter and how to help students understand its application (Jewell, 2017; Grimmett, 2014).

As the 1900s began, business productivity models began to be used to move teacher observation and development to objective criteria that could be used to measure performance. Building level administrators still followed through on the teacher evaluations and now focused on working together with teachers to improve teachers' skills. However, during the 1960s the evaluation process began to shift to one that sought multiple data points to fully evaluate a teacher's effectiveness. These data points included teacher/student interaction and also signified

the beginning of using standardized test scores as another way to gather objective data regarding instructional quality. In the United States, prior to 1965, discussion and decisions regarding curriculum and teacher evaluation were left to the states. Due to this lack of federal regulation, students were subject to be reliant on their individual states to ensure educational opportunity. The disparity in opportunity and instruction among states was remedied in 1965 with the passing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This act, which provided federal funding to states, also created an avenue for the federal government to become more greatly involved in K-12 education (Grimmett, 2014). With the 1970s came the birth of a new model called "clinical supervision." This model is one many teachers and administrators know today. This model "required objective measurements be combined with pre-observation, observation, and postobservation meetings where teachers and administrators worked together to improve overall teaching quality and classroom management" (Jewell, 2017, p. 76).

In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* was published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The central focus of the report was to render the United States' educational system as dysfunctional and to convince its readers this system was ruining the fate of the nation's technological, military, and economic prowess (Guthrie & Springer, 2004). As a result, the focus of teacher evaluation once again shifted to the professionalization of teachers. This report identified the need for teacher evaluation goals to be predetermined to create the evaluation system rather than seeking to evaluate whatever was presented. The report also mentioned the evaluation system should be based on the problems that plagued the individual school districts. This journey toward ensuring better quality teaching instruction continued throughout the 1990s. However, there was essentially no empirical studies that explored the relationship between

teacher evaluation and student academic performance. This could have been because it was not considered that a connection existed between the practice of teacher evaluation and student learning (Hallinger, 2014; Millman, 1997).

In the 21st century, the NCLB Act brought with it a strong movement on accountability and a shift in the language of evaluation from teacher behavior to student achievement. In 2011, the Obama administration introduced RTTT which "built on the accountability model introduced by the NCLB and provided financial rewards to states that included increased student learning measures into their evaluation practices" (Jewell, 2017, p. 78). Since the institution of RTTT, states and even individual districts have adopted various versions of teacher evaluation, most notably the impact of teacher evaluation on student achievement. In 2009, "regardless of the rating and weighting system used to evaluate teachers, over 94% of teachers were still ranked as satisfactory or higher" (Jewell, 2017, p. 78). This drew the conclusion that teacher quality and performance was still not measured consistently or accurately. However, despite these results, and in light of the requirements of NCLB and RTTT, many current teacher evaluation systems have moved away from planning, observation, and feedback models to linking percentages of a teacher evaluation to student test data.

On January 1, 2016, President Obama signed the ESSA—which gave states more control over their teacher evaluation systems and no longer requires them to be tied to student testing. As a result, in the current public school landscape, teacher evaluation models vary greatly by state. The instruments and frequency used in evaluation also vary. Certain states see value in implementing ongoing and consistent evaluation for both tenured and nontenured teachers.

Others believe that only nontenured teachers need to be evaluated regularly, and veteran teachers can be evaluated once per year or every other year (Jewell, 2017).

Independent Schools, Teacher Evaluations, and Accountability

Public school pressures have mounted since the early 1900s, in part due to poor student performance. Movements such as NCLB in 2001 required testing in reading and mathematics for grades 3–8, during certain grades for science and once in high school. With the institution of RTTT by the federal government in 2009, public school districts were faced with competing for grants for implementing Common Core standards and the subsequent tests tied to them. In 2015 ESSA continued the annual standardized testing mandate. One of the major differences between these recent movements of accountability is NCLB and ESSA focused on school district accountability while RTTT focused on individual teacher accountability (Stotsky, 2016).

In contrast, in the independent school realm, pressures regarding teacher performance and accountability often stem from their board of trustees. They recognize and promote the need to push student academic performance and the way it is connected to teaching methods and strategies. Due to the difficulties in continuously attracting and retaining quality students, independent schools find themselves continuously having to market their value proposition and ensuring it is truthful. Prospective families of independent schools rate quality teachers who are invested in their child's well-being and growth as the most important factor in choosing a school. This translates into the need for the value proposition to be truthful (Evans, 2013).

The discussion of teacher evaluation in the independent school faculty is not often met with encouragement and fervor either. Many independent school teachers do not see the

credibility or value in systems of supervision. For many, these evaluations cause anxiety and unease (Balossi & Hernández, 2016). Few independent teachers believe their professional growth has been supported by administrators in meaningful and ongoing ways. An eye-opening factor of independent school education is “large numbers of independent schools have weak traditions of performance appraisal and professional development” (Evans, 2013, p. 31). Evans (2013) cites the lack of implementation regarding teacher evaluation and supervision, even if schools do have systems in place. Although some independent schools are rooted in certain types of instructional practices, the majority of teachers in independent schools are given much leeway regarding what and how they teach. Until rather recently, the term “teacher autonomy” was one the majority of independent schools strongly believed in (Hall, 2013).

However, no matter the system of evaluation and supervision an independent school may adopt, the most important factor is the implementation. Many systems of evaluation focus on teacher performance and interaction in four distinct areas. The areas most often examined are teaching skills, unit design, assessment, and feedback and collegial behavior (Evans, 2013). Independent schools’ struggle to break through these areas is often highlighted by the individual school’s history of autonomy. When the students within schools with a deep tradition of autonomy do well academically, it often makes it even more difficult for the administration to encourage and implement a system of evaluation. Although most administrators interested in implementing a more formal or consistent approach to supervision and evaluation may see this process as an opportunity for their faculties to grow, most teachers may view it as threatening, and it may leave them feeling uneasy (Evans, 2013).

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Administrators who wish to move in this direction in an attempt to ensure a greater level of accountability within their schools must ensure they are providing teachers with adequate support. This type of support manifests itself in the justification of the change, a clear direction, an outline of the change, a timeline for the change, and progress check-ins along the way. School leaderships that wish to implement this type of change must provide a clear direction for all the faculties so the teachers know they are expected to get on board with the change. Evans (2013) suggests principals and other chief administrators should let their faculties know that during classroom observations they are looking for the following, among other things: "whether students are actively engaged, how the teacher frames the purpose and directions for the lesson, whether the questions stretch the students, how the teacher differentiates the approach to meet different students' needs, and whether the teacher has assessed students' skills and knowledge levels" (Evans, 2013, p. 33). Although it is nearly impossible for independent schools to provide and ensure a full measure of accountability, the evaluation and supervision practices that exist are strong enough to assist teachers in improving their own instructions to better benefit students. While these conversations are at times difficult to have, they are necessary for continuing to ensure independent schools are offering a competitive product that supports the school's value proposition.

For independent schools to develop a culture of evaluation that allows their teachers to focus on their own professional growth, having a growth mindset is key. Hall (2013) considers the four key ingredients for a growth mindset to be "observation, dialog, feedback, and investment" (p. 11). Dialog among teachers is crucial in providing them with insight into their own teaching that is insightful, constructive, and positive. When teachers have the opportunities

to observe one another, they not only provide supportive feedback to those who they are observing, but they also gain valuable insight into their own practice. Similarly, feedback from supervisors must occur often. To build trust with teachers, supervisors should strive to be in their classrooms weekly. This will help the supervisor to truly know who the teacher is as a professional, provide the teacher with more supportive feedback, and assist in building the teacher's trust (Hall, 2013).

Teacher Evaluation

From a conceptual standpoint, "teacher performance evaluation" and "instructional supervision" are considered different (Castetter, 1976; Duke, 1990; Hallinger, 2014; Millman, 1981; Popham, 1988). Hallinger (2014) defines teacher evaluation as "the formal assessment of a teacher by an administrator, conducted with the intention of drawing conclusions about his or her instructional performance for the purpose of making employment decisions" (p. 186). However, he views instructional supervision as "growth-oriented coaching conducted by administrators, supervisors, or peers" (Hallinger, 2014, p. 56). This type of observation is not aimed at making employment decisions. Proponents of teacher evaluation argue newer evaluation models should include a clear set of standards to benchmark teacher performance, more observations, validated instruments, and data on the learning achievement of the particular teacher's students over the past year (Danielson, 2007; Gates Foundation, 2013; Hallinger, 2014; Kimball & Milanowski, 2009; Odden, 2008; Toch & Rothman, 2008; Rockoff & Speroni, 2010). This set of criteria offers a more complete means of measurement for teacher performance. Although this set is clearly delineated, many building administrators prefer to provide teachers with a certain level of

autonomy in the classroom in return for teacher compliance on school-wide issues (Hallinger, 2014). Much of the research that have been conducted on teacher evaluation and performance is often more optimistic than descriptive of the process of conducting and ensuring the observations are positively improving teachers' instructional capacity and maintaining an environment of accountability.

The current educational landscape in the United States has been undergoing both federal and state changes since the institution of RTTT in 2009 and ESSA in 2015, which places the responsibility on states and districts to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers and principals to increase student academic achievement. Policymakers and administrators seek to make effective change while also ensuring the change is positive and best supports students. The single largest indicator of student success is teacher influence. However, it is virtually impossible for principals, especially in large districts, to find the time or have the content expertise to provide valuable and informative feedback to all teachers. In addition to evaluation, many teachers are not given the depth of professional development that is needed to make effective instructional improvements when needed.

Student achievement and teaching have become major focal points of educational policymaking, and teacher evaluation is being targeted as the means to improve it. The interest in teacher evaluation developed as a result of influential research that proved teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor influencing student growth and academic achievement (DiPaola & Hoy, 2012; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007; Hanushek, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Walsh, Joseph, Lakis, & Lubell, 2017). RTTT encouraged states to use evaluation results as a means to make personnel decisions. The only category within the rubric that was awarded more than 10%

of the total available points was “improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance” (Marzano, 2012, p. 15). These measures were put in place to measure student growth. Student growth was defined “to mean the change in student achievement as measured on statewide assessments and other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms” (Marzano, 2012, p. 16).

Under the Obama administration, the Teacher Incentive Fund was also greatly expanded. For districts to win funding, the proposals needed to differentiate between teacher and principal effectiveness, which is largely based on student growth. As a result of these changes, “the number of states requiring objective measures of student achievement to be included in teacher evaluations nearly tripled from 2009 to 2015, from 15 to 43 states nationwide” (Marzano, 2012, p. 17). To assess teacher effectiveness, the ratings are designed to include multiple observations, feedback, and student test scores. In addition to the need for a strong focus on quality teachers who are well prepared, teachers also need a strong professional development system that allows them to continue to develop their own expertise and have the working conditions to be able to work collectively and share that expertise with their colleagues.

The development of common statewide standards, performance-based assessments, and local evaluation systems aligned to those standards, professional learning opportunities, and support to ensure proper mentoring and trained evaluators are some of the key elements that best support teaching and learning. Darling-Hammond (2013) drives home the notion that assessments used to make judgments on students’ progress should be relevant to the curriculum and students the teacher teaches. Feedback provided to teachers should be ongoing and relevant to their professional practice and continued learning. The development and implementation of an

evaluation panel is useful in ensuring the evaluation process is of high quality and is fair (Darling-Hammond, 2013).

Mixed approaches to teacher evaluation are being touted as reasonable and effective means to evaluation versus the value-added models, which are strictly focused on student achievement data. In states that require observation as a piece of the teacher evaluation process, rubrics that include research-based criteria are used to provide improved feedback. When multiple observations are conducted by more than just administrators, teachers find the feedback to be most effective. Researchers are calling for high-quality assessments only a few times throughout a student's career instead of consistent low-quality assessments. They believe that these assessments should include an assessment of the full core curriculum. In addition to multiple observations and high-quality assessments, many districts are applying student learning objectives (SLOs) to their systems of evaluation. SLOs "reflect professional judgment, help evaluate the progress of individual students, and are applicable to all teachers" (Firestone, 2014, p. 5). However, because they are not standardized, it may be difficult to compare them throughout different districts or states. As of 2016, 25 states included SLOs as part of their teacher evaluation system. Given current arguments rejecting standardized testing, they may gain popularity in the near future (Firestone, 2014).

There are some challenges districts may face when trying to implement new teacher evaluation systems. Among these is the inability to effectively stick with the change. Change is not easy to implement, and to be successful with its implementation, it requires time. Many districts and administrators have a difficult time maintaining change if they do not feel it is immediately successful. However, educational research suggests change needs approximately

five to seven years before the effectiveness of its implementation can be seen (Minnici, 2014). In addition to time, to improve instructional quality and delivery, the overall system and way content is delivered must be reorganized. Teachers need to be provided with opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues. Principals must be provided with opportunities for continued professional learning. It is difficult to implement a new system that relies heavily on collaboration without providing teachers with the time or means necessary to effectively implement it (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007).

Policymakers view teacher evaluation as a tool toward school improvement. For this type of tool to be a consideration, teachers have to be recognized as having a sufficient impact on student learning, and the use of data serves as evidence of this. It also must be assumed that the tools used can reliably measure the impact of teachers on student learning (Bridges, 1990; Hallinger et al., 2014; Kelly & Downey, 2010; Latham & Wexley, 1981). Another valid assumption is implementing an approach such as this one will produce sustainable and substantial improvements in the quality of learning. Without a belief in these assumptions, it is difficult for both administrators and teachers to find value investing the time it takes to continuously make the process one of great value and meaning.

Contrary to the way teachers' views of imposed evaluation systems are represented, teachers do desire coaching, mentoring, and guidance regarding their professional practice. However, teachers desire a formative and continuous process alongside summative evaluations. Many teachers wish that administrators would spend more time in their classrooms so they can better understand the complexities of their teaching and be able to consistently provide feedback that is tailored to the teacher (Hallinger, 2014). Hallinger (2014) points out a need for

administrators to provide their teachers with formative feedback, support, and coaching prior to conducting summative evaluations. These types of assessments relieve anxiety and increase the likelihood of teacher success. Hallinger (2014) also points out the need for evaluation feedback to "be descriptive and specific" because when there is "precision in language, both the supervisor and teacher share an understanding of goals" (p. 56). Teachers desire the ability to partner with their administrators in determining the next steps in their professional growth. Recognition of teachers' strengths and consistent feedback that is representative and knowledgeable of the teacher's development are most important when administrators seek ways to not only earn the respect and buy-in of their teachers but also ensure student success.

Teacher Evaluation Systems: "The Value-Added Model"

Currently, districts are generally faced with a choice regarding which state-approved evaluation system they wish to adopt. Forty states and the District of Columbia require objective measures of student learning to be considered a part of educator evaluations. One model that has gained a lot of popularity recently, in large part due to an emphasis on education of data-driven decision making, is the value-added model (VAM). VAMs enable researchers to use statistical methods to measure changes in student scores over time while considering student characteristics and other factors often found to influence student achievement (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012; Harris, 2011). This type of model is designed to directly tie a student's achievement to a teacher's effectiveness. Proponents of the VAM may point out a large-scale study conducted in 2011 that used data from 2.5 million students. These students were tested in mathematics and English between 1989 and 2009. In their study Chetty, Friedman,

and Rockoff (2014) found that VAMs using controls for teacher quality could raise students' test scores significantly. Teachers with a rating of highly effective did have a long-term measurable impact over their students' learning outcomes. These findings provided compelling arguments for the use of value-added evaluation as a means to ensure student learning and achievement.

However, this type of thinking is dependent upon the belief that achievement is correlated with test results and the teacher is the only influence. Research has proven student academic gains are also influenced by relationships with their peers, past learning experiences, summer learning loss (which particularly affects students of low socioeconomic status), support from home, individual student needs, and school factors (Stotsky, 2016; Toch & Rothman, 2008). These studies have shown that while VAMs are not necessarily the best option for evaluating individual teachers, they can be useful when evaluating groups of teachers. They often provide important information regarding teaching influence and best practices.

Due to the fact that VAMs do not account for all of these factors, researchers have provided administrators and district leaders with information regarding the flaws in relying solely on this type of evaluation system. One of the main issues with VAMs is their inconsistency. Some studies have found that the data and ratings obtained by districts over the course of multiple years have revealed noticeably different scores each year. Also, when various statistical tests are used, the value-added scores did not yield the same results. These factors force researchers to consider the reliability of the tool (Harris, 2011).

Another main argument against the VAM is teachers' performance is subject to the students who are assigned to them. The VAM has been designed to account for the random assignment of students to teachers. However, students are not randomly assigned to teachers, and

the model does not account for teachers who may be working with students with disabilities or other factors that could impact their test results such as homelessness, hunger, and a lack of familial support (Darling-Hammond, 2013; DiPaola & Hoy, 2012; Muñoz, Prather, & Stronge, 2011). One study highlighted by Darling-Hammond et al. (2012) points to a radical shift in one teacher's rating from the year prior. When the teacher received a score in the lowest category, the teacher had a classroom of English language learners, Hispanic students, and low-income students. However, the following year, the teacher's rating soared to the very highest ranking, and the teacher had a classroom filled with students of higher socioeconomic status and well-educated parents. This level of variability and rating system may influence teachers' desire to work with students who are at risk and have a high level of needs.

The third major reason why VAMs are difficult to fully accept as true measures of teacher effectiveness is that of the number of differences that are difficult to control. The teachers' areas of curricular strengths can impact the results of value-added statistical models. Also, teachers who place an emphasis on short-term test preparation may not actually be best preparing their students for the next level of coursework. Research has found that teachers are least likely to show added value when their classrooms have, "English language learners who are transitioned into mainstreamed classrooms, large numbers of special education students who are mainstreamed, and large numbers of gifted students" (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012, p. 9). Although solely using the VAM may not be the most effective way to evaluate teachers, this type of model is useful in its ability to help validate the measures that are most productive for teacher evaluation as a whole (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012).

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although in some cases teacher perceptions regarding VAMs of teacher evaluation are mixed, the majority of teachers do not believe this type of evaluation system is beneficial. Teachers in a large, diverse district in North Carolina responded to a survey regarding their perceptions of the VAM of evaluation being used there. The perceived effects of this type of model fell within five distinct themes: "a) Educators increasingly game the system and teach to the test, b) teachers increasingly leave the field, c) some educators seek to avoid working with certain students and at certain schools, d) educators feel an increase in stress, pressure, and anxiety, and e) educator collaboration is decreasing, and competition is increasing" (Wilson et al., 2014, p. 9). These themes found within the teachers' perceptions of the VAM serve as crucial information in helping policymakers and administrators to recognize the potential pitfalls of this type of system within the larger landscape of teacher recruitment and retention.

Teachers' concerns with VAMs stem from the design of the model and the lack of understanding and recognition that there are many pressing factors that impact student performance and ability to focus and learn in the classroom. Health, emotional, and academic challenges all impact learning and can influence value-added scores. Many teachers noted the VAM did not take into account all of the responsibilities and daily duties of the role. VAM does not take into consideration any of the character building or social skills lessons that teachers incorporate into everyday life. Also, due to the deliverance of the test on one single day, it can be argued that the single assessment does not paint an accurate or complete picture of a child's learning.

Teachers are also concerned that the value-added measure of teacher evaluation is very much dependent upon the students they teach. This is often the case, especially when teachers

have students in their classes “who are multiple years below grade level, students with disabilities, and gifted and high-performing students” (Marzano, 2012, p. 16). Teachers do not have the opportunity to choose their students or their teaching assignments year to year; therefore, there is great variability in academic achievement and their ratings based on students in their class. The number of contextual factors within a school setting has perceived influence over student performance. Teachers cited personal, classroom, school, and district contexts as many of the reasons why student performance varies.

In addition to the many factors that teachers believe can greatly influence the outcomes of value-added evaluations, there are also a number of different negative perceived effects of this type of model that they note. Many teachers feel pressure to neglect the social/emotional needs of their students and teach to the test. They feel if students do not score well on one particular high-stakes test, they will be perceived by administrators and parents as ineffective. Many studies found increases in the instructional time spent on test preparation, especially in high-stakes settings. (Jones, Jones, Hardin, Chapman, Yarbrough, & Davis, 1999; Pedulla, Abrams, Madaus, Russell, Ramos, & Miao, 2003; Koretz, 2005; Hamilton & Stecher, 2006; Jennings & Bearak, 2014). Due to the fact that teaching to the test often takes away the teacher’s ability to be creative within the curriculum, more teachers are losing their passion for the profession. They are increasingly feeling an overwhelming sense of pressure and anxiety regarding the effects that the evaluation system will have on their jobs. Many of these teachers cite feelings of total powerlessness as one of the main reasons for their increased anxiety. These feelings greatly influence morale in the workplace and “teachers are upset and discouraged that their performance will be measured on one assessment” (Marzano, 2012, p. 16).

Some teachers are also hesitant to collaborate with their peers and feel the need to be more competitive in their own professional growth, comparing their students' scores with those of other teachers. Although, as of 2016, only 19 states utilized evaluations as a means for teacher compensation and employment, some believe this number may increase as people's perception and interpretation of "accountability" continues to expand (Paterson, 2016).

Teachers agree that a system of evaluation that is comprehensive and provides recommendations to improve practice does need to exist. However, they believe that a form of teacher evaluation should be a combination of a number of factors—which may include student portfolios, students and parents' feedback, and classroom observations. Teachers also do not believe the evaluations should be publicly available to be scrutinized. This type of public scrutiny yields implications such as "increased competition among teachers, underperforming children being unwanted, the branding of teachers, the narrowing of the curriculum, cheating as a means to game the system, and parental competition for those labeled as most effective teachers" (Firestone, 2014, p. 3). Teachers view these implications as misalignments with education. They note that the purpose of education has seemed to transform from the means to ensure a democratic society to viewing students as a form of currency for the economy.

The Convergence of Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development

When assessing much of the literature that exists regarding teacher evaluation or professional development, it can often be very difficult to find researchers who propose connecting the two. Teacher evaluation is designed to promote professional conversation among colleagues and between teachers and their supervisors (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012). The commitment to

professional learning is important because it is every teacher's professional responsibility to continue to improve practice during the course of his or her career. Charlotte Danielson, acclaimed educator and creator of the Danielson model of teacher evaluation, points out the difficulty in finding a way to merge teacher evaluation with professional development. She recognizes that the demands of these two things are different: "A system to ensure quality must be valid, reliable, and defensible; whereas, a system designed to promote professional learning is likely to be collegial and collaborative" (Danielson, 2011, p. 108). The typical teacher evaluation process educators are familiar with does not include teachers' contributions regarding their own practice.

Danielson (2011) points out that rather than administrators returning to teachers during a postconference with recommendations, administrators should consider involving teachers directly after the initial observation. This may include providing the teacher with a copy of the administrator's notes from the observation and requesting the teacher uses the notes to develop his or her own evaluation. This allows the teacher and the administrator to come together during the post-observation conference and mutually identify areas of strength and determine areas for growth for the teacher. Once these areas of growth are identified, together, the teacher and the administrator can develop a professional learning plan for the teacher that will help with continuing to improve in these areas. Professional goal setting allows both teachers and administrators to ensure that professional development planning is designed to meet the needs of the teachers and is tailored toward their growth (Danielson, 2011, p. 108).

Erica Hamlin—Head of School at University Prep in Seattle, Washington—designed and implemented the Individualized Teacher Improvement Plan (ITIP), with the hope of connecting

the evaluation and professional development processes for her teachers. Together with her faculty, they developed a three-year program for all new teachers. Year one consists of a formal observation year by both peers and administrators that helps new teachers narrow their focus on one specific area of the characteristics of good teaching they feel will most benefit their professional practice. In year two, the teacher, in conjunction with his or her direct supervisor, develops a plan that supports their three-year professional development goals that are outlined in the ITIP. The professional development plan should "have coherence and an articulated desired outcome, be financially feasible, and may include an advanced degree in a relevant field—taking courses in pedagogy, visiting schools, or attending conferences and workshops" (Wilson et al., 2014, p. 3). This type of relationship between the evaluation, goal setting, and professional development is designed to ensure teachers' growth opportunities are not viewed as a "one-size-fits-all" approach. In year three of the ITIP approach, the teacher assembles a portfolio of materials that support his or her progress toward the year one goal.

Summary

The review of literature for this study included a discussion of the history of independent schools, an overview of teacher evaluation and its historical context, an examination of independent schools, teacher evaluations, and accountability, and the convergence of teacher evaluation and professional development.

The review of the literature revealed that as stakeholders have become more interested, current K-12 reform movements have promoted great change in teacher evaluation (Chait & Miller, 2010; Daley & Kim, 2010; Sheppard, 2013; Toch & Rothman, 2008). In the 21st century,

the NCLB Act and RTTT have both been influential in moving the teacher evaluation conversation away from teacher behavior and toward student achievement. Within the public school landscape, both the type of teacher evaluation models and instruments used vary greatly.

The review of the literature provided some insight into the history and current state of teacher evaluation in independent schools, which are not held to the same accountability factors as their public school factors. Instead, it was revealed that the need for teacher evaluation in independent schools, a relatively recent concept in this realm, often stems from boards of trustees and the need to continuously attract and retain high-quality students who are drawn toward high academic performance. Evans (2013) points out prospective independent school families believe the greatest value proposition of a potential school is the quality of teachers and their interest in their students' growth potential. This important fact points to the need for independent schools to ensure their teachers possess strong content knowledge, value the school's mission, and above all else, value their interactions and relationships with their students.

I believe a study of the characteristics of the teacher evaluation process and professional development programs in the independent schools in New Jersey would help add to the limited body of research in this area. I was particularly interested in the examination of how independent school administrators perceive the relationship between teacher evaluation and professional development. This study will fill the gaps in the literature regarding what teacher evaluation processes and tools are being used in New Jersey independent schools.

Chapter III: Methodology

Mixed Methods Research

Although numerous studies have been published regarding teacher evaluations, few have examined the connection between teacher evaluation and professional development; no study has done this within the independent school realm. The purpose of this descriptive mixed methods study was to investigate administrator perceptions of the process of teacher evaluation and its connection to professional development held by New Jersey independent school administrators. The mixed methods approach was appropriate for this study because of the way it integrated quantitative and qualitative data while also minimizing the limitations of the two approaches. It allowed for a deeper exploration of what teacher evaluation tools administrators in New Jersey independent schools were using and how they viewed the integration, or lack thereof, within their professional development programs. If I had conducted this study strictly using quantitative data, I would have missed the valuable perceptions of the administrators regarding the evaluation and professional development processes within their respective schools. Likewise, if I had conducted this survey strictly using qualitative data, it would have proved more difficult for me to “map” the territory and evaluate what similarities and differences exist based on school type and administrator demographics. The mixed methods approach allowed me to examine both differing characteristics based on school and administrator type and their influence on teacher evaluation and professional development, as well as probe perceptions administrators have regarding the two.

Mixed methods research can be defined as "an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks" (Creswell, 2014, p. 89). The philosophy behind this research approach is it provides a clearer understanding of a research problem than quantitative or qualitative methodology could provide alone. The field of mixed methods research is relatively new; the first major research published using this methodology was not until the late 1980s. As the development of this type of methodology progressed, so did procedures for expanding mixed methods. They were identified as follows: integrating the quantitative and qualitative data so one method could be used to check the accuracy of the other, one method could explore different research questions than the other, one method could lead to a better instrumentation if the other instrument does not fit with the sample or population, or one method could alternate with the other during a longitudinal study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Mixed methods research employs a complex approach that can prove a useful strategy in "explaining quantitative results with a qualitative follow-up data collection and analysis" (Creswell, 2014, p. 101). Although mixed methods research offers an extensive collection of the data and insight into the research questions presented, it does hold some drawbacks. The complexity of the research design requires the researcher to dedicate tremendous amounts of time within the design. It is also vital for the researcher to have a firm understanding of both quantitative and qualitative forms of research. This approach is best suited to answer my research questions, as it allows for a more thorough understanding of administrator perceptions on teacher evaluation and its connection to professional development to be established.

The mixed methods approach that best fit my research study was the explanatory sequential mixed methods design. In this design, “the researcher first conducts quantitative research, analyzes the results, and then builds on the results to explain them in more detail with qualitative research” (Creswell, 2014, p. 104). In the first phase or the quantitative phase of this research collection, numerical data were collected using a web-based survey. The data were then subjected to descriptive analysis. The goal of the quantitative phase was to both map the territory regarding independent school administrators’ perspectives on the teacher evaluation process and what, if any, connections were made between teacher evaluation and professional development. The goal of the quantitative phase was to identify what factors administrators find most important in evaluating successful teaching and how they view their role in supporting their teachers. In the second phase, a qualitative collection of text data through structured interviews took place. These interviews helped to further explain why some of the administrators felt certain characteristics of teaching made someone most successful and also provided more insight into the values held within the independent school community. The rationale behind this approach was while the quantitative data and survey results provided a general picture of the research problem, the qualitative data and its analysis provided a more refined explanation of the statistical results by exploring the participants’ views in greater depth.

The sequential mixed methods approach in which the two strands occur chronologically (QUAN→ QUAL) suggests “the conclusions based on the results of the first strand lead to the formulation of design components for the next strand” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 62). Inferences were determined from both strand results. The second strand of data collection served to either confirm or disconfirm inferences from the first strand or provide further explanation.

This type of design answers exploratory questions in a predetermined order. The priority in this design was given to the quantitative method because quantitative research was representative of the major aspect of data collection and analysis in the study. A smaller qualitative component was conducted as the second part of the study and was used to explore and collect more information resulting from the quantitative survey. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods were integrated after the quantitative phase while selecting participants for the interviews and developing the interview questions.

Target Population and Sample

The target population in this study was active, New Jersey independent school administrators—who were responsible for conducting teacher evaluations/coaching and possessed a role in the discussions surrounding professional development in their school communities. As mentioned earlier, there are over 30,000 students and 4,100 teachers in New Jersey independent schools. The recruitment of survey participants for the quantitative sample occurred through the database of schools maintained by the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools (NJAIS). Due to the varying administrative structures within independent schools, the survey was not addressed to a certain administrative title because those responsible for completing teacher evaluations within the schools may range in title: head of school, principal, assistant principal, academic dean, curriculum coordinators, etc. An email with instructions regarding dissemination of the survey was sent to members of NJAIS listserv for academic leaders. The email was sent via the executive director for NJAIS. Likewise, the qualitative sample also included a selection of New Jersey independent school administrators who met the aforementioned criteria. Furthermore, the

qualitative sample came from the same sample of individuals within the quantitative sample because the design was intended to explore the quantitative results in greater depth. This notation was also included in the solicitation email that was distributed in the same way via the executive director of NJAIS.

For the purpose of the first, quantitative, phase of the study, I used a sampling frame that encompassed an administrator from each institution who was responsible for evaluating its teachers regarding a specific set of guidelines according to the institution. For the purpose of the second, qualitative, phase of the study, the purposeful sample was sought to intentionally select individuals to learn to understand the central phenomenon (Popham, 1988). The rationale behind this purposeful sample was to intentionally select informants who were best able to answer the research questions. Within the survey informed consent form, the participants were told select participants could choose to partake in the follow-up voluntary individual interviews. The sequential design of this study allowed the researcher to select participants for the second, qualitative, phase based on the results of the quantitative phase. Convenience sampling was used. This type of sampling was used because participants were chosen based on their availability and willingness to volunteer (Creswell, 2014).

Phase I: Quantitative

Data collection. The first phase of this study focused on identifying what teacher evaluation models New Jersey independent schools were using, what characteristics they valued most in an evaluation model, and how their model connected to their professional development program for their teachers or not. The survey was administered in a cross-sectional design, which

means the data was collected at one point in time (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used the Teacher Evaluation Profile (TEP) survey instrument developed by Stiggins and Duke (1988) and revised by Doherty (2009) to gather data about teacher and administrator perceptions of current methods of teacher evaluation (see Appendix E). This instrument has been used in several studies, and it is noted for its validity (Stiggins & Duke, 1988; Doherty, 2009). The researcher was given permission by Daniel Duke to use the TEP instrument in this research (see Appendix A). The TEP consists of both demographic information and items presented to the respondent on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being the lowest/least favorable and 5 being the highest/most favorable. The completion of the survey took participants approximately 15 minutes.

The survey questionnaire was anonymous, web-based and accessible through the URL that was sent to all administrators identified through the NJAIS's website of members. The main advantage of a web-based survey was participants' responses were automatically stored in a database that could be easily transformed into numeric data or Qualtrics format. Working email addresses were available for all potential participants in the study. An informed consent form was posted on the web as an opening page of the survey. Participants clicked on the button stating "I agree to complete this survey," expressing their compliance to participate in the study and complete the survey.

Once the survey was live, potential participants received an email notification and letter of solicitation from the executive director of NJAIS introducing the study (see Appendix C). The email was forwarded to all administrators within the NJAIS listserv for academic leaders. The goal of using this approach was to help avoid a low response rate, which is typical for web-based surveys (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In an effort to further address concerns about response

rate, two follow-up emails were sent to all administrators requesting their participation if they had not done so already. The web link of the survey remained open for five weeks.

Data analysis. Data analysis began with the final return of all survey responses after the five-week period. Detailed data was downloaded from the survey website, Qualtrics. This software has quantitative statistical analysis capabilities. Descriptive analysis of the survey data was conducted and presented as frequencies and means. The questions used on the quantitative survey provided the researcher with a mix of both nominal and interval-level data (Watkins & Gioia, 2015). The administrator group surveyed had 25 participants, yielding a 24% response rate. High school administrators yielded a higher response rate than middle or elementary school administrators. This may have been because of the larger number of upper school divisions within the NJAIS. Table 1 shows the breakdown of participants, including the total number of potential participants, the actual number of responses, and the percentage of total responses.

Table 1

Subgroup P*articipation* i*n* Questionnaire 1

Subgroup	Number of Potential Participants	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Administrators	104	25	24%

Reliability and validity. To ensure the right participants entered the study, it was vital to consider sample size. It was important to select a large sample, if possible. The survey was pilot-tested. The goal of the pilot study was to validate the instrument and test its reliability (Creswell,

2014). In my study, I was presented with a sample of the independent schools in New Jersey. However, there are multiple administrators at these institutions that perform teacher evaluations and multiple grade level divisions. Therefore, my sample size was larger than 87. The email was distributed to 104 administrators from 87 schools, and it yielded 25 responses.

Phase II: Qualitative

Data collection. The second phase of the study focused on explaining the results of the statistical tests run in the quantitative phase. The interviews were used for collecting and analyzing the qualitative data. In a qualitative interview, "The researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, or telephone or email interviews. These interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants" (Creswell, 2014, p. 210).

The primary technique for qualitative data collection was in-depth, semi-structured, and standardized open-ended interviews with administrators until saturation was met. In semi-structured open-ended interviews, "The exact wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance. All interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order. Questions are worded in a completely open-ended format" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p 59). Participants were asked to consent to providing the information regarding their school's teacher evaluation process and whether or not it connected to their professional development planning and offerings. The interview protocol included 13 open-ended questions. The content of the interview questions was based on the results of the statistical tests and the independent school administrators' perceptions regarding teacher evaluation tools; the integration of teacher

evaluation tools into the school environment; whether or not these tools help to ensure teacher quality; and the relationship, or lack thereof, between evaluation and professional development. The protocol was pilot-tested on administrators selected from the same target population but then excluded from the study. I debriefed the pilot participants to obtain information on the clarity of the interview questions and their relevance to the aim of the study. The completed interview protocol is found in Appendix F.

I recorded and transcribed all the interviews. A total of eight administrators responded to the solicitation email for the qualitative part of the study (see Appendix D). Due to various circumstances, two of the interviews were canceled. Convenience sampling was used for the qualitative portion of this mixed methods study. Participants volunteered their time for each interview. The resulting interviews were conducted with six administrators. Although this was a relatively small interview sample (N = 6), the qualitative data helped to generalize the findings and support the quantitative data. Once administrators agreed to participate, I provided them with further information detailing the length of the interviews and the measures to be taken to protect their identities. All interviews were recorded to assist in the analysis of interview notes and to confirm quotations. To protect the participant's identity, the transcribed interviews were anonymized using code numbers for participants' names and schools.

Data analysis. I followed a specific process during the analysis of my qualitative data. First, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. After interviews were transcribed, I began the coding process by looking for overarching themes within the data. I did so by reading the transcripts three times. In qualitative research, themes are defined as more general terms, phrases, or sentences that encapsulate larger groups of more specific codes (Wilson et al., 2014).

Once I documented these themes, I began generating specific codes that relate to these overarching themes but are more specific data points and generally include the language of the participants (Miles et al., 2014). I developed the codes inductively, and as themes emerged from the coding process, I grouped the codes by themes (Creswell, 2014; Miles et al., 2014). After developing these codes, I coded each of these interviews a second time, noting any discrepancies.

After I completed the coding process, I then reviewed all the codes, looking for common excerpts that highlighted similar themes and ideas. Consequently, I checked the validity of the coding process by recoding the data for a second time. I noted any discrepancies, and these discrepancies were addressed to refine and justify assertions and look for possible alternative interpretations of the data (Miles et al., 2014). After I completed the coding process, I compared quotations to the original interview text, making sure the data were taken in context and accurately represented what the participants attempted to articulate.

Credibility. In qualitative research, credibility focuses on the confidence that can be placed in the researcher's findings and an understanding of the context of the study. Watkins & Gioia (2015) suggest "Credible qualitative studies are those in which the findings are grounded in, and substantiated by, the data" (p. 88). Qualitative researchers must work toward the dependability of their findings, rather than reliability. Researchers should consider whether the research questions are truly aligned with the research design. As a qualitative researcher, I had to ensure I established a delineation between my personal views and those of the interviewees as a co-participant in the interview. I attempted to do this by piloting the interview protocol and

standardizing the questions. Assumptions and biases may have influenced the collection of the data (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

Advantages and Limitations of the Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Design

The benefits and drawbacks of mixed methods research designs have been discussed by researchers throughout literature (Watkins & Gioia, 2015; Creswell, 2014; Caruth, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

The advantages of this design include

1. It allows the researcher to identify and further explore important elements of his or her research.
2. It offers the researcher an opportunity to extend beyond the results of his or her quantitative research.
3. It draws comparisons between the quantitative and qualitative results.

The limitations of this design include

1. It is time intensive and requires many resources.
2. It requires the researcher learns multiple methods to combine them knowledgeably, defend their use, and utilize them professionally.

Each of these advantages and disadvantages relates to the purpose for my mixed method study because they further explain why a mixed method approach provides more insightful data than would have been collected from a strictly quantitative or strictly qualitative study. This approach best fit the nature of my descriptive study because the quantitative data collected assisted me in providing an overview of the landscape of teacher evaluations and professional

development in New Jersey independent schools, while the qualitative data collected provided greater insight into the systems and thought process behind those systems that are implemented. Although this type of design is more labor intensive because it requires multiple stages of data collection and analysis, it provided further insight into the perceptions of New Jersey independent school administrators. The mixed methods design required I dedicated additional time to the study of qualitative methods.

Ethical Considerations

As per the requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the permission for conducting the research was first obtained (see Appendix B). An informed consent form was created, and it stated all participants were guaranteed specific rights, recognized their rights are protected, and agreed to be in the study. As a prefix to the web survey, participants acknowledged that by completing the survey, they accepted the conditions of the study. All of the participant information was protected by numerically coding each completed survey and ensuring the confidentiality of responses. All individuals who were interviewed were assigned coded numbers, and schools were not be mentioned by name in description or reporting.

The Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I had different roles during the two different data collection phases of this study. During the quantitative phase, I distributed the survey and collected the data through convenience sampling of naturally existing groups (NJAIS school administrators) and reliability and validity checks of the instrument. The data analysis used various statistical analysis techniques, and the results were interpreted using Qualtrics software version 5 of the Qualtrics

Research Suite (Qualtrics, Provo, UT, USA). During the qualitative phase, I served in a participatory role and was personally involved in the research topic. To combat any potential issues of bias, I took measures to avoid self-disclosure and objective displays of emotion during the interviews.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

I recognize the results of this study may not be generalized due to the limited selection of participants, as well as the geographical location of the schools participating in the study. However, I provided detailed descriptions of the context so readers can make their own judgments regarding the generalizability of the findings. In addition, I assumed all participants were open and honest in their responses to both the survey and interview questions and the survey instrument and interview protocol did measure what they were intended to measure. Limiting the geographical location of the participants (New Jersey independent schools) may have lessened the generalizability of this research. Moreover, a small sample size for both the survey and interviews may also limit the findings of the study. Also, as with all qualitative research, the participants are shaped by their experiences and beliefs.

Chapter IV: Report of Data and Data Analysis

Research Questions

The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the perceptions of the teacher evaluation and professional development process held by New Jersey independent school administrators. The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What teacher evaluation processes or tools are being used in the independent schools in the state of New Jersey?
2. What types of professional development programs are provided for teachers in these schools?
3. How do independent school administrators perceive the relationship between the teacher evaluation system and the professional development programs?

Presentation of Quantitative Findings

Participants included administrators from New Jersey independent schools. Participants were asked to complete the TEP, a survey administered online via Qualtrics. A total of 25 administrators responded to the online survey. As Table 2 shows, the administrators' years of experience ranged from 1–3 years to 13 or more years. Those administrators with 4–7 years and 13 or more years were the largest group of respondents with 36% and 28%, respectively. The largest majority of respondents had only been an administrator in their current school (52%). The second largest respondent group had been administrators for 13 or more years (28%).

Table 2

Respondents' Total Years in Administration and Total Years at Current School Respondents' Total Years in Administration

	Total Years (Number)	Total Years (%)	Total Years at Current School (Number)	Total Years at Current School (%)
1–3 years	0	0	5	20
4–7 years	2	8	9	36
8–12 years	3	12	4	16
13 or more years	7	28	7	28
I have only been an administrator at this school	13	52		
Total	25	100	25	100

In Table 3, the current grade level assignment of the administrators is shown. Administrators serving grades 9–12 constituted 80% of respondents (20 of 25). New Jersey independent schools serving grades 9–12 made up 55% of the sampling frame. Administrators serving grades 6-8 made up 12% (3 of 25) of respondents, and those serving grades PreK–5 accounted for 8% (2 of 25) of respondents.

Table 3

Administrators' Current Grade Level Assignment

Grade Level	Number	%
PreK–5	2	8
6–8	3	12
9–12	20	80
Total	25	100

The final question in the first section of the TEP (Demographic Information) asked the respondents to report their gender, as shown in Table 4. Of the 25 administrators, 56% (14 of 25) were male and 44% (11 of 25) were female.

Table 4

Gender of Respondents

Gender	Number	%
Male	14	56
Female	11	44

Respondents were asked to use a 5-point scale to rate 40 items as well as answer basic demographic information and one open-ended question. The Likert scale responses ranged from 1–5 with 1 being the lowest/least favorable and 5 the highest/most favorable. The alignment of individual survey questions with research questions is presented in Appendix E.

Overall Rating of Quality of Evaluation

In the second section of the TEP, administrators were asked to rate the quality of the evaluation process used in their system. A rating of 1 on the Likert scale indicated the evaluation process was of very poor quality, whereas a rating of 5 indicated the evaluation process was of very high quality. The mean was 3.88, and the standard deviation was 0.59. Table 5 shows that no administrator (0%) indicated the quality of the evaluation process in his or her school very poor, while 3 of 25 administrators (12%) rated the evaluation process in their system to be very high in quality. No administrator (0%) rated the quality of evaluations as below average, and 6 of 25 administrators (24%) gave a rating of average. The largest number of respondents, 16 of 25 administrators (64%), indicated the evaluation process used in their school was above average quality.

Table 5

Administrators' Perceptions of Quality of Evaluation Process/Professional Practice

	Number	%
Very Poor Quality (1)	0	0
Below Average Quality (2)	0	0
Average Quality (3)	6	24
Above Average Quality (4)	16	64
Very High Quality (5)	3	12
Total	25	100

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Administrators were asked to rate the overall impact of the teacher evaluation process on a teacher's professional practice. A rating of 1 indicated teacher evaluation has no impact on a teacher's professional practice nor did it change a teacher's practices, attitude and/or understanding. A rating of 5 indicated the teacher evaluation process has a strong impact on professional practice that leads to significant changes in a teacher's practices and attitude about teaching. The mean was 3.48, and the standard deviation was 0.70. Table 6 shows two of the administrators (8%) indicated the evaluation process has a below-average impact on professional practice. Majority of the administrators, 48% (n = 12), indicated evaluation has an above-average impact on professional practice.

Table 6

Administrators' Perceptions of the Overall Impact of the Evaluation on Professional Practice

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	2	8
3	10	40
4	12	48
Strong Impact (5)	1	4
Total	25	100

In Table 7, administrators were asked to rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on teacher professional growth. A rating of 1 indicated teacher evaluation has no impact on a teacher's professional growth, while a rating of 5 indicated the teacher evaluation process has a

strong impact on professional growth. The mean was 3.56 and the standard deviation was 0.85. Table 7 shows majority of the administrators, 44% (n = 11), indicated evaluation has an average impact on professional growth. Eight percent of the administrators (n = 2) indicated the evaluation process has a below-average impact on professional growth. However, 32% of the administrators (n = 8) indicated an above-average impact on professional growth, and 16% of the administrators (n = 4) indicated evaluation has a strong impact on professional growth.

Table 7

Administrators' Perceptions of the Overall Impact of the Evaluation on Professional Growth

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	2	8
3	11	44
4	8	32
Strong Impact (5)	4	16
Total	25	100

As shown in Table 8, administrators were asked to rate the degree to which, if at all, evaluation has an impact on the quality of student learning. Sixty-eight percent (n = 17) indicated evaluation has an above-average impact on the quality of student learning. Twenty-four percent of the administrators (n = 6) indicated evaluation has an average amount of impact on the quality of student learning. No administrator indicated teacher evaluation has no impact on the quality of student learning. One administrator (4%) indicated teacher evaluation has very little impact on

the quality of student learning, while one other administrator (4%) indicated teacher evaluation has a strong impact on the quality of student learning. The mean was 3.72, and the standard deviation was 0.60.

Table 8

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on the Quality of Student Learning

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	1	4
3	6	24
4	17	68
Strong Impact (5)	1	1
Total	25	100

Table 9

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on Student Achievement

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	1	4
2	2	8
3	11	44
4	11	44
Strong Impact (5)	0	0
Total	25	100

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In Table 9, when asked to rate the impact of evaluation on student achievement, the majority of the administrators were split between their perception of evaluation either having an average or an above-average impact on student achievement. These categories had 44% of the administrators each (n = 11). No administrator believed the evaluation has a strong impact on student achievement. Although evaluations do serve other professional purposes, this may indicate New Jersey independent school administrators do not believe there is a direct correlation to student achievement. Four percent of the administrators (n = 1) indicated there was no impact, while 8% (n = 2) indicated evaluation has very little impact on student achievement. The mean was 3.28, and the standard deviation was 0.78.

As shown below in Table 10, administrators were asked to rate the influence, if any, evaluation has on school improvement goals. Majority of the administrators, 56% (n = 14) indicated evaluation has an above-average impact on school improvement goals. Thirty-two percent of the administrators (n = 8) indicated evaluation has an average impact on school improvement goals. Eight percent of the administrators (n = 2) indicated evaluation has a strong impact over school improvement goals. Four percent of the administrators (n = 1) indicated a below-average impact, while no administrator indicated evaluation has no impact on school improvement goals. For the data collected in this response, the mean was 3.68, and the standard deviation was 0.68.

Table 10

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on School Improvement Goals

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	1	4
3	8	32
4	14	56
Strong Impact (5)	2	8
Total	25	100

As evidenced in Table 11, administrators had varying beliefs with regard to what degree the evaluation system supports and helps foster a positive school culture and climate that supports learning. The mean was 3.76, and the standard deviation was 0.65. Sixty-four percent of the administrators (n = 16) indicated evaluation has an above-average impact, while 8% (2) indicated a strong impact on school culture and climate. Twenty-four percent of the administrators (n = 6) indicated an average impact on school culture and climate. Four percent of the administrators (n = 1) indicated a below-average impact, and no administrator indicated the evaluation system has no impact on school culture and climate at all.

Table 11

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on School Culture and Climate

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	1	4
3	6	24
4	16	64
Strong Impact (5)	2	8
Total	25	100

Table 12 shows the results of what administrators noted when rating the impact of evaluation on the improvement of teaching quality. The mean was 3.84, and the standard deviation was 0.67. Seventy-six percent of the administrators (n = 19) indicated the evaluation system in their school has an above-average impact on improving teacher quality. None of the administrators indicated that their evaluation system has no impact on teacher quality. 8% (n = 2) administrators noted that evaluation has a below-average impact, 8% (n = 2) administrators indicated an average impact, and 8% (n = 2) administrators indicated a strong impact on the improvement of teacher quality.

Table 12

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on the Improvement of Teacher Quality

	Number	%
No Impact (1)	0	0
2	2	8
3	2	8
4	19	76
Strong Impact (5)	2	8
Total	25	100

In Table 13, administrators were asked to indicate whether they believed the evaluation system had a positive impact on supporting and linking to the development of teacher goals. Within their responses, the mean was 3.56, and the standard deviation was 0.85. Majority of the administrators indicated the evaluation system has an average impact (n = 11, 44%) or above-average impact (n = 10, 40%) on the development of teacher goals. Twelve percent of the administrators (n = 3) indicated a strong impact, while none indicated a below-average impact. Four percent of the administrators (n = 1) indicated there was no positive impact of evaluation supporting and linking to the development of teacher goals. With a cross-tabs analysis, Table 13 demonstrates the majority of the administrators with 13 or more years of experience perceived an average or above-average impact on the link to teacher goals. The chi square was 5.03, and the degrees of freedom were 16. There was a p-value of 1, which details the results were not statistically significant.

Table 13

Administrators' Perceptions of the Impact of Evaluation on Supporting and Linking to the Development of Teacher Goals with Administrator Years of Experience

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1–3 years	0	0	0	0	0	0
4–7 years	0	0	1	1	0	2
8–12 years	0	0	2	1	0	3
13 or more years	0	0	3	4	0	7
Total	1	0	11	10	3	25

In the next section of the TEP, administrators were asked to consider to what extent sources of performance information were considered part of the evaluation process. These sources of performance included observation of a teacher's classroom performance, meetings with the administrator, examination of artifacts (lesson plans, materials, and home/school communication), and examination of student performance, student evaluations, peer evaluations, and self-evaluations. As seen in Table 14, with a scoring range of 1 to 5, the administrator mean scores ranged from 2.16 to 4.16—with the lowest mean being for peer evaluations and the highest mean being for observation of classroom performance. Data indicated a combined 84% of the administrators used or extensively used observation of a teacher's classroom performance as part of the teacher evaluation process. Seventy-two percent of the administrators used or extensively used meetings with teachers as part of the teacher evaluation process. Forty-six percent of the administrators used or extensively used examination of artifacts, 32% used or extensively used examination of student performance, another 32% used or extensively used

student evaluations, 16% used peer evaluations, and 54% used or extensively used self-evaluations as a part of the teacher evaluation process.

Table 14

Mean Scores of the Sources of Performance Information Considered Part of the Evaluation Process

Performance Information	Administrator Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Observation of Classroom Performance	4.16	0.78
Meetings with the Administrator	3.80	1.10
Examination of Artifacts	3.38	1.07
Examination of Student Performance	2.92	1.13
Student Evaluations	3.16	1.01
Peer Evaluations	2.16	1.12
Self-Evaluations	3.58	1.04

Next, administrators had to identify the number of formal and informal evaluations conducted per year for both tenured and nontenured teachers. Respondents chose from 0–4 or 4 or more observations. Administrators were also surveyed on the length of these evaluations, both formal and informal. Response choices for these items were 1 (0–10 minutes), 2 (10–20 minutes), 3 (20–30 minutes), 4 (30–40 minutes), and 5 (40 or more minutes). As seen in Table 15, administrator mean scores ranged from 3.00 to 4.50—with the lowest mean being for the

number of formal observations per year for a tenured teacher and the highest mean being for the average length of formal observations. Data indicate 12.5% of tenured teachers do not receive yearly formal observations, 25% receive one formal observation, and another 25% receive two formal observations. Another 25% of tenured teachers receive three formal observations, while another 12.5% receive four or more observations per year. Nontenured teachers have a slight increase in yearly formal observations—with 12% receiving zero, another 12% receiving one, 24% receiving two, another 24% receiving three, and 28% of nontenured teachers receiving four or more observations per year. The scoring range for the average length of informal and formal observations ranged from 1 (few minutes) to 5 (40 or more minutes). Twenty-five percent of the administrators indicated the average length of formal observations was approximately 30 minutes, while 66.67% of the administrators indicated formal observations took 40 minutes or more. A combined 66.66% of the administrators indicated informal observations averaged a few minutes to 20 minutes.

Table 15

Mean Scores of the Attributes of the Extent of the Observations of the Classroom Used

Attribute on TEP	Administrator Mean Score/Minutes	Standard Deviation
Number of formal observations per year for a tenured teacher	3.00	1.22
Number of formal observations per year for a nontenured teacher	3.44	1.33
Number of informal observations for tenured teachers	3.54	1.29
Number of informal observations for nontenured teachers	3.83	1.28
Average length of formal observations	30–40 mins	0.91
Average length of informal observations	20–30 mins	1.17

*TEP = Teacher Evaluation Profile

In the following section, administrator perceptions of the attributes of the feedback received in the evaluation process were examined. In this section the information obtained included the amount of information given, frequency of formal feedback, frequency of informal feedback, depth of information provided, quality of the ideas and suggestions contained in the

feedback, specificity of information provided, nature of information provided, timing of feedback, and the amount of time spent on the evaluation process by both the administrator and other participants. As shown in Table 16, the mean score for administrators ranged from 3.04 to 4.08—with the highest mean score for feedback focused on the specificity of the information provided and the lowest mean score being the frequency of formal feedback in the evaluation process.

Table 16

Mean Scores of the Attributes of the Feedback Received during the Evaluation Process

Attribute TEP	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Amount of information 1 (None) to 5 (Great Deal)	25	3.88	0.82
Frequency of formal feedback 1 (Infrequent) to 5 (Frequent)	25	3.04	0.92
Frequency of informal feedback 1 (Infrequent) to 5 (Frequent)	25	3.68	1.01
Depth of information provided 1 (Shallow) to 5 (In-depth)	25	3.84	0.61
Quality of ideas and suggestions 1 (Low) to 5 (High)	25	3.84	0.61
Specificity of information provided 1 (General) to 5 (Specific)	25	4.08	0.63
Nature of information provided 1 (Judgmental) to 5 (Descriptive)	25	3.88	3.88
Timing of feedback 1 (Delayed) to 5 (Immediate)	25	3.72	0.72
Amount of time spent on the evaluation process 1 (None) to 5 (Great Deal)	25	3.96	0.82

*TEP = Teacher Evaluation Profile; N = sample size

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The final section of the TEP asked respondents to rate the attributes of the evaluation context. The questions included the amount of time allotted during the school year for professional development aligned with standards, the time allotted during the school year for professional development aligned with the implementation of the evaluation process, the availability of training programs and models of good practices, the clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of evaluation, and the intended role of evaluation. With a scoring range of 1 to 5, Table 17 shows the mean scores for administrators ranged from 2.80 to 4.08—with administrators rating intended role of evaluation as the highest attribute and amount of time on professional development aligned with evaluation process as the lowest attribute. It was interesting to see that the clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of evaluation statements ranked as the second highest. These two results point to administrators' belief in the importance of clearly defining the role of evaluation for faculties.

Table 17

Mean Scores of the Attributes of the Evaluation Context

Attribute TEP	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Amount of time on professional development aligned with standards	25	3.36	0.89
Amount of time on professional development aligned with the evaluation process	25	2.80	0.98
Availability of training programs and models of good practice	25	3.28	1.00
Clarity of policy statements regarding the purpose of evaluation	25	3.92	0.93
Intended role of evaluation	25	4.08	0.69

*TEP = Teacher Evaluation Profile; N = sample size

Open-Ended Responses Regarding Teacher Evaluation

On the final question of the survey, administrators were asked to describe what they thought about the teacher evaluation process in the school where they were employed. There were 19 comments from administrators. Qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses was conducted using content analysis and frequency counts. Overall, the comments from administrators were positive and indicated the processes provide meaningful feedback and create a culture of accountability and growth. One administrator cited, “Our goals with the evaluation process include building a cohesive professional community of risk takers and innovators, creating

capacity for the skillful design and implementation of high-impact instruction, and demonstrating a passion for children, teaching, and professional practice."

Similarly, another administrator indicated,

> A robust and well-considered process, our teacher evaluation process is about teacher growth, not measurement and accountability. Our goals include building a cohesive professional community of risk takers and innovators, creating capacity for the skillful design and implementation of high-impact instruction, and demonstrating a passion for children, teaching, and professional practice.

In addition, another administrator noted the importance of reflection throughout the process: "I feel that our evaluation system is very personalized, which makes it more impactful and truthful. In addition, it allows for reflection periods throughout the process and the school year."

Although many administrators indicated their school's evaluation process was meaningful, some felt differently. A few administrators did note improvements could be made to make the process more impactful for all those involved. The most common theme among the few administrators who sought for more to be accomplished was "While supervisors observe and submit evaluations of department members, there is little follow up from the administration." Other responses noted the devotion of time needed for the process and the evaluations are not followed up in any meaningful way.

Presentation of Qualitative Findings

The presentation of the findings is structured according to the emergent subthemes and categories. The initial codes that emerged were fostering growth, mission-focused faculty, and an aversion to rating scales, the connotation of evaluation, and ties to employment.

When attempting to identify how New Jersey independent school administrators perceive the relationship between the teacher evaluation system and professional development programs, it was important to ascertain administrators' perceived purpose of evaluation. Fostering growth within the faculty, having a mission-focused faculty, and having an aversion to rating scales, the connotation of evaluation, and ties to employment all emerged as major themes.

Interview participants ranged in titles and included a division head, an associate school head, deans of faculties, and a dean of academics. Administrator 1 was a male serving grades 6–12, administrator 2 was a female serving grade K-8, administrator 3 was a male serving grade K-12, administrator 4 was a female serving grades 9–12, administrator 5 was also a female serving grades 9–12, and administrator 6 was a female serving grade K-5.

Fostering growth. In this study, all six administrators interviewed were responsible for teacher evaluation within their schools. Although some worked as part of a team of individuals conducting evaluations, others were solely responsible for carrying out the evaluation process themselves. All six of the administrators interviewed perceived the purpose of teacher evaluation as a way to foster growth in teachers. Although much of the discussion across the national landscape involving teacher evaluation is currently focused on accountability and ratings, the interviews with New Jersey independent school administrators yielded only a focus on fostering

the professional growth of faculties. In discussing the perception of teacher evaluation and benefit of constructive feedback, Administrator 1 stated,

> It's a growth model where we focus on content expertise, classroom management, and professionalism, so I see everybody teach by January or February, and I see the entire class. We talk about the teacher development model—those categories I mentioned and the narratives are sort of bullet points within each of those categories in relation to the class. They also get to be observed by their department chair, who also uses the teacher development model. I meet with the department chairs to talk about my observations so there is a context for how they are being observed, what the conversations look like, and how that will form their professional development moving forward.

Administrator 1 went on to express the school utilizes a teacher development model and feedback is provided to teachers based on the categories of teaching excellence included in the model. Teachers are also observed by their department chairs. The teachers then meet with the administrator to discuss the observation and be provided context for how they are being observed. A faculty member's professional development is often shaped by these observations.

Administrator 2 explained the evaluation process was viewed as a check-in during the year to provide continued conversation surrounding teaching excellence. She indicated, "The greatest opportunity to use at our school for teachers is to engage in ongoing growth and development. Its design and its intent are to be formative, not to be summative or evaluative as people would think."

Administrator 2 went on to explain the school's philosophy is a collaborative one, where the school works to meet the teachers at their need and where they are on their career path.

Therefore, depending on the tenure of the teacher, the expectations and goals for that teacher would be very different. She said, “They benefit from it because it’s not a top-down sort of authoritarian way of monitoring teachers.” Teachers benefited from the frequent feedback and collaborative nature of how the evaluation system was being carried out.

Administrators 4 and 6 indicated the evaluation model was not so much about performance as it was about development and growth. Administrator 4 said, “So our philosophy that we might use is to help people improve. So we use it to focus on our teacher improvement plans, helping teachers develop their skills and also take ownership of where they need to improve.”

Similarly, Administrator 6 indicated,

> The observation model is largely based on a growth model, not necessarily a performance model. It is something there are conversations about, whether we are going to have a direct correlation between the two. Right now, I would say it is indirect.

Both administrators expressed the evaluation process is used as a way to facilitate conversations surrounding teaching and learning. When examining administrators’ perceptions of the purpose of teacher evaluation, the data suggest administrators agreed the evaluation process should be used for professional growth. They agreed the evaluation process creates room for meaningful conversations to take place surrounding teaching and learning. Administrators included in this sample did not seem to perceive the same level of pressure regarding the evaluation process as many public school administrators have cited in other studies (Kimball and Milanowski, 2009; Odden, 2004; Toch and Rothman, 2008; Rockoff and Speroni, 2010). Independent school administrators included in this study were in agreement that the process of

becoming an excellent teacher is achieved through continuous and ongoing growth. Administrators also agreed their evaluation model and procedures are collaborative in nature, focusing on meeting the teacher where he or she is.

Having a mission-focused faculty. During the course of the interviews, administrators were asked to discuss what role, if any, the school's mission statement had in the expectations of a model teacher in their school and whether or not the school's mission was included in the process of evaluation.

Responses surrounding mission-focused evaluation were mixed. Administrator 1 indicated,

> Yes, I would say that it does in terms of our mission which is about being an individual and achieving excellence by one's ability to meet students' needs where they are. And our model really does promote self-aware, nimble, agile teachers who are able to think about how to help students coordinate, collaborate, communicate, and be creative in content knowledge based on how well they learn from each other and the teachers.

She explained as an administrator during the evaluation process, she looked for the teacher to demonstrate the characteristics of the mission through his or her teaching, conduct, and interactions with students and the school community.

Similarly, another administrator discussed the importance of the core tenets of the school to the overall evaluation. Administrator 2 stated,

> We look at the school's mission, the ethos of the school. We look at mission skills. The same criteria that we look at for our children, we also look at for teachers, so they are embodying time management and creativity and teamwork, collaboration. So that's sort

> of the basis of what we do. We base it on sort of our founding tenets of the school which we call our mission skills and our pillars: leadership, responsibility, and respect.

In addition to examining how teachers are exhibiting the core values and tenets of the school inside their classrooms, some administrators expressed the use of reflection when it came to identifying how teachers viewed the role of the mission within their professional lives. Administrator 5 noted,

> At the very beginning, we ask faculty to reflect on why they work here instead of another school—in particular, we are a boarding and day school—and we also ask them to identify those parts of the mission that resonates with them most.

The faculty is encouraged to reflect on how they view their role as professionals within the learning community. Administrator 6 indicated within the evaluation document management system, there is a section for the foundation documents of the schools. During the course of the evaluation process, teachers are asked to reflect on those documents when they write their narrative and discuss the ways the mission influences their teaching and interactions with their students. Administrator 3 noted the mission of his school is carried out within these interactions and the tool which his school uses to acknowledge these interactions. He explained,

> Items within that survey (student perception surveys) are consistent with mission-specific priorities. I mean, at the heart of our mission, it's really about students and teachers connecting, so I would say other than having an intellectually rigorous and engaging learning environment, I would say the primary thing that teachers want to look at is engagement.

Overall, the majority of the administrators indicated the value and importance of including their mission statement as a focal point in the evaluation process. Administrators 1 and 2 indicated that the forethought of the mission should be visible in the classroom observations of the teachers. However, Administrators 3 and 5 viewed the role of the mission in the evaluation process slightly differently. They indicated the importance of requiring their faculty to reflect on the mission and how it shapes their interactions with their students.

Having an aversion to rating scales, the connotation of evaluation, and ties to employment. A noticeable difference during the discussions with New Jersey independent school administrators was their view on the evaluation process as a whole and whether or not it should tie to employment. This differs from much of the research surrounding their New Jersey public school counterparts who are focused on evaluation ratings that are tied to employment. New Jersey public school administrators are responsible for rating each of their teachers within a rating scale framework that includes ineffective, partially effective, effective, and highly effective (Achieve NJ, n.d.). However, New Jersey independent school administrators seemed to unanimously agree the evaluation process and employment are not one and the same. For example, Administrator 3 pointed out

> The answer is no. So we have professional development processes that we engage in, but if we see reason for concern that a faculty member is not meeting that expectation, we feel that it's essential to figure out what's going on and engage that faculty member in conversation if we believe there is a need for intervention because that drop in performance occurs for a variety of reasons usually. We believe many of them occur because of life changes: someone goes through a period of depression, they are going

> through a divorce, or they have a sick child. There are a whole array of reasons performance falls off, so we really feel first and foremost, we need to support people getting back to that expectation, and that means working closely with that person.
>
> I guess the other side of that is how we figure things out as people are coming on board, and so we have a separate process for people onboarding with close attention over the first three to four years that people are at the school, which involves coaches and mentors and the faculty working closely with those individuals. Obviously, department heads play a critical role in determining whether or not this person is the right fit for the school, and in cases where they aren't meeting expectation, again, if we feel that an intervention is best going to support them moving forward to that level of expectation, we won't hesitate to move in that direction. We really believe that is in the best interest of not only the students but also the faculty member.

Similarly, the other New Jersey independent school administrators indicated they did not feel the observation model was based on performance but rather on growth. Although there are expectations teachers must meet, administrators felt their job was to support the teacher where he or she was. When administrators witnessed a pattern of teacher behavior in need of remediation, they, in conjunction with the teacher, developed a remediation plan. If the teacher was still not found to be meeting expectations after a year or two, they may be phased out.

Administrator 5 pointed out that the process is viewed differently in their school. The administrator indicated,

> Yeah, it's really much more designed to be about developing the talents of the teacher, not trying to identify weak teachers or teachers who we need to consider terminating. We

would have those kinds of conversations separate from the evaluation piece so there might be things that come up in the evaluation process that help us identify issues. But then we would try to highlight those issues to that teacher and, again, take them to more of a probationary piece where they really have to address certain issues to remain at the school.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

Summary

This chapter contains a summary of the findings of the study as well as the conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research. The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate the perceptions of administrators of New Jersey independent schools on both teacher evaluation and professional development programs. Twenty-five administrators responded to the survey, and six administrators participated in the interviews. Overall findings from the responses collected were favorable toward administrators' perceptions of the value and connection between teacher evaluation and professional development. A large number of the administrators (64%) believed the evaluation process at their schools was above average quality and had a large influence on professional growth (32%). Administrators indicated the evaluation process has an above average influence on school improvement goals (56%). In addition, administrators believed the evaluation process has an above average influence on the development of teacher goals. Administrators ranked observation of classroom performance as the most important piece of the evaluation process. This is contrary to the NCLB, RTTT, and ESSA movements, which focused primarily on student achievement as a large component of the evaluation process (Evans, 2013; Stotsky, 2016). Across the survey responses, virtually no responses indicated a below-average rating. Three common themes emerged regarding New Jersey independent school administrators' perception of the purpose of teacher evaluation from the six administrators who participated in the interviews. These themes included fostering growth, having a mission-focused faculty, and having an aversion to rating scales, the connotation of evaluation, and ties to employment. Overall, this sample of administrators viewed

the evaluation process as reflective, as responsible for facilitating teaching excellence, and as personalized to each teacher rather than as a list of evaluative checkpoints to complete and a one-size-fits-all approach (Danielson, 2007; Gates Foundation, 2013; Hallinger, 2014; Kimball and Milanowski, 2009; Odden, 2004; Toch and Rothman, 2008; Rockoff and Speroni, 2010). This research will help inform independent school leaders as they work to develop and implement effective teacher evaluation and professional development processes.

Analysis of Research Findings

Quantitative data from 25 New Jersey independent school administrators were collected via the online administration of the TEP. Qualitative data were collected from six New Jersey independent school administrators using an online video conferencing platform. The overarching question that guided the research was: What are New Jersey independent school administrators' perceptions of the teacher evaluation and professional development processes in their schools? The quantitative results from this research demonstrated administrators believe the current teacher evaluation tools used in their schools are average to above-average in quality. They informed the qualitative findings by providing context for the interview protocol questions. The quantitative findings provided details regarding frequency of use and perceptions while the qualitative findings deepened the understanding of each school's philosophical approach to teacher evaluation and professional development. The qualitative responses indicated a focus on the use of evaluation in fostering conversations and in goal setting surrounding professional growth.

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This descriptive study focused on outlining what teacher evaluation and professional development practices are currently being used in New Jersey independent schools. Due to the lack of research regarding independent schools, the study's purpose was to map the territory. The first research question stated, "What teacher evaluation processes or tools are being used in the independent schools in the state of New Jersey?" Administrators primarily responded they utilize school-created models, and many also use the Danielson model for evaluation or draw inspiration from this model for their schools. The processes regarding evaluation varied. However, it was apparent that classroom observation and conversation was key to most processes.

The second research question asked, "What types of professional development programs are provided for teachers in these schools?" Administrators reported their schools generally provided healthy budgets for professional development. While some responded that professional development in their school took the forms of conferences, workshops, and book clubs, others noted professional development in the context of curriculum writing and peer-to-peer training. A mandatory number of hours for professional development was not required by schools but engagement in professional development to some extent was. Administrators felt teachers freely engaged in professional development activities and practices.

In the third research question, administrators were asked, "How do independent school administrators perceive the relationship between the teacher evaluation system and professional development programs?" All administrators indicated a belief in the connection between evaluation and professional development. Some administrators stated areas of focus for professional development for teachers sometimes came from observations made during

evaluations. All administrators indicated school-wide goals helped to focus both the nature of the evaluations and the activities surrounding professional development.

Suggestions for Future Research

I would like to make the following recommendations for the interpretation and utilization of the data included in this study. Further research should be conducted with a larger, more diverse sample to improve the generalizability of the results. The qualitative data provided further rationale regarding the process of teacher evaluation and professional development, along with implementation. A more extensive study of just qualitative data should be conducted using a broader sample chosen from NAIS. This study should be replicated during a different time period during the school year to hear administrator perceptions while moving through the process of evaluation and professional growth. Research focus should be extended to independent school teacher perceptions of the teacher evaluation and professional development process as well. This will allow for comparisons to be made between teacher and administrator perceptions of the evaluation and professional development processes.

Conclusions and Implications of the Study

As accountability for student learning and outcomes increases in the independent school realm, the need for measures to ensure teacher development and growth increases. This need has become a priority for school administrators as they consider ways to maintain their school's marketability among increasing competition from successful public schools. The focus on the school reform movement has influenced educators to reexamine teacher quality. The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate New Jersey independent school administrators'

perceptions of teacher evaluation and professional development processes. There has not been a study conducted to evaluate the landscape of what tools and processes that are currently used in New Jersey independent schools.

The data collected in this study can be used to make improvements in current teacher evaluation and professional development processes. The results of this study demonstrated independent schools in New Jersey view evaluation as a means to provide the channels for professional growth. The schools participating in the study indicated professional development is a vital piece of teacher growth but should be initiated and explored by the needs of the individual teacher. Although some research recognize other forms of collection of evaluative information, administrators who participated in this study viewed classroom observations as the way the majority of evaluative information was collected.

One of the key findings in this study was the perception New Jersey independent school administrators possess in relation to the teacher evaluation process. The administrators in this study consistently reported the evaluation process is used as a tool to promote and foster growth rather than measure performance. Additionally, some noteworthy indications by administrators included evaluation has an above-average impact on professional practice, school improvement goals, and teaching quality. Administrators also noted although classroom observations are still the primary source of data collection for evaluation, they also utilize artifacts, student performance measurements, peer/student evaluations, and self-evaluations. These findings demonstrate New Jersey independent schools feel the evaluation process is meaningful and positively influences their learning communities. There is a notable connection between the evaluation process, school improvement goals, and the focus of professional development.

Although there is not a mandated type of evaluation tool to be used in independent schools, these institutions recognize the importance of the process as a whole and are committed to identifying and developing a program that best fits the needs of their schools and faculties.

These findings are useful for independent school administrators. They provide a scope from which this group of practitioners can assess their school's current evaluation and professional development practices. This research can provide a platform for administrators to have productive conversations on how to continue providing support and resources to their faculties to ensure high-quality instruction and educational outcomes for students. This research also points to the continued culture of autonomy and individuality of independent schools, as the institutions included in this study primarily utilize a school-created model for evaluation. Policymakers can use the results of this study to reroute the focus of evaluation in the public school sector from rating scales to professional growth.

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Appendix A

TEP for Administrators Survey Permission

Gmail - TEP Permission

Gmail

Marissa Muoio <marissa.c.muoio@gmail.com>

TEP Permission

Duke, Daniel L. (dld7g) <dld7g@virginia.edu> Mon, Apr 23, 2018 at 3:58 PM
To: Marissa Muoio <marissa.c.muoio@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. Muoio:

I hereby grant you permission to use the TEP for as an instrument in your doctoral research. What did you mean when you referred to the "revised TEP"?

Daniel L. Duke
Professor
University of Virginia

From: Marissa Muoio <marissa.c.muoio@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 2:04:20 PM
To: Duke, Daniel L. (dld7g)
Subject: TEP Permission

Good
afternoon, Dr. Duke:

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D Program at Seton Hall University. My dissertation title is "Administrator Perceptions of the Teacher Evaluation
Process and Professional Development Programming in New Jersey Independent Schools." I would like to use the (TEP) as an instrument in my research.

Are
you able to grant permission for my use of the revised TEP? If you are unable to grant permission, would you be so kind as to direct me to the correct individual who would be able to do so?

Sincerely,
Marissa
Muoio

me
to Daniel
Apr 24, 2018 View details

Hi Dr. Duke,

Thank you for the permission. Please excuse my use of the word revised. I would just like to use the TEP.

Thank you,

Marissa

Appendix B

IRB Approval

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
1856

July 9, 2018

Marissa Muoio
[redacted]

Dear Ms. Muoio,

The Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board has reviewed the information you have submitted addressing the concerns for your proposal entitled "Administrator Perceptions of the Teacher Evaluation Process and Professional Development Programming/Offerings in New Jersey Independent Schools". Your research protocol is hereby approved as revised through expedited review. The IRB reserves the right to recall the proposal at any time for full review.

Enclosed for your records are the signed Request for Approval form and the stamped original Consent Form. Make copies only of this stamped form.

The Institutional Review Board approval of your research is valid for a one-year period from the date of this letter. During this time, any changes to the research protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

According to federal regulations, continuing review of already approved research is mandated to take place at least 12 months after this initial approval. You will receive communication from the IRB Office for this several months before the anniversary date of your initial approval.

Thank you for your cooperation.

In harmony with federal regulations, none of the investigators or research staff involved in the study took part in the final decision.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Ruzicka Ph.D

Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. David Reid

Office of Institutional Review Board
Presidents Hall • 400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, NJ 07079 • Tel: 973.313.6314 • Fax: 973.275.2361 • www.shu.edu

HOME FOR THE MIND, THE HEART AND THE SPIRI

Appendix C

Letter of Solicitation (Survey)

Dear Administrator,

My name is Marissa Muoio, and I am a doctoral student at Seton Hall University in the College of Education's K-12 Administration program.

This study examines administrator perceptions of the teacher evaluation process and professional development programming/offerings in New Jersey independent schools. To conduct the investigation, I ask that you participate in one 15-minute anonymous survey during a three-week collection period from August 21 to September 11.

The purpose of this study is to determine what teacher evaluation tools/practices are currently being used in New Jersey independent schools. In addition, the study seeks to determine what professional development practices are used by New Jersey independent schools and examine if these professional development practices are related to teacher evaluation practices.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks to participating in the study, and there is no penalty for refusing to participate.

Potential benefits include your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how New Jersey independent schools view teacher evaluation and professional development within their school communities.

All electronic data will be kept on a USB drive and locked in a cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researcher and her dissertation advisor will have access to this data. Due to the online nature of this study's survey, there is always a possibility of hacking of online material.

If you need further information about this study, please contact Marissa Muoio by email: muoiomaa@shu.edu or my advisor, Dr. David Reid: david.reid@shu.edu.

If you are interested in taking the survey, please click on the link below:
https://shu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1zaVa6rBPeZ2WPP

Once again, the link will remain live from August 21 to September 11. Thank you for your consideration of participating in my research.

Marissa Muoio

Appendix D

Letter of Solicitation (Interviews)

Dear Administrator,

My name is Marissa Muoio, and I am a doctoral student at Seton Hall University in the College of Education's K-12 Administration program.

This study examines administrator perceptions of the teacher evaluation process and professional development programming/offerings in New Jersey independent schools. To conduct the investigation, I ask that you be available for one 30-minute interview during the 2018–2019 school year.

The purpose of this study is to determine what teacher evaluation tools/practices are currently being used in New Jersey independent schools. In addition, the study seeks to determine what professional development practices are used by New Jersey independent schools and examine if these professional development practices are related to teacher evaluation practices.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. The interview may be conducted by phone or via a Zoom meeting and will be recorded. If the interview is conducted via a Zoom meeting, there is a danger of the software being hacked.

Potential benefits include your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how New Jersey independent schools view teacher evaluation and professional development within their school communities.

All electronic data will be kept on a USB drive and locked in a cabinet in the researcher's office. Only the researcher and her dissertation advisor will have access to this data.

If you would like to participate in the interview, please contact Marissa Muoio by email: marissa.c.muoio@gmail.com or phone: [redacted]

Thank you for taking the time to consider being part of my research.

Marissa Muoio

Appendix E

TEP Instrument for Administrators

Demographic Information

1. Including the current year, how many years have you been an administrator in your independent school?

1–3 years
4–7 years
8–12 years
13 or more years

2. If you have been an administrator in multiple school districts, including the current year, how many total years have you been an administrator?

1–3 years
4–7 years
8–12 years
13 or more years
I have only been an administrator in this school

3. Your current assignment grade level (select the answer that best describes your current position).

Grades PreK–5
Grades 6–8
Grades 9–12

4. Your gender

Male
Female

Part A: Please reflect on the evaluation process in your school for this current school year. Consider the entire evaluation process—including goal setting, self-assessment, meetings with individual teachers, planning for evaluation, formal and informal observations, or other procedures and feedback.

5. Rate the overall quality of the evaluation process.

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Very poor quality→ very high quality

6. Rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on a teacher's professional practices. (Note: A rating of 5 would reflect a strong impact leading to profound changes in teaching practices, attitudes about teaching, and/or understanding of the teaching profession. A rating of 1 would reflect no impact and no change in practices, attitudes, and/or understanding.)

No impact→ strong impact

7. Rate the overall impact of the evaluation process on teacher professional growth. (Note: A rating of 5 would reflect a strong impact on teacher professional growth. A rating of 1 would reflect no impact at all on teacher professional growth.)

No impact→ strong impact

8. Rate the positive impact on student learning: A strong impact rating (5) would indicate that the evaluation system improves the quality of student learning.

No impact→ strong impact

9. Rate the positive impact on school improvement goals: A strong impact rating (5) would indicate the evaluation system helps the faculty achieve school improvement goals.

No impact→ strong impact

10. Rate the positive impact on school climate: A strong impact rating (5) would indicate that the evaluation system supports and helps foster a positive school culture and climate that supports learning.

No impact→ strong impact

11. Rate the positive impact on quality of teachers: A strong impact rating (5) would indicate the evaluation system improves teaching quality.

No impact→ strong impact

12. Rate the positive impact of the evaluation system on the goals that you develop with teachers each year: A strong impact rating (5) would indicate the evaluation system supports and links to the development of teacher goals.

No impact→ strong impact

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To what extent were the following sources of performance information considered as part of the evaluation process?

13. Observation of a teacher's classroom performance

Not considered→ used extensively

14. Meetings with you (administrator)

Not considered→ used extensively

15. Examination of artifacts (lesson plans, materials, home/school communication, etc.)

Not considered→ used extensively

16. Examination of student performance

Not considered→ used extensively

17. Student evaluations

Not considered→ used extensively

18. Peer evaluations

Not considered→ used extensively

20. Self-evaluations

Not considered→ used extensively

Describe the extent of the observations you have done for teachers for the 2017–2018 school year. (Note: In these items formal refers to observations that were preannounced and/or were accompanied by a pre-test or with the evaluator; informal refers to unannounced drop-in visits.)

21. Number of formal observations for a teacher being evaluated
- 0 observation
- 1 observation
- 2 observations
- 3 observations
- 4 or more observations

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

22. Approximate frequency of informal observations of all teachers within one school calendar year

- 0 observation
- 1 observation
- 2 observations
- 3 observations
- 4 or more observations

23. Average length of formal observations

Brief (few minutes) 1→ 5 Extended (40 minutes or more)

24. Average length of informal observations

Brief (few minutes) 1→ 5 Extended (40 minutes or more)

Part B: Please describe the attributes of the feedback you typically gave to teachers during the evaluation process throughout the 2017–2018 school year

25. Amount of information given

None 1→ 5 Great deal

26. Frequency of formal feedback

None 1→ 5 Great deal

27. Frequency of informal feedback

None 1→ 5 Great deal

28. Depth of information provided

None 1→ 5 Great deal

29. Amount of time spent on the evaluation process, including your time and that of all other participants

None 1→ 5 Great deal

30. Time allotted during the school year for professional development for teachers aligned with professional development plans and curriculum standards

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

None 1→ 5 Great deal
31. Time allotted during the school year for professional development for administrators aligned with the implementation of the evaluation process

None 1→ 5 Great deal

32. Availability of training programs and models of good practices

None 1→ 5 Great deal

33. Intended role of evaluation

Teacher accountability 1→ 5 Teacher growth

Appendix F

Interview Protocol

Participant ID: _____
Date: _____

(Read this to the participant prior to recording). Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed. As with any part of this study, you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Anything you say will not be connected with your name or the name of your school in any publications or presentations. I will record your responses for my use only. Your responses to this interview will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and/or on a secure computer. Your identity will be kept using unique ID numbers and will never be released.

Begin recording: STATE PARTICIPANT ID NUMBERS, DATE, NAME OF INTERVIEWER, AND "START INTERVIEW" FOR RECORDING DEVICE (e.g., "This is participant ID number one. Today is Monday, April 23, 2018. I am Marissa Muoio. Begin."

Teacher Evaluations in the Context of Your School

1) In what ways does your school currently evaluate teachers? If you do use an evaluation tool, which does it most resemble?
a. Danielson model
b. Value-added model
c. School-created
d. Other?

2) How have you learned about your schools' teacher evaluation process/tool? What type of training did you receive?

3) What is your school's philosophy regarding teacher evaluation?

4) Does your teacher evaluation tool include a specific area dedicated to your school's mission? If so, what does this look like?

5) In what ways do your teachers benefit from constructive feedback provided to them in their evaluations?

6) How often do you examine/revise your evaluation practices? Who is involved in the process?

TEACHER EVALUATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development in the Context of Your School

7) What does professional development look like at your school? What opportunities are available for teachers? In what ways do you or your teachers engage in these opportunities?

8) Does your school enforce a minimum amount of professional development hours per year for teachers?

Teacher Evaluations and Professional Development

9) In what ways is there a connection between teacher evaluations and professional development at your school?

10) In what ways is there value in the teacher's development in connecting teacher evaluation and professional development?

11) Does your school tie teacher evaluation and development to performance and employment? What does this look like?

12) Do you believe teacher evaluations and professional development should be connected? Why or why not?

13) If you could design your ideal teacher evaluation/professional development system, what would this look like?